

JK Wedding Entrance Dance or How Do Videos Become Popular on YouTube



Someday this summer a young couple decided to do something special on their wedding day. Instead of a normal entrance to the church, they wanted to dance down the aisle. The scene was recorded on video and put onto YouTube. Five days later the video was one of the most watched videos on YouTube and the couple found itself invited to many popular TV shows.

This is just one example of a video that suddenly and unexpectedly became very popular on YouTube. (And how this popularity was carried over to the classical media.) In general, there are a lot of reasons and ways why and how a video becomes popular. Of course, it's about the content and quality of the video, but that's not the whole truth. It's also about who watches the video, and then posts it on which blog. It's also about virally sharing the video with friends via Twitter, Facebook, or Mail. It's also about the Zeitgeist and many other things. In this thesis you have the chance to dig deeper into the phenomenon of how videos become popular on YouTube and to gain a better understanding of what the key factors in driving views on YouTube are.

To get a feeling for the matter, here are some sample questions, though in your thesis you are not restricted to those questions, but are encouraged to come up with own ideas.

1. Can we find out whether a video is going to be super-popular before it actually is?
2. Which blog is the first to post about a viral videos?
3. How do videos make their way through the media (e.g. first twitter, then digg, then classic media)?
4. How fast does the average video become popular? How fast does it become unpopular again?

Requirements: Basic programming skills, interest in theory and data mining.
Interested? Please contact us for more details!

Contact

- Dr. Mirjam Wattenhofer, mirjam@google.com, Google Switzerland, 044 668 16 53
- Prof. Dr. Roger Wattenhofer, wattenhofer@tik.ee.ethz.ch, ETZ G63, 044 632 63 12