Petition Signing in the UK: Evidence from the Government Petitions Platform

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Aug. 2011 – Present

Sept. 2011 – Present
Data

• Hourly resolution of signatures per petition
• From August 2011 to present
• All petitions and signatures
  • Over 50,000 petitions
  • Over 11.8 million signatures
• Comparative data from the US (We the People) and the previous #10 Downing Street site
Most petitions fail
US petitions show similar pattern
E-petitions: Swift uptake is key to success

Eventual number of signatures

Example petitions, all entitled “Stop the badger cull”:

1. Total signatures: 294,264
2. Total signatures: 3,588
3. Total signatures: 15

Source: Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford
After 10 hours, petitions face digital oblivion
Successful petitions grow quickly

Petitions receiving more than 10,000 signatures
Facebook (esp. mobile) large driver

Referral Traffic

Jan 2013 - March 2014

Source: GDS analytics data
Petition Signatures by Postcode district

Liverpool area
44.5 signatures per 100 residents

Greater London

Number of signatures per 100 residents
- > 30
- 22.5 - 30
- 17.5 - 22.5
- 15 - 17.5
- < 15

Data referring the sum of all petitions, until March 29th, 2014.

Mapping: Stefano De Sabbata, OII