

# HEEDING THE TWEETS

How Bluefin analyzes what you say about TV



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## 1. Video intake

Every day, Bluefin ingests video from 200 television networks, representing about 90 percent of the programming viewed by U.S. audiences. It also captures the name and time of the show, the names of characters and actors, and closed-captioning text of the show's dialogue. It tracks advertisements as well. Machines detect ads; humans electronically tag new ads, and video fingerprinting technology detects and tracks repeat airings.



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## 2. Social-media intake

At the same time, Bluefin scans 300 million public social-media comments daily for keywords associated with the video signals it has processed. The system seeks relevant comments that appear in the three hours before or after a show is broadcast, suggesting that the words are not being used in some other con-

text. Each day, about 1.4 million comments fit these criteria.

## 3. Text analysis

For comments about TV, Bluefin seeks clues about the author's gender and age. In this example (based on a real tweet but edited and anonymized), a female screen name, use of multiple exclamation points, and references to family members are hints of female authorship. The system keeps track, in anonymized fashion, of posters' commenting habits—especially what TV shows and ads they comment on over time.

## 4. Patterns and associations

Bluefin makes many kinds of associations that could be valuable for programmers, marketers, and, someday, politicians. For example, women who talk about Diet Coke in social media also discuss reality shows more than other kinds of programming, with *Russian Dolls* topping the list. But men who mention Diet Coke in social media tend to discuss talk, news, or comedy shows the most, especially Mike Huckabee's program on Fox News. Such information can, in theory, do things like help ad buyers determine which slots best provoke audience "conversation," but proof of its value is still under study.



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