DC Influencer Index: October 2017

Uncertainty around the tax reform bill drives negative sentiment among Influencers.

Tax reform, Puerto Rico and the Las Vegas shooting were the top topics in October's Washington Influencer Index. Washington Influencers mentioned tax reform 42 percent more times this month than they did last month as the debate on the impending bill increased online. Meanwhile, Democrats worked in unison on social media to spread awareness about the shortened Open Enrollment period using a hashtag to let constituents know the enrollment period began November 2.

DEMOCRATS USE #GETCOVERED TO DRAW ATTENTION TO OPEN ENROLLMENT, MAKES TOP 5 HASHTAGS

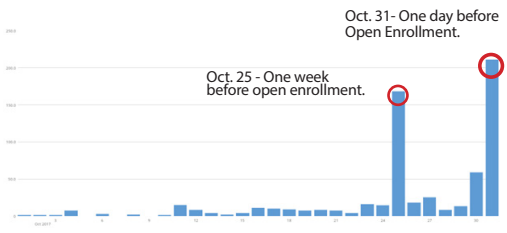

Fig. 1: October 2017 Washington Influencer conversations mentioning the Open Enrollment period.

Medicaid was a topic of discussion in October due to changes in the upcoming enrollment period and its promotion to the public.

As a result, the Democratic bought ads for the program themselves and reminded their constituents about the enrollment period on social media. They used #OpenEnrollment to drive the conversation, and by the end of the month, their tweets made more than 101 million total impressions on Twitter.

The graph above highlights their coordinated effort to spread the word on October 25, a week before Open Enrollment began, and October 31, the day before it began. Despite being used primarily on those two days, #GetCovered was the fifth most mentioned hashtag in October.

The open enrollment period lasts Nov. 1–Dec. 15. Expect to see #GetCovered, #OpenEnrollment and #ACA climb to the top of your trending topics as Democrats including Nancy Pelosi, Joe Kennedy, and the House Democrats Twitter account push this message.

UNCERTAINTY AROUND THE TAX REFORM BILL DRIVES NEGATIVE SENTIMENT AMONG INFLUENCERS

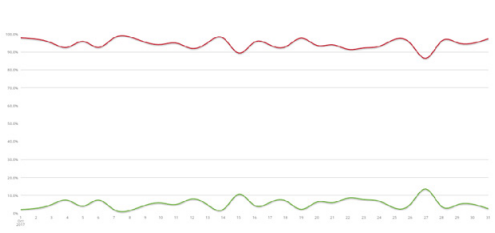

Fig. 2: October 2017 negative and positive tweet sentiment comparison on tax reform.

With little to no information available on the bill that would be released in November, October tweets mentioning the tax reform bill were 92 percent negative. A majority of the top retweeted tweets coming from members from both sides of the aisle, including Sens. Rand Paul and Brian Schatz.

After #TaxReform, #BillionairesFirst was the second most used hashtag Washington Influencers used when talking about tax reform. In addition to possibly benefitting the top 1 percent, the proposed GOP bill was initially under scrutiny for its potential to cripple middle- and lower-income families.

Now that that an initial tax reform bill has been revealed, we can expect to see more positive tweets about tax reform in November as House Republicans and Democrats debate the details of the bill.

Top topics within the tax reform conversation ranged from families, health care, the budget deficit, and the framework. They will likely continue to shape and form the conversation around the proposed tax reform.

LAS VEGAS: TOP RETWEETED TWEET; SHORTEST CONVERSATION HELD BY INFLUENCERS.

The above tweet by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA 5th District) was the most retweeted tweet by Washington Influencers. His post, which was in response to the shooting in Las Vegas that left more than 600 people injured, was retweeted 33 times by Washington Influencers and 1,619 times total for a total of 2.8 million total potential impressions made on Twitter.

#LasVegas was the third most used hashtag by Washington Influencers, but was also only mentioned in excess for two days before the conversation dropped from 450–500 posts per day, to 10–20 posts a day.

The other top retweeted tweets focused on the impending tax reform bill, the Trump administration's attempt to end the DREAM Act, and Bob Corker's tweet about Donald Trump, which generated 8.2 million total potential impressions on Twitter.

Other notable retweeted Washington Influencers included Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-CA 24th District), Rep. Al Green (D-TX 9th District), Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA 6th District), and Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA).

INFLUENCING THE INFLUENCERS: OCTOBER TOP ISSUES

PUERTO RICO and TAX REFORM were two frequently mentioned issues in the October DC Influencer index. Rational 360 analyzed mentions related to these topics, and the accounts below posted tweets that Influencers retweeted the most.

TAX REFORM
1. Doris Matsui (@DorisMatsui)
Representative; California's 6th District
2. Dan Kildee(@RepDanKildee)
Representative; Michigan's 5th District
3. Nancy Pelosi (@NancyPelosi)
House Minority Leader
4. Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump)
President of the United States
5. Richard Neal (@RepRichardNeal)
Representative; Massachusetts's 1st District

PUERTO RICO
1. Marshall Cohen (@Marshall_Cohen)
Politics Reporter; CNN
2. Manu Raju (@mkraju)
Senior Congressional Correspondent; CNN
3. Matt Pearce (@mattdpearce)
National Correspondent; Las Angeles Times
4. Philip Rucker (@PhilipRucker)
White House Bureau Chief; Washington Post
5. Daniel Dale (@ddale8)
Washington Correspondent; Toronto Star

INFLUENCER QUICK HITS

TOP TRENDING HASHTAGS
% of Influencer Tweets That Include the Hashtag:

1. #TaxReform (0.97%)
2. #PuertoRico (0.36%)
3. #LasVegas (0.25%)
4. #MAGA (0.23%)
5. #GetCovered (0.18%)

MOST MENTIONED ACCOUNTS
% of Influencer Tweets Mentioning the account:

1. @realDonaldTrump (1.21%)
2. @POTUS (1.15%)
3. @KurtSchlichter (0.40%)
4. @jbarro (0.30%)
5. @FoxNews (0.26%)

MOST ACTIVE ACCOUNTS
Number of Tweets by the Influencer:

1. @KurtSchlichter (6,441/ 2.63%)
Senior Columnist; Townhall.com
2. @HotlineJosh (5,165/ 2.11%)
Politics Editor; National Journal
3 @senatorshoshana (3,821 / 1.56%)
Digital Manager; R Street Institute
4. @JohnJHarwood (3,195/ 1.30%)
Chief Correspondent; CNBC
5. @dandrezner (3,016 / 1.23%)
Senior Fellow; Brookings Institute

Rational 360 maintains an exclusive list of 1,022 Influencers in the policy and political space and analyzes tweet patterns with a variety of analytics tools including Crimson Hexagon. This group includes 532 official accounts of members of Congress, 35 Cabinet heads and departments, 175 members of the media and 140 Democratic and 140 Republican pundits, experts and strategists. This group was selected by determining users' influence within DC-centric conversations.

Rational 360 is a full-service bipartisan strategic communications and digital agency with offices in Washington, D.C., New York, Boston, Los Angeles, and Seattle. The firm provides strategic counsel, executes sophisticated communications programs, and directs creative and effective public affairs campaigns that change perceptions and advance client agendas. Known for its campaign-style approach, Rational 360 executes communications strategies with urgency, speed, and a relentless emphasis on outcomes. For more information about the DC Influencer Index or Rational 360, email digital@rational360.com.