University of Zurich[UZH]

IKMZ – Institute of Communication and Media Research

The IKMZ Speaker Series presents:

Building the Open Computational Communication Science toolchain

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16:15-17:15
Room AND 4.06

Computational Communication Science promises to give new insight into communication and social behavior by using digital methods to study large and heterogeneous data sets consisting of traces left by online activity from Instagram posts, comments to online news articles on various sites to online purchases. This talk focuses on the tools needed to carry out this research. In particular, we need tools to gather data, such as digital trace data; analyze the resulting texts, networks, and images to measure our theoretical quantities; and store and share the data and results. In all cases, it is important to focus on the replicability, validity, and transparency of data, analytic processes, and results. In this talk, I will outline the requirements, existing resources and challenges for "open" Computational Communication Science. For each of these steps, I will discuss the possibilities and limitations of existing tools, and describe the methods and open sources tools that we are currently developing. I will call for a turn to "open science" and collaboration on open source software to build the tools we need to develop Computational Communication Science.

Dr. Wouter Van Atteveldt (PhD in Artificial Intelligence, 2008) is associate professor at the Department of Communication Science, VU University Amsterdam. His research interests are computational methods and political communication and journalism. He has published in both substantive and methodological journals such as Political Analysis, Communication Methods and Measures, and Journalism. He received a NWO VENI grant in 2011, a Digging into Data challenge grant in 2017, and recently a JEDS/NWO grant to measure online news consumption and study the prevalence and effects of filter bubbles. He is co-founder and chair of the ICA interest group on Computational Methods, and co-founder and editor-in-chief of the open access journal Computational Communication Research (first issue to appear May 2019).