Volume Trend Of this Topic

Mentions

SMLC interns Natalie Peck and Katie Ward monitored the social media conversation around the debate between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump on September 10, 2024.

From the outset, the awkward handshake between the two candidates resulted in 64,000 comments within the first five minutes of the debate and served as a stark reminder of the political tension between Harris and Trump. Over the course of the 90-minute debate, the candidates debated topics like abortion, immigration, the economy, the peaceful transition of power, international conflict, and race relations, among others.

Altogether, there were 1,678,847 posts over the course of the debate, a nearly 70% increase over the debate between Trump and President Joe Biden on June 27 (994,121 posts).

Natalie and Katie ran a search of content by users who identified themselves in their bios using partisan language (e,g., #MAGA or #democrat) to evaluate how the different sides of the political spectrum reacted to the debate. Trump supporters were more likely to refer to terms and topics like the economy, the moderators of the debate, and immigration. Trump supporters were also less likely to discuss the debate in a favorable light, with 16.68% of the conversation being positive. Alternatively, Harris supporters were more likely to refer to terms and topics like immigration, Trump's rally sizes, and fact checking. Harris supporters viewed the debate in a more favorable light (22.15%) compared to Trump supporters.

A few interesting side narratives emerged throughout the debate, including the performance of the debate moderators. In particular, ABC Moderator and Anchor David Muir was - at one time (at around 9:45 p.m. EST) - the second highest trending topic on Twitter. Users frequently cited his fact-checking of Trump, while others called him out for exhibiting political bias against Trump.

There was also a point during the debate when Trump referenced immigrants eating pets in Springfield, Ohio. "EATING PETS" and "THEY'RE EATING THE DOGS" were trending on Twitter. In all, social media conversation around this particular moment in the debate accounted for just over 20% of the overall discussion.

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Shortly after the debate ended, Taylor Swift announced her endorsement for Kamala Harris and Tim Waltz via her Instagram account. Between 11 and 11:59 p.m., there were 217,143 mentions reacting to Swift's endorsement (68% of which were positive).

As we move closer to the general election on November 5, we will continue to monitor the social media conversation around each candidate closely. Stay tuned for additional updates and real-time monitoring of the social media discussion during Election Day.