

The Power of Social Media

Public Safety and Crisis Management

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Introduction

PublicSonar is an online monitoring solution for incident and crisis management. It provides you with instant access to real-time social media insights for an informed response.

Whether it's unrest, nuisance or other incidents, unsafe situations are often visible online even before they are known in an incident or control room. It is precisely this continuous source of up-to-date information that is invaluable for public safety.

By detecting the first signs of risks, as a public authority you can gain direct insight into what is taking place and what is happening. In this way, you can act with knowledge and prevent escalation.

Over the years, we have collected several cases showing that social media data can help protect lives.





Case 1: Natural Disasters | Emergency Planning

Situational Awareness

In 2021, we experienced an extreme amount of natural disasters. Besides the enormous personal suffering, they have also left their financial traces. The floods in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg were the second most expensive natural disaster of 2021. In mid-July, several areas were hit by extreme rainfall. This resulted in severe flooding that killed 196 Germans and 42 Belgians. The damage was enormous, with estimated costs of no less than €38 billion.

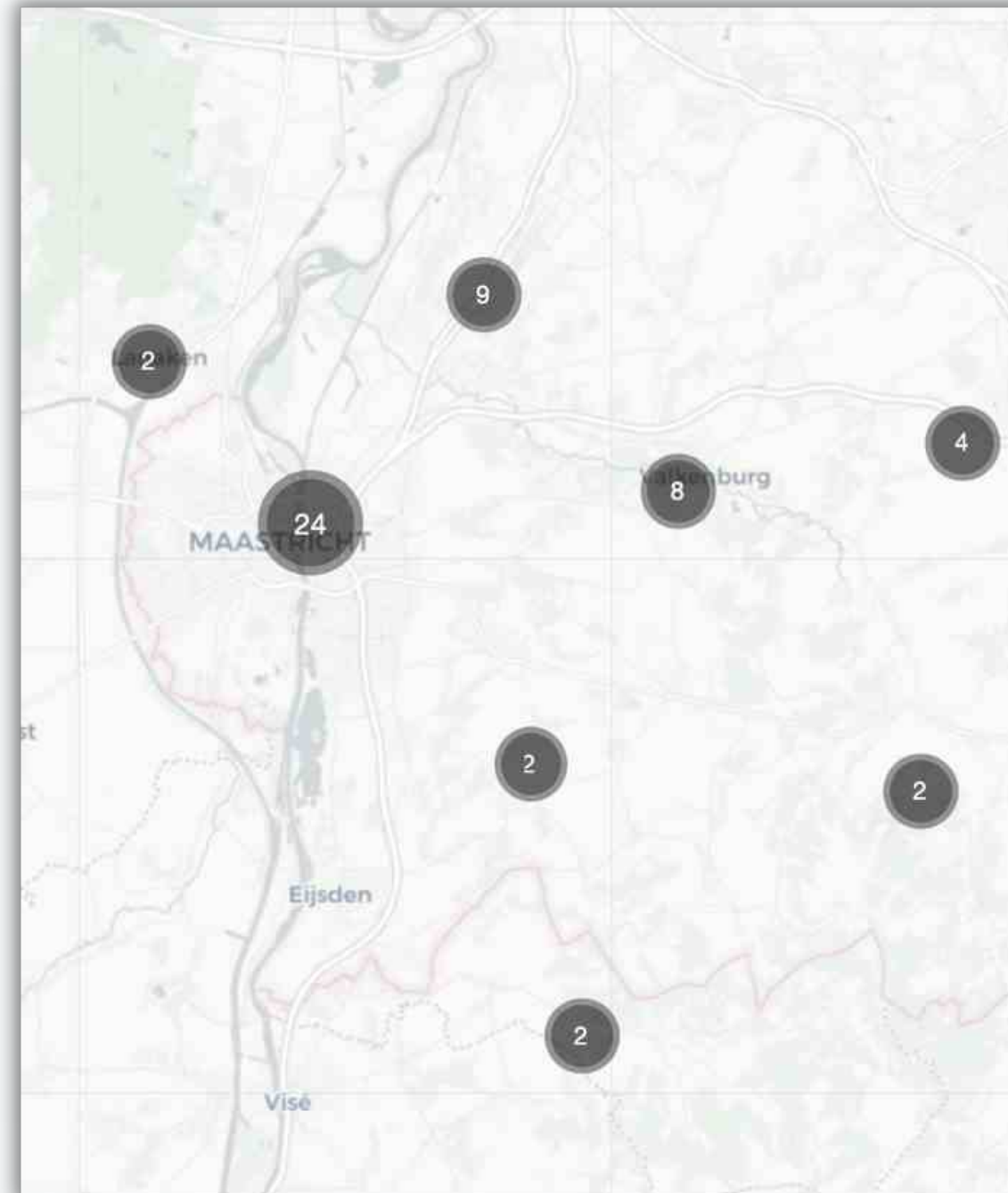
The Institute for Safety and Crisis Management carried out an evaluation for the South Limburg Safety Region in order to draw lessons from this disaster. One of the challenges was forming situational awareness.

According to those involved in this evaluation, local assessments were difficult: "The disaster occurred at different speeds for the municipalities and the impact varied everywhere. It was therefore a major challenge to constantly create an overall real-time overview," said Hans Verheijen, the chairman on duty of the South Limburg Safety Region and mayor of Sittard-Geleen. With so much information available, it was hard to respond quickly and inform the local citizens properly.

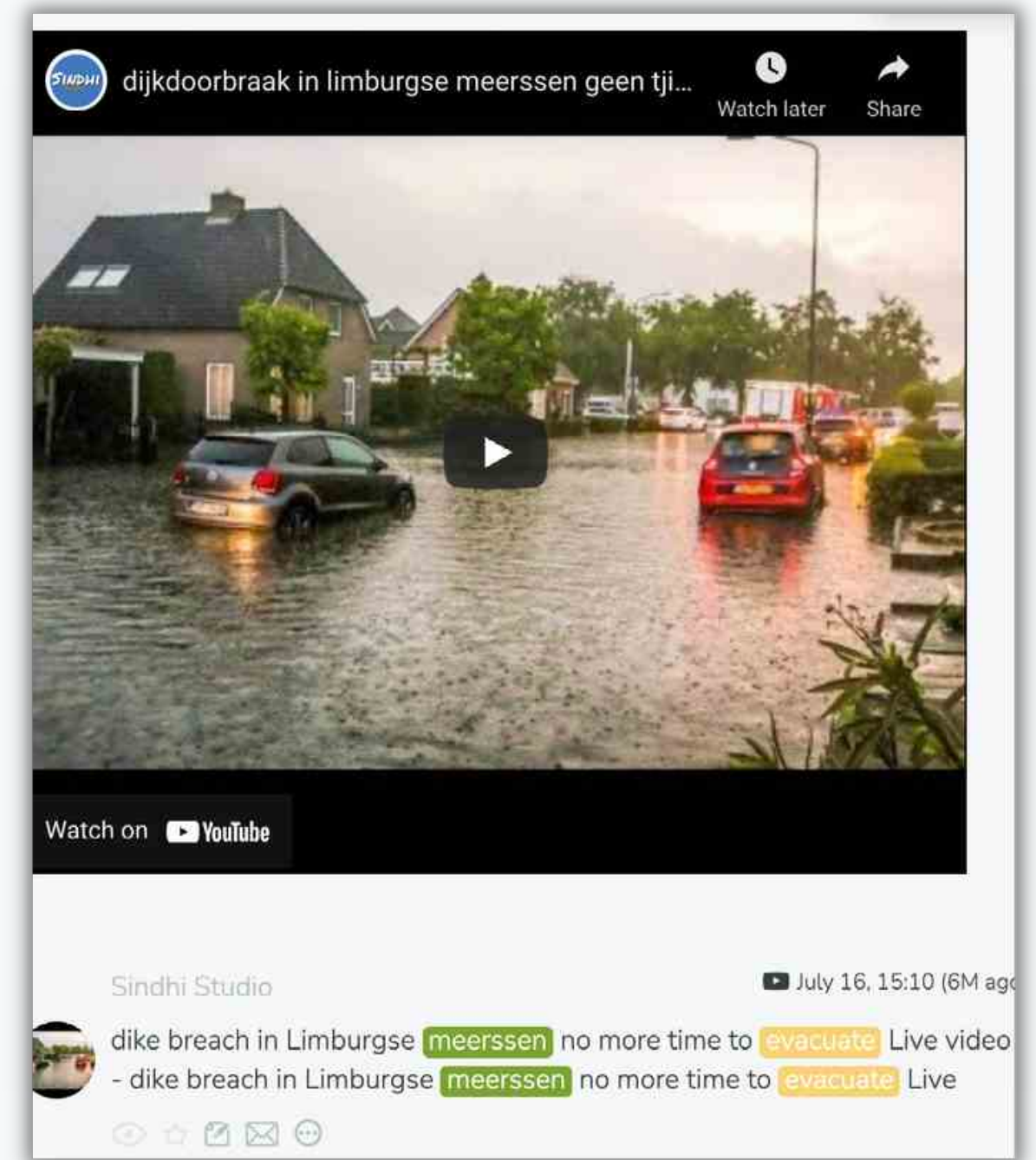
Collected social media messages during extreme floods



Numerous images showed the extent to which some areas were affected.



With location indications you know exactly where a situation is escalating.



Live videos give emergency responders an instant view of what is happening.

Case 2: Mobility & Infrastructure | Municipalities

Social Media and Traffic Management

There are many challenges in managing mobility and traffic. Incidents, roadblocks, planned events (e.g. concerts) and busy days are only examples of what can affect the traffic flow in a large city. To increase road safety, it is important to know what is happening, how an incident develops and how road users experience the situation. In short, you need as much information as possible.

The municipality of The Hague decided to take action and look for ways to best assist their traffic controllers. Despite their technology and intelligence tools (such as CCTV and sensors), they were still missing one source of information - social media data. Now, for more than six years, the municipality is actively using PublicSonar's social media monitoring solution for their traffic management.



3 reasons to monitor social media for traffic management



EARLY DETECTION

When there is an incident, road traffic controllers are not always immediately informed by the road authority or the police. Social media can therefore be a great first source of information. Helping you to respond quickly.



SITUATIONAL PICTURE

Messages and images on social media serve as background information and can provide additional insights. "It is particularly useful at times when we don't have camera footage. It gives us a better situational picture," says a traffic controller.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sometimes it is not always clear what has happened at certain places in the city or why a certain road section has been closed off. For instance, a traffic controller says that it is useful to consult PublicSonar to collect additional information afterwards.

Case 3: Innovation

Understanding Sentiment

During high-risk situations, it is important to be aware of the feelings, sentiment and risk perceptions of citizens. Simply knowing that sentiment is "negative" is not enough. Are people angry? Confused? Or fearful? For public authorities, understanding which sub-sentiment is dominant gives insights into what response is needed.

Manually analysing the billions of messages posted daily is not only tedious, but also an infeasible task. More so during an emergency circumstance affecting citizen safety. That is why we at PublicSonar developed an automatic sentiment analysis specifically for public safety & security.

Our smart algorithms collect real time situational and location data from a variety of sources. Then, artificial intelligence automatically processes these into a sentiment score and sub-sentiments. [Read more.](#)



Case 3: Innovation

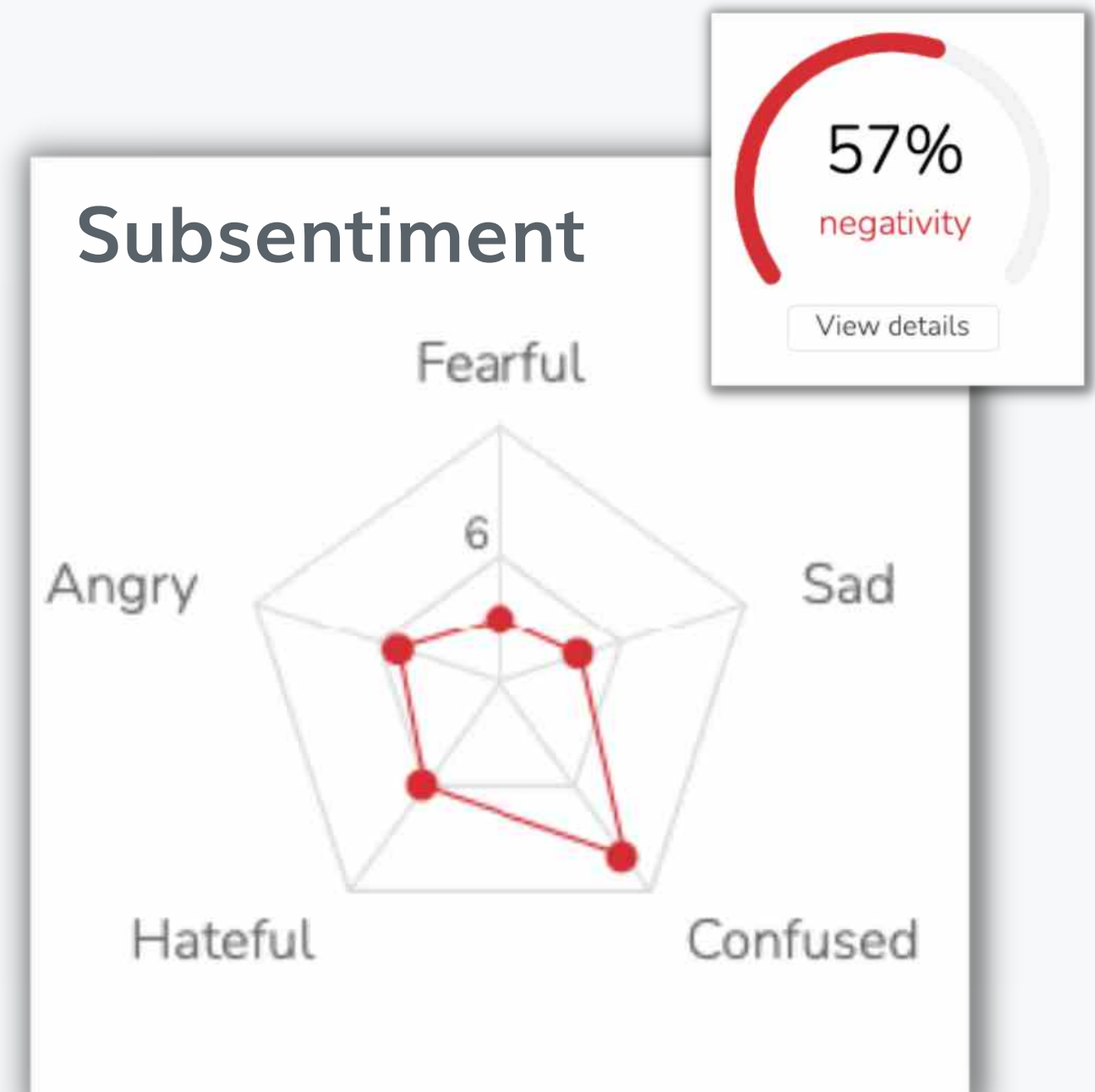
Sentiment during Bomb Threat

On 9 August 2021, there was a bomb threat at the Library of Congress in Washington DC. Live images and messages were posted directly from the scene. PublicSonar's online monitoring solution collected them all and filtered out the noise.

This incident can be viewed not only in terms of the suspect, but also in terms of the impact on the public. Therefore, public sentiment was also automatically detected.

Of all messages, 57% were considered negative. In order to truly understand these negative emotions, it is important to conduct a more in-depth sentiment analysis.

This analysis showed that during the bomb threat, most people were confused. Valuable information that is necessary for determining the communication and measures to be taken by the authorities.





Case 4: Crowd Management

Crowd Safety and Major Events

At mass gatherings, crowded events and parades, you must always be prepared for dangerous situations such as panic, suffocation or threatening weather. If something does happen, you want to act quickly and deploy resources accurately.

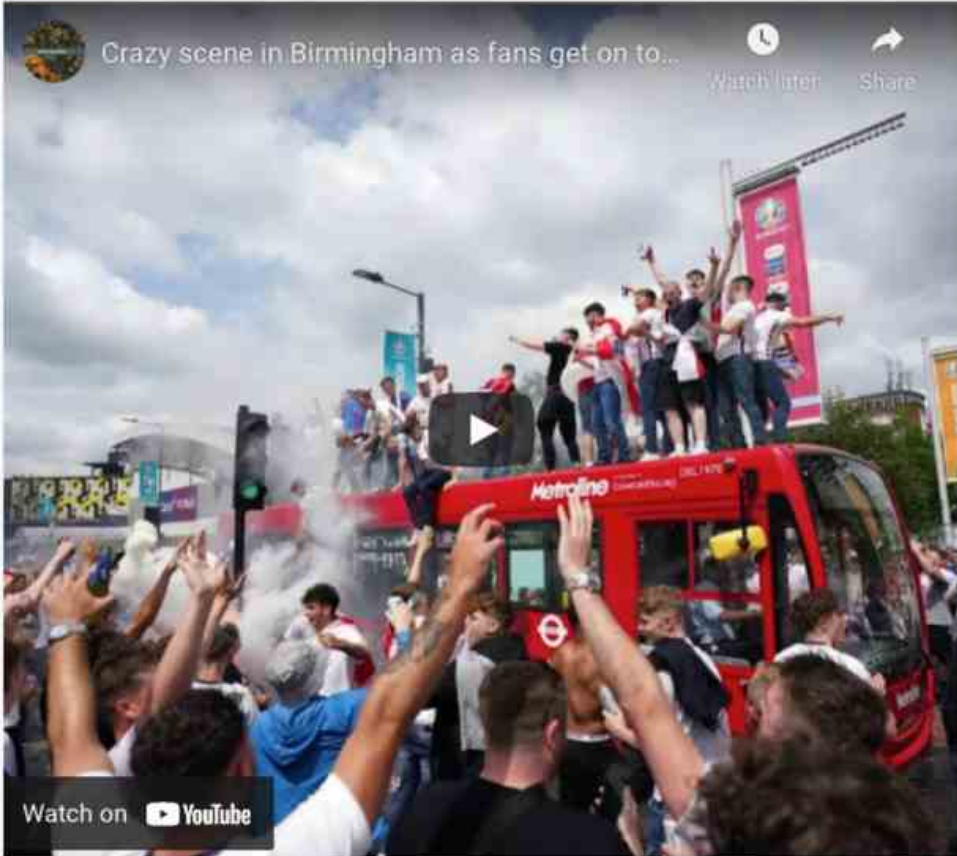
Over the years, there have been many incidents that have affected crowd safety. For example:

- Vandalism in and around a football stadium, causing inconvenience to local residents
- A stampede at the Travis Scott concert on 5 November 2021 causing 10 deaths and 300 injuries
- Overcrowded trains, markets, festivals, parades or events such as New Year's Eve

When monitoring crowd safety, social media can provide you with a lot of valuable information. Think of images, videos, location clues, but also the public's sentiment. Information you definitely do not want to miss at critical moments.

Case 4: Crowd Management

Follow developments in real-time: UEFA Euro 2021 Final

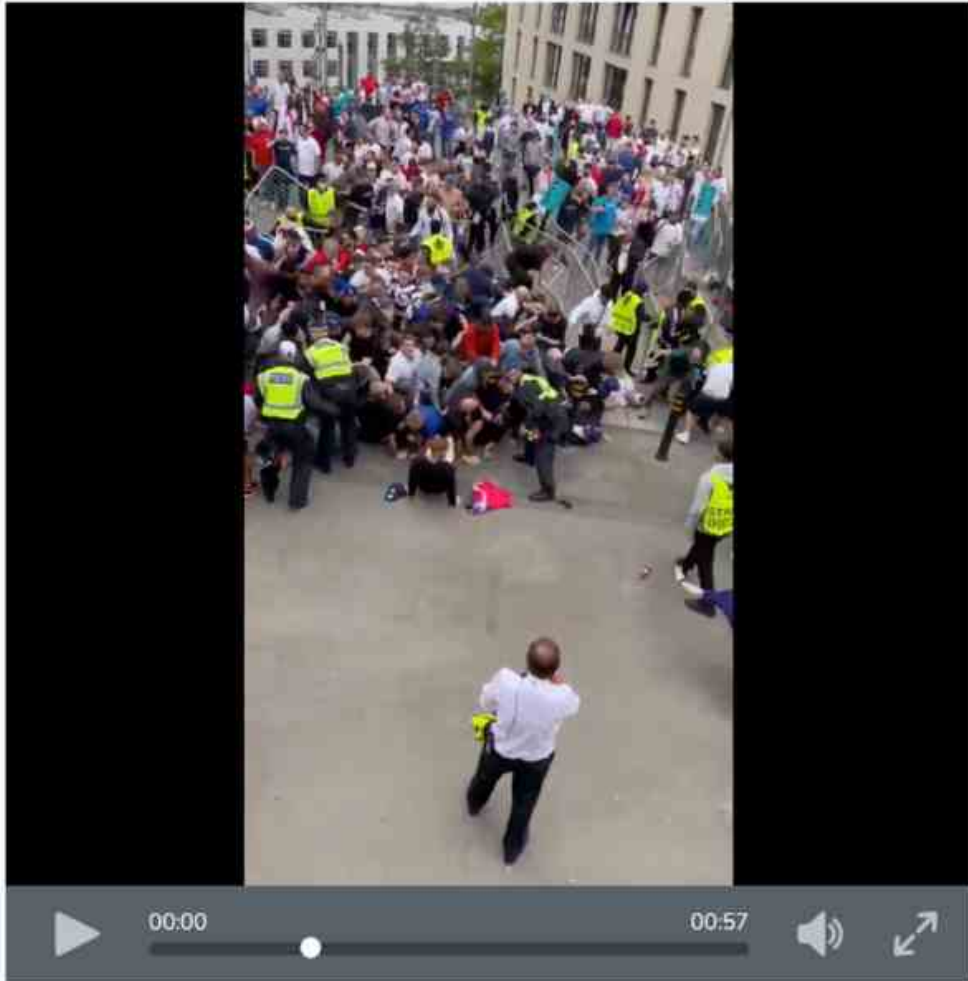


Crazy scene in Birmingham as fans get on to...
Watch later Share

Watch on YouTube

Relax Station July 11th, 4:49 pm (2M ago)

Crazy scene in Birmingham as fans get on top of bus after England win - England fans partied on the streets of London following Wednesday's 2-1 victory against Denmark in the semi-finals of Euro 2020. Supporters could be seen climbing on top of buses and traffic lights in the capital, as crowds gathered around Piccadilly Circus. Riot police were eventually



00:00 00:57

Arsalan Abbas July 11th, 7:21 pm (2M ago)

Doesn't happen in Pakistan only. People without tickets gate crashing the Wembley today <https://t.co/70hPygZthv>

Negative



29 29 33 167 16 132 689 50



scott owen July 11th, 8:00 pm (2M ago)

Got this happening in Leicester Square but the woman in The Co-Op wants to kick off at me for not wearing a mask. I don't think so, not today love #EnoughIsEnough <https://t.co/TEXTKLDxT>

Negative

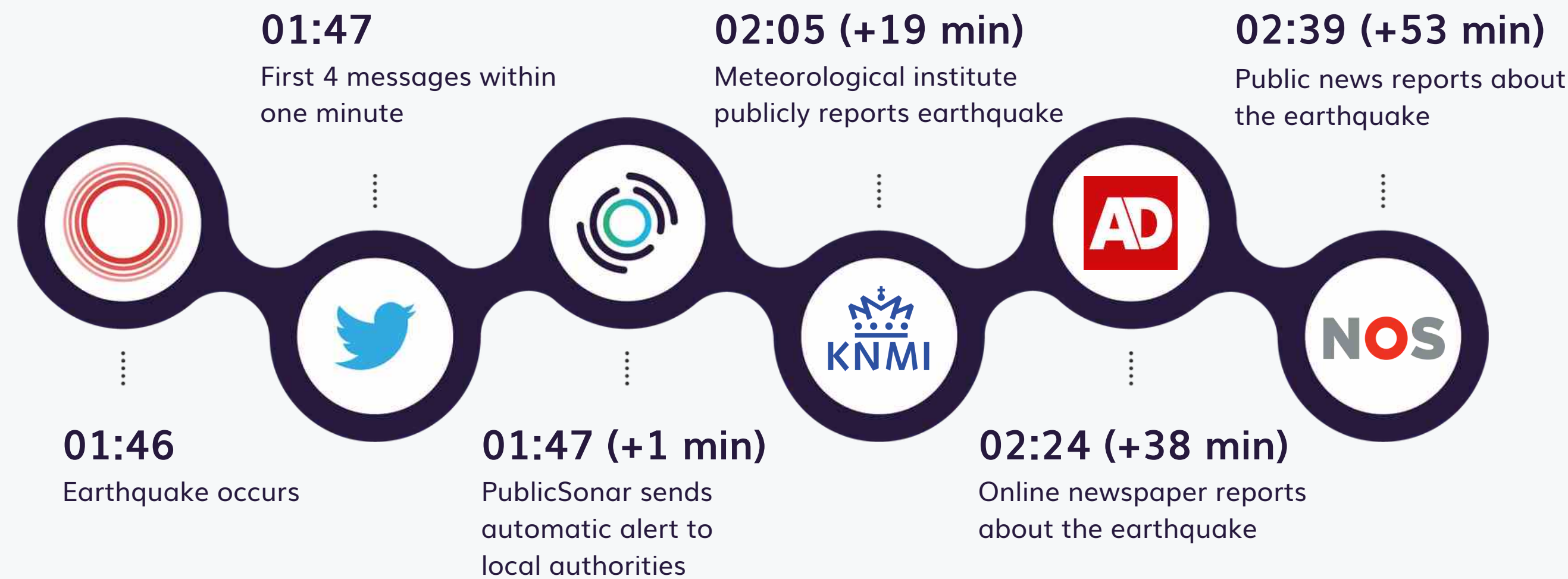
Mobility

Crowd Management

Vandalism across UK

From earthquake to alert within 1 minute

When the earthquake occurred on 16 November 2021, the emergency services immediately had a head start in their actions. With real-time social media data, they could directly allocate the right resources and provide help where needed.



Tips & Insights

How to start with social media monitoring?

Local storms, floods, riots, (traffic) accidents, fires, events. All situations in which you want to know early on when something is getting out of hand and how the situation is unfolding.

Social media is a goldmine of information. But how do you make use of it? Here are 6 tips to get you started with social media monitoring:

1. Be concrete about your search for risks
2. Define your geographical search area
3. Determine who the authorities and influencers are
4. Filter messages per risk subject
5. Set up alerts per topic
6. Use dashboards & reports

Read more about these tips on our [blog](#).



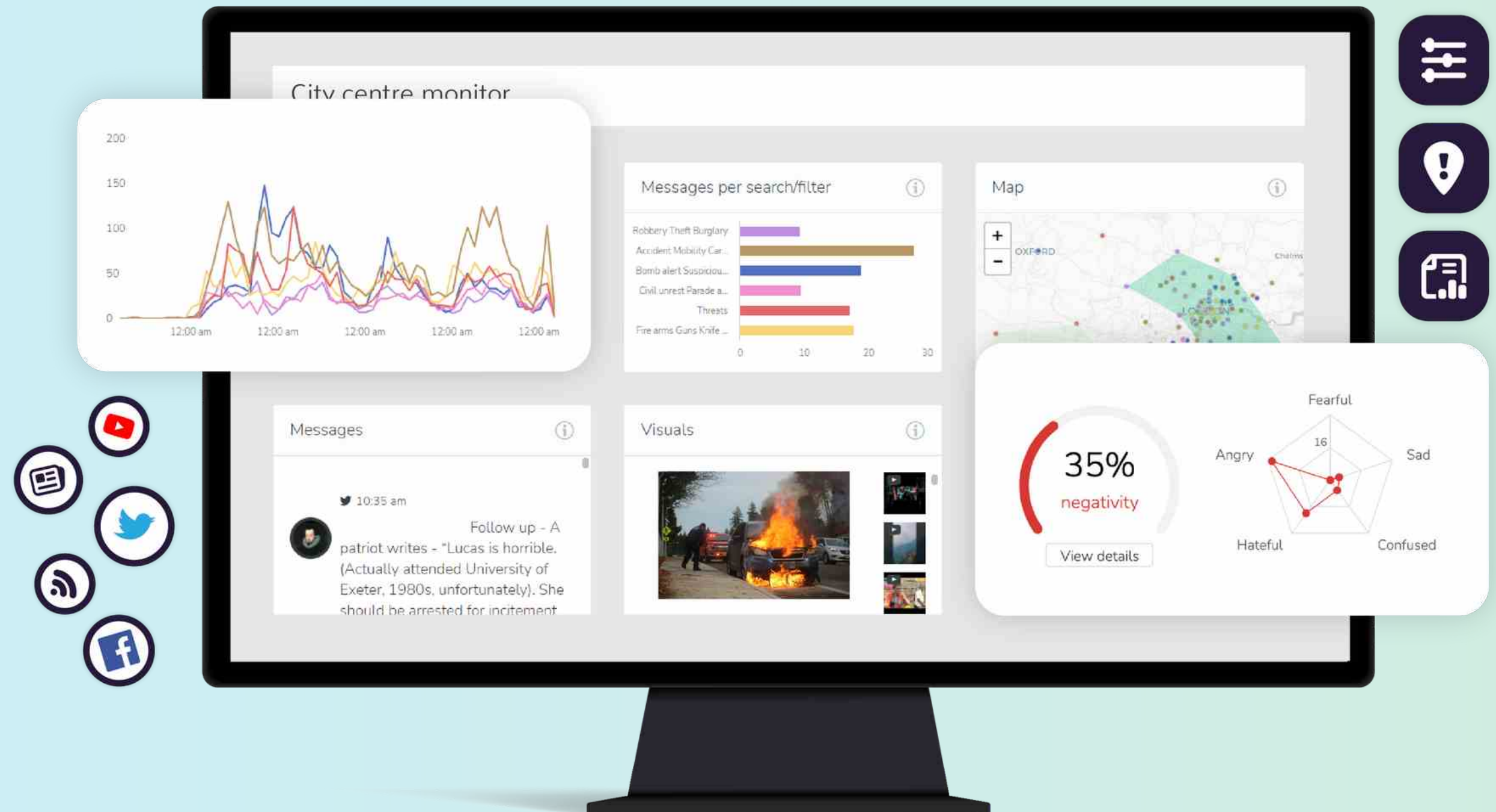
Our AI-Solution

An introduction to our solution

Early warnings and establishing a comprehensive real-time picture can make all the difference to how an incident unfolds. At such times, social media messages cannot be left out.

But how do you make sense of so much data? Artificial Intelligence (AI) can save time and give better context for time-critical decisions – that is why PublicSonar is developed.

After working with users in the field, we put the latest technologies into a user-friendly interface to create an industry-leading solution. [Learn more.](#)



What are the next steps?

TALK TO AN EXPERT

Do you still have questions about social media monitoring? Such as: What is the value? What extra information can I collect? And how do I start?

Talk to one of our industry experts. They can certainly answer them for you.

JOIN A WEBINAR

Learn everything you need to know about social media monitoring. Our webinar covers:

- Real-life case studies
- Challenges & Solutions
- Collaborating with others
- Complying with regulations
- Demonstration of our tool

REQUEST A DEMO

Find out how PublicSonar's solution can assist you in easily gaining real-time insights for an informed response.

Besides taking a look at our solution, you will also receive tailored advice specifically for your organisation.

