

Using Twitter

as a tool for audience research
on carillon music

WCF Congress 2021, Hartford, CT
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Why audience research on carillon music?

The carillon is the public music instrument by excellence:

- It penetrates the public space
- It is (mostly) financed by the passive listeners (who pay taxes)

-> 'Audience research is a moral duty.'



Moreover, it generates some extra benefits

- **Functional:**

Feedback that enables me to make my playing more effective

- **Financial:**

Evidence to my employer that there *is* public appreciation for carillon music

- **Personal:**

Reassurance that, although the audience is invisible, there *is* an audience

But surprisingly,
audience research on carillon music
is almost never done.

Methodological problems in audience research on carillon music

- No controlled laboratory conditions
- Many variables play a role (time, repertoire, playing level...)
- Most of the audience cannot be not identified (passers-by, local residents...)
- Risk for biased results (by submitting surveys to friends or fans)

Survey possibilities

1. Extrapolation of research results in other domains of music psychology, perception research and social psychology
 - Needs to be validated
 - Doesn't give specific information on local carillon music



Survey possibilities

2. Street surveys

- Difficult to get controlled and objective data and to obtain results that are statistically significant.



Survey possibilities

3. Analysis of messages on social media

- Facebook, Instagram etc.:
positive bias due to 'social bubble'

- **Twitter:**

Pros:

- Represents spontaneous emotional responses on carillon music on the spot by everybody, not only from the people who follow you
- Makes the invisible audience visible
- No cost
- The results can be checked (tweets remain on the Twitter platform)

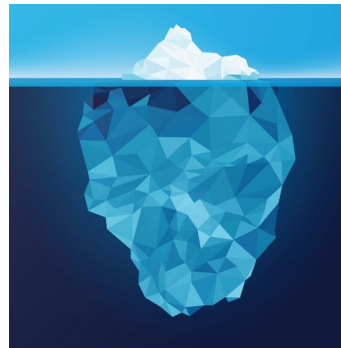
Cons:

- No scientific validity
(sample size; no representative sample of population...
-> works probably better for campus carillons than for city carillons)

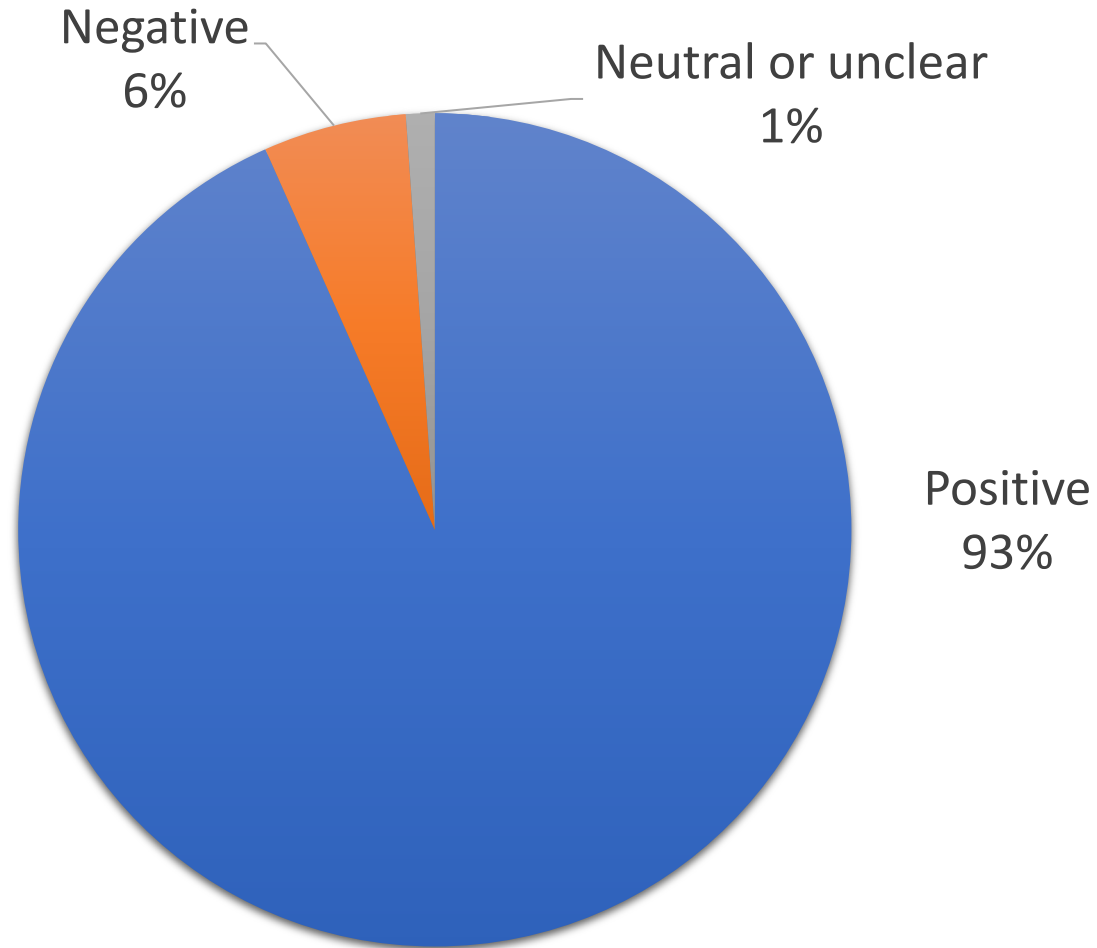


Analysis of tweets about carillon music in Leuven

- Fixed set of keywords:
(klokken OR bells OR cloches OR beiaard OR carillon)
AND
(leuven OR ladeuze OR bibliothèque OR Louvain OR bibliotheek)
- Registered all tweets (positive + negative)
- Playing on different towers in Leuven, by different players
- 180 tweets, posted by 147 individuals between 2009 and April 2021
(top of the iceberg...)

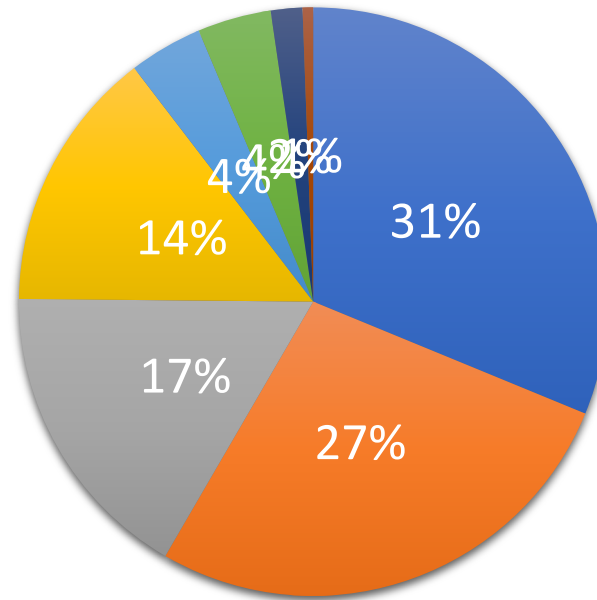


Positive vs. negative comments



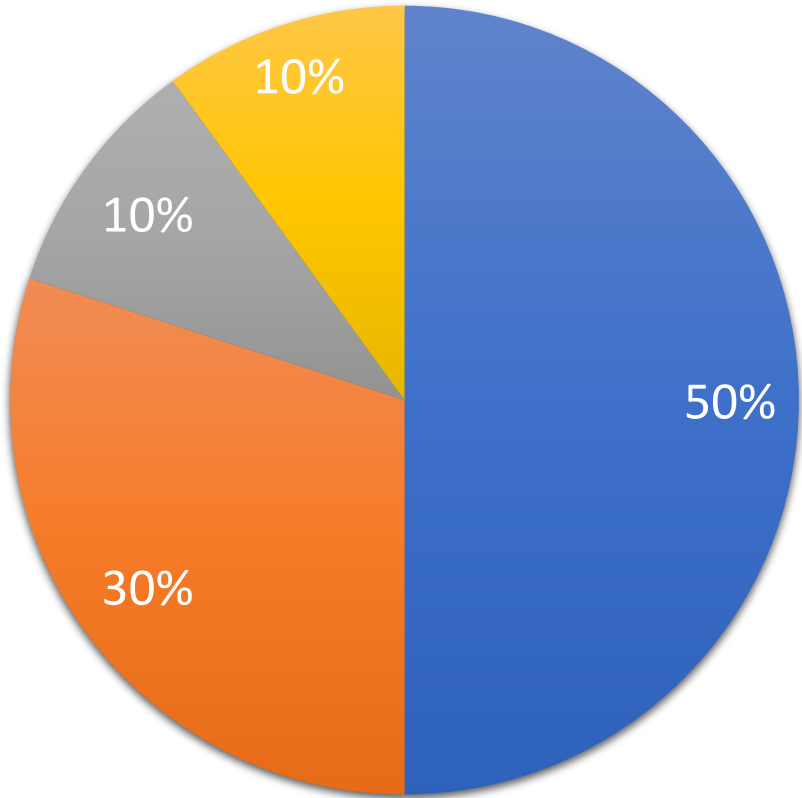
Overrepresentation of positive comments
(although average on the market is difficult to assess)

Breakdown of positive comments (N = 173)



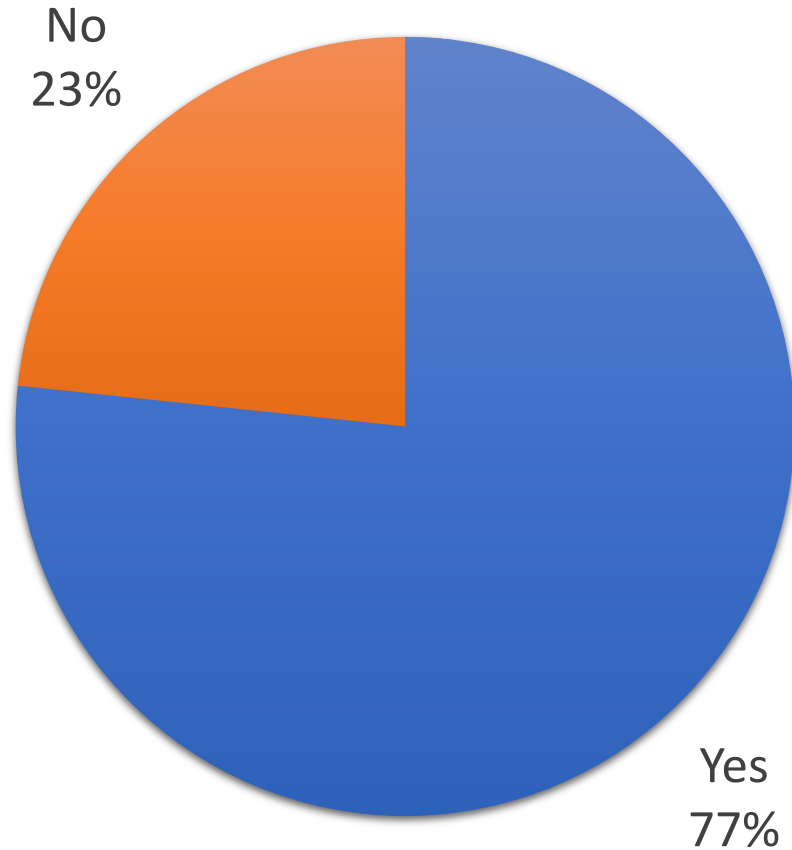
- Amazing / great carillonneur
- Makes happy / moving / memories / association / safety / surprising
- Nice atmosphere or distraction from work
- Nice city / university
- Sounds good
- Sing along / together / resonance
- Which song is this?
- Tradition

Breakdown of negative comments (N = 10)



- too much, too frequent
- bad moment
- sounds bad
- bad choice of music

Is repertoire mentioned?



3 out of 4 tweets is triggered by recognition of the music played.

Carillon Top-10

1.	Das Model (Kraftwerk)	10
2.	Imagine (John Lennon)	8
	Mia (Gorki)	8
	Teleromeo (K3)	8
3.	Harry Potter Theme (John Williams)	7
4.	Student songs	5
	St. Nicholas songs	5
5.	Bohemian Rhapsody (Queen)	4
6.	Alle kleuren (K3)	3
	Game of Thrones (Ramin Djawadi)	3
	Pirates of the Caribbean (Klaus Badelt)	3
	Stairway to Heaven (Led Zeppelin)	3
	Sweet Caroline (Neil Diamond)	3

Be careful: Top-10 is limited to the selection you play.

Pop music and film music are mentioned most; classical music almost never (although I play classical music too).

A few quotes (only in English)

27/09/16 19:36

El carillón de la biblioteca de la universidad está tocando Stairway to Heaven. I will miss you Leuven, you crazy cold bastard city you

A few quotes (only in English)

6/03/18 19:39

Just hung out the window for a smoke, and heard the bell ringers in one of the churches in [#Leuven](#) playing the Sound of Silence by Simon and Garfunkel. Absolutely amazing!

A few quotes (only in English)

- 'Could not help but listen'
- 'cool city'
- 'love Leuven'
- 'Feeling like prof Snape'
- 'it makes me momentarily believe... magical world exists'
- beautiful :'(
- One thing I love about living in the heart of Leuven...
- This is why I love Leuven
- giving a sense of harmony to a townscape



Takeaways



- Don't be afraid of the voice of the people: generally, they like your playing !
- Search on Twitter reveals emotions from the invisible audience, that help you to upgrade your audience from zone of indifference to zone of sympathy or delight
- Decorative, supportive function of carillon music is important:
 - 'It made my day'
 - 'That is why I love Leuven'
- Recognition of music is the main driver of audience delight. So, evergreens (pop, film music) can serve as 'engines' for better appreciation of carillon music in general
- From an audience point of view, you have to consider the carillon more as a music channel than as a music instrument.



Thank you!