Search

Operational Oceanography, End Users, and Social Network Sites: An Exploratory Analysis

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Abstract

Many oceanographic products are currently being disseminated in a systematic and routine manner to end users. In recent years, data producers have gained insight into the specific requirements of the scientific community. However, there is still a lack of perception of the interests of the broader and non-expert public. This study analyzes the interests and needs of potential end users of operational oceanography by mining Web search engine and social media data. Results show an increasing number of people searching for operational oceanography-related products, with seasonality in these searches depending on the kind of variable. Information on currents is searched more during winter, waves during spring, and tides and temperature during summer. Moreover, the ranking of specific interests of the general public differs from the requirements of the fisheries and applied environmental scientists reported by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea Working Group on Operational Oceanographic Products for Fisheries and Environment. The general public is more interested in temperature, wave conditions, and sea ice, whereas the highest priority of a group of scientists was temperature, currents, and salinity. An understanding of the terminology used by non-expert clients and their priorities will help institutions involved in curating and disseminating oceanographic data sets to better design their Web portals and applications.

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