

## Qantas/Emirates Launch: Issues Management

Early in 2013, Australia's flag-carrier international airline, Qantas, announced a new global partnership with the UAE's Emirates. The new routes opened up through Emirate's Dubai hub cut flight time between Australia and Europe by two hours, while streamlining global connections for long-haul travel.

The Qantas Marketing Director tasked us to produce a series of Significance Landscapes over the first month of the new partnership, to identify and characterise brand opportunities and threats as expectation turned to experience for Qantas's valued passengers.

Shortly after the new routes opened up, stories started to appear in the Australian press, which claimed that the Dubai layovers meant that Islamic law would ban wine and pork from Qantas flights through the hub—a blow to Qantas's well-earned reputation for onboard food and wine service. Ongoing Landscapes clearly indicated that the significance of these stories grew rapidly, as their content was echoed and amplified in both traditional and social media.

Over the following weeks, we saw historical stories of Australians detained in Dubai for 'unacceptable behaviour' being referenced in the context of this story—the implication being that 'Australian behaviour in Dubai or on a Qantas/Emirates flight could lead to prison'.

Qantas was aware of criticism of its new 'Arab connection' in the Australian press, and assumed these negative stories were being driven by local voices, with whom it was already engaged via its issues team.

Emirates airline Dubai alcohol  
Emirates layover  
Emirates Industry  
Emirates deal  
Emirates first class  
Emirates airline issues  
Emirates airline Tim Clark  
Qantas Emirates Dubai law  
Emirates airline middle East  
Emirates issues management  
Qantas Dubai sex  
Emirates airline Airline Industry  
Emirates airline news  
Emirates airline Dubai law  
Emirates deal approval  
Emirates issues  
Qantas Emirates Dubai alcohol  
Emirates opinion  
Qantas share price  
Emirates Dubai law  
Emirates Dubai alcohol  
Qantas advertising  
Qantas Dubai law  
Emirates airline crew

Intensifying narratives, 5 April 2013

QANTAS INTERNATIONAL  
SINGAPORE  
EUROPE  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  
PORK PRODUCT  
MEAL LONDON  
SPOKESMAN SYDNEY  
MENU SYDNEY  
FOOD ALCOHOL  
PORK PRODUCTS  
PARTNERSHIP  
STEPHANIE PARTINGTON  
UNITED KINGDOM

REBECCA BLAKE  
CONOR MCREDMOND  
FIONA DAVIS  
MICHAEL COOPER  
STEPHANIE PARKINGTON

PRISON

Most Significant Topics,  
Significant Protagonists  
and Most Engaged  
Topics,  
5 April 2013



Sydney Morning Herald, 11 April 2013

Some of the less offensive comments on social media included the airline being referred to as "Al-Qantas" and "the flying Mosque-a-roo".

"No pork or pork products, announcements in Arabic, no alcohol ... who owns Qantas?" asked one user.

The move also made international news, including on the most-read news site in the world, [the Daily Mail](#), where the story attracted many comments, including a comment calling for a boycott of the airline voted among the "highest rated" comments on the site.

Qantas said on Tuesday it would not change its decision, despite the barrage of negative responses, many of them racist and some calling for the airline to be blackbanned.



The significance of the negative stories kept building. Landscape showed clearly that the media most significant to these narratives was in fact US-based: a cluster of online media closely affiliated with far-right firebrand Pam Geller. Rather than being an organic, Australian expression of local concerns, the narratives were driven by a global network with a single-minded, long-standing, anti-Islamic agenda. Turbulence indeed, but was a change of course needed?

The series of Landscapes delivered insight into the dynamics of that network , and indicated that it had a very short news cycle: our advice to Qantas was to monitor the network closely, but delay action on the global stage, while acting locally to engage with positive engagement on other fronts.

Following this advice, Qantas activated their relationship with Australian superstar chef Neil Perry, to reassure travellers that their inflight catering remained premium-class.

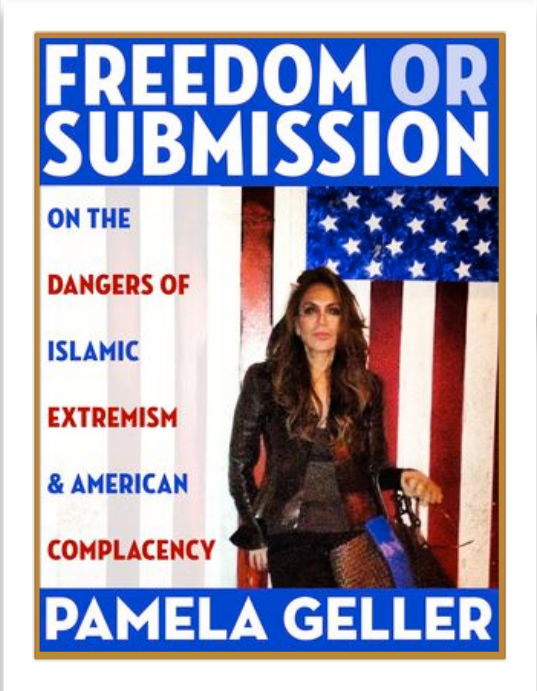
Meanwhile, we tracked the opinion-leaders on the global negative narratives.

As we predicted, the attention of this network shortly after swung to another story—the Boston marathon bombings. The Qantas/Islam narrative was then swiftly discarded by the key opinion leaders, and both local and global negative content creation dried up; a positive result without the need for a high-risk global engagement with single-issue zealots.

Clear skies ahead.

Most Significant Media  
'Emirates Dubai  
alcohol' narrative, 5  
April 2013

<a href="http://www.theaustralian.com.au">http://www.theaustralian.com.au</a>	326
<a href="http://atiasshrugs2000.typepad.com">http://atiasshrugs2000.typepad.com</a>	133
<a href="http://www.adelaidenow.com.au">http://www.adelaidenow.com.au</a>	107
<a href="http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au">http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au</a>	91
<a href="https://theconversation.com">https://theconversation.com</a>	90
<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubai_International_Airport">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubai_International_Airport</a>	78
<a href="http://www.smh.com.au">http://www.smh.com.au</a>	63
<a href="http://creepingsharia.wordpress.com">http://creepingsharia.wordpress.com</a>	54
<a href="http://www.perthnow.com.au">http://www.perthnow.com.au</a>	34
<a href="http://boardingarea.com">http://boardingarea.com</a>	26
<a href="http://www.qantas.com.au">http://www.qantas.com.au</a>	24
<a href="http://www.barenakedislam.com">http://www.barenakedislam.com</a>	22
<a href="http://www.7daysindubai.com">http://www.7daysindubai.com</a>	16
<a href="http://blogs.news.com.au">http://blogs.news.com.au</a>	14
<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">http://www.theage.com.au</a>	14
<a href="http://sheikyermami.com">http://sheikyermami.com</a>	12
<a href="http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au">http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au</a>	12



# Significance Landscape

## About the Product

Significance Landscape locates the deep, timeless narratives around any topic in any major language. It identifies and characterises the key opinion drivers and the most significant content, wherever it is: whether websites, traditional media, blogs or social media.

It exploits this unique capability, to map out the 'narrative landscape' which relates to a brand, threat or opportunity. Each Landscape clearly visualises the nature of engagement with those brands, threats or opportunities 'in the wild'. Whether your goal is to effectively approach, or to create distance from, those key drivers, this insight provides immediately-actionable intelligence on **what to say, how to say it, where to say it and to whom.**

# Significance Systems

## About Us

### Shape the Narratives That Shape Your World

Knowing **what to say, how to say it, where to say it and to whom**, empowers you to *focus your time and effort, to deliver better outcomes for your business.*

Our products rapidly analyse a **communications issue, sector, category or market need**, to quickly, accurately and securely identify the narratives on which to focus. They cost-effectively identify **what's likely to happen** to each particular narrative, and highlight the levers of **communications power**: the key media, the key people, the key messages.

We don't need any of your data to do this.

We work across the whole web, in any major language.

This sounds like social listening? It isn't. All our clients continue to use social listening to improve their customer care experience. Our products deliver strategic insight.

### Contact Us

<http://www.significancesystems.com>

AUS: [sydney@significancesystems.com](mailto:sydney@significancesystems.com)

UK: [london@significancesystems.com](mailto:london@significancesystems.com)