



How Twitter Annotations Could Bring the Real-Time and Semantic Web Together

Written by [Chris Cameron](#) / June 24, 2010 6:40 PM / [5 Comments](#)

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Just because the new iPhone arrived in stores today doesn't mean the rest of the technology world shut down. In fact, today in San Francisco the [2010 Semantic Technology Conference](http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com) (<http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com>) continued its week-long series of talks and sessions about the semantic Web - the ability to understand and intelligently interpret content from the Web. A fascinating of how the semantic Web is colliding with the real-time Web is through [Twitter](http://twitter.com/) (<http://twitter.com/>) and the [impending release of annotations](http://www.readriteweb.com/archives/what_twitter_annotations_mean.php) (http://www.readriteweb.com/archives/what_twitter_annotations_mean.php) - and Ph.D student

[Joshua Shinavier](http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com/sessionPop.cfm?confid=42&proposalid=3236) (<http://semtech2010.semanticuniverse.com/sessionPop.cfm?confid=42&proposalid=3236>) provided some fascinating semantic scenarios for their use.

Twitter posts already contain plenty of metadata that allows for smart filtering and organization, including date and location. With annotations, however, the metadata possibilities will be literally endless. Tweet metadata could eventually contain information or links based on words or phrases in the tweet itself, other options added to the tweet, or even other external data like the weather in the senders location at the time it was sent. Imagine being able to add an infinite number of hashtags to a post without wasting precious characters.



As Shinavier points out in his presentation ([see slides above](http://www.slideshare.net/joshsh/realtime-semantic-web-with-twitter-annotations-4606369) (<http://www.slideshare.net/joshsh/realtime-semantic-web-with-twitter-annotations-4606369>)), Semantic databases could then plug into the annotation metadata and provide real-time semantic information to those who seek it. Using existing databases like [GeoNames](http://www.geonames.org/) (<http://www.geonames.org/>), [Linked Movie Database](http://www.linkedmdb.org/) (<http://www.linkedmdb.org/>) and [FOAF \(Friend of a Friend\)](http://www.foaf-project.org/) (<http://www.foaf-project.org/>), very specific searches for genres of tweets can be collected. Searchers could ask for tweets about "places in developing countries," "English-language movies starring Chinese actors," or "songs by artists my friends like," says Shinavier.

Shinavier likens annotations to the real-time version of attributes from [RDF \(Resource Description Framework\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resource_Description_Framework) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resource_Description_Framework), which provide websites with extended semantic metadata. Since Twitter's annotations will be easy to implement for developers, the sheer size of the network of use will create the "long tail" of real-time semantic data, he says. The application of the semantic Web to annotations will make it easier for developers to create richer applications, which benefits the end user.

In basic terms, the Web is getting smarter. Not [Skynet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skynet_(Terminator)) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skynet_\(Terminator\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skynet_(Terminator))) smart, but smart, and with the mashup of the real-time fire-hose of information coming from services like Twitter, the semantic Web can provide even deeper and richer interactions for users. Personally, I am highly anticipating the release of annotations because I know brilliant developers are going to create amazing applications that leverage metadata. Throwing in semantic recognition only sweetens the pot.

Image from Flickr user [Colectivo Mambembe](http://www.flickr.com/photos/colectivomambembe/) (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/colectivomambembe/>).



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1. Twitter annotations greatest value could (and should IMHO) be for semantic web, that was clear as soon as the new feature was announced in April.

There is, nevertheless, still a long way to go.

Annotations were enabled to a group of developers during the hackfest last month, a few weeks later Twitter started rolling these out (again, first to developers). However the current performance issues at Twitter put further rollout of the feature aside.

The biggest issue for semantic web is that annotations are currently only enabled to streaming API. Annotations have not been integrated yet into the search API yet, and there is currently no word of Twitter when that will happen. Twitter search and streaming are implemented by separate teams.

And without search, one cannot do anything with annotations to empower semantic web. Analyzing the annotations of a random tweet you stumble upon (which happens to be in your timeline) doesn't help the semantic cause.

I hope Twitter will realize this (I tried to make this point to them) and will implement annotations in search soon.

Posted by: [Roy Reshef](#) | [June 24, 2010 9:45 PM](#)

2. There ain't no such thing as a free lunch. Someone has to foot the bill for all of the computational horsepower, disk space and programming talent necessary to make these "semantic web" dreams a reality.

Posted by: [Ed Borasky](#) | [June 25, 2010 12:29 AM](#)

3.We are still not there....I looked at the slides....Will we ever come to the point were someone that is not technical can understand and be a part of the process....The majority of the slides and the ideas in them can probably not be understood by most internet users.....The Semantic web as it has been defined by the current movers and shakers will only come into reality when the majority of end users are involved in the programming/development process.....

Why is it good that a twitter (a closed source company that is not owned by the user community) become the defacto semantic content creation point for the real time web?

Why should developers and members add value and revenue to company that has its own interest that is more than likely aligned with investors rather than the community at large ?

http://www.factoetum.com/factoetum/The_FIFA_100

Posted by: [bruce wayne](#) | [June 25, 2010 1:38 AM](#)

4. <http://www.hbookmark.com> already brings automated semantic capabilities to links shared via twitter, too bad rww didn't choose to cover its launch :(

Posted by: [Pete](#) | [June 25, 2010 3:17 AM](#)

5. informasi yang anda berikan sangat bagus dan menarik, terima kasih atas informasinya dan salam persahabatan

Posted by: [dimas](#) | [June 25, 2010 7:13 AM](#)

twitter

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