
Social Feed Manager Documentation

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George Washington University Libraries

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1	Introduction	3
1.1	Overview	3
1.2	Features	3
1.3	Current uses at George Washington University	3
1.4	Technical and staffing considerations	4
1.5	Development and community	4
2	Installation and Configuration	5
2.1	Background	5
2.2	Dependencies	5
2.3	Configuration	7
2.4	First time running SFM	8
2.5	Apache integration	10
2.6	What next?	11
3	Daily Operations	13
3.1	Administrative tasks	13
3.2	Data gathering	13
3.3	Account maintenance	14
3.4	Data movage	14
3.5	System considerations	15
4	Management Commands	17
4.1	Introduction	17
4.2	user_timeline	17
4.3	update_usernames	18
4.4	populate_uids	18
4.5	streamsample	19
4.6	filterstream	19
4.7	organizedata	20
4.8	fetch_tweets_by_id	21
4.9	fetch_urls	21
4.10	export	21
4.11	createconf	22
5	Using Supervisor to Manage Streaming Filters	23
5.1	Supervisor setup	23
5.2	Streamsample setup	24

5.3	Filterstream setup	25
5.4	OAuth constraints	25
6	Use Cases	27
6.1	Definitions	27
6.2	Lifecycle of a TwitterUser	27
6.3	State Transitions	27
7	CSV Export Data Dictionary	29
8	Frequently Asked Questions	31
8.1	Does Social Feed Manager capture photos and other media embedded in tweets?	31
8.2	How far back in time does SFM go when collecting a TwitterUser's tweets?	31
8.3	Does Social Feed Manager capture the followers list?	31
8.4	Do I have to set up supervisor in order to use filterstreams or streamsample?	31
8.5	The number of retweets in a TwitterItem is inconsistent with the number of retweets shown on the tweet in Twitter. Why?	31
8.6	Does the SFM web interface provide a way to view the files generated by filterstream and streamsample?	32
8.7	When I click on the link to view a raw tweet, it's difficult to read in my browser.	32
8.8	Can I set this up on a Mac?	32
9	Troubleshooting	33
9.1	TwitterUserItemUrls is empty. Why isn't SFM fetching URLs?	33
9.2	I tried to add a filterstream using the user that I've configured as TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER, but SFM is telling me that Streamsample is also configured to authenticate as that user. But I'm not using Streamsample!	33
10	Release Notes	35
10.1	m5_003 release notes	35
10.2	m5_002 release notes	36
10.3	m5_001 release notes	37
10.4	m4_002 release notes	37
10.5	m4_001 release notes	37
11	Indices and tables	39

Social Feed Manager is a Django application developed by George Washington University Libraries to collect social media data from Twitter. It connects to Twitter's approved API to collect data in bulk and makes it possible for scholars, students, and librarians to identify, select, collect, and preserve Twitter data for research purposes.

The application code is open source and [available on github](#).

We are in the process of re-architecting Social Feed Manager. For updates, see the [sfm-ui repo on github](#) and the project scope and background in its [wiki](#). When documentation for the new app is available, we will point to that from here.

Contents:

Introduction

1.1 Overview

Social Feed Manager is open source software for locally capturing public data from Twitter. It makes it possible for librarians, archivists, scholars, and students to:

- identify, select, collect, and preserve “at risk” social media data
- gather datasets of tweets in bulk for analysis in other software packages
- fill gaps in special collections
- archive the social media activity of their library or institution.

The software connects to Twitter’s approved public APIs to collect tweets by specific users, search current tweets by keyword, and filter by geolocation. We hope to add other social media platforms in the future.

1.2 Features

- Collects tweets account by account
- Queries streaming APIs by keyword, user, and geolocation
- Captures Twitter’s sample stream (currently ~0.5-1% of tweets)
- Manages multiple streams reliably
- Respectful of Twitter rate limits
- Groups tweets into sets for easier management
- CSV export, which can be uploaded into analysis software of the researcher’s choice
- Web-based interfaces for researchers / data users and administrators
- Command-line updates for application administrator
- Streaming data output to compressed rolling files in date/time hierarchy

1.3 Current uses at George Washington University

- The University Archives is gathering tweets by university offices and student organizations, capturing an aspect of student life whose main online presence is on social media

- Faculty in the School of Media and Public Affairs are studying how journalists, activist organizations, and members of Congress tweet
- Students in digital journalism are learning how to analyze tweets to inform reporting
- Computer science faculty are using tweet datasets to train machine learning algorithms

1.4 Technical and staffing considerations

Social Feed Manager is locally hosted and requires a system administrator to set up and manage the application in a Linux (Ubuntu 12.04) environment. Storage requirements vary depending on usage of the application: collecting data account-by-account requires less storage than connecting to the streaming APIs, which accumulates large files.

Archivists, librarians and other service administrators, as determined by the library, use a web-based interface to add new Twitter users, specify keyword queries, and create sets of accounts. Researchers may directly download user timeline data from the web interface after signing into the site from an institutional IP address and using their own Twitter credentials. Currently, all captured user timeline data is available in the researcher interface and is not separated by researcher account. Accessing files generated from the streaming APIs requires mediation by a system administrator.

1.5 Development and community

Social Feed Manager was developed at The George Washington University Libraries in 2012 as a prototype application and is now being supported by multiple developers and an *IMLS Sparks! Innovation Grant* <<http://www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=19>>¹. Several libraries and archives have installed it and are providing feedback to help prioritize development of new features.

The software is available for use, study, copying, and modification under a free and open source software license (MIT license). We welcome others to become involved in the project and contribute to the code.

1.5.1 Contact us

- [sfm-dev Google Group](#)
- Developers responsible for the app include Dan Chudnov (@dchud), Dan Kerchner (@dankerchner), Ankushi Sharma (@ankushis), and Laura Wrubel (@liblaura).

1.5.2 Resources

[Social Feed Manager on Github](#)

[Google Group](#) (updates about new releases and discussion of features)

¹ Institute of Museum and Library Services Grant LG-46-13-0257

Installation and Configuration

2.1 Background

Social Feed Manager is not a simple “click to run” application. It is best if you or somebody you can work with has some experience as a unix/linux systems administrator when attempting to install this application. It’s not the world’s most complicated app, but you will need to install system software and configure it, set up a database, get application credentials from Twitter, and then use all of that to configure and run SFM, which is a python/django application that plugs into a web server. If these are new tasks for you, you might want to work with another person with a little more experience.

Another key consideration is platform. At GW Libraries we develop, test, and run SFM strictly on Ubuntu LTS servers (virtual machines, actually), so these docs reflect that. If you want to install SFM into another environment you will be on your own to some degree. But if you stick with Ubuntu LTS (currently 12.04) these instructions should work for you if you follow them precisely.

We develop and run SFM inside a virtualenv, which is a commonly used sandbox / isolation technique for Python applications. This allows a Python application and its third-party library dependencies to be installed into one independent virtual environment for the app side-by-side with other applications (and perhaps their own virtualenvs) on the same system, or even alongside multiple versions of SFM itself. There are many benefits to using virtualenv for this purpose. We strongly recommend that you do the same, and these instructions will guide you.

2.2 Dependencies

These instructions assume you have a brand new Ubuntu 12.04 LTS server.

SFM is developed and managed using Ubuntu 12.04, Python 2.7, PostgreSQL 9.1+, Apache 2+, and other dependencies we’ll run into in a moment. If you want to use something else, you’re on your own, but let us know and please feel welcome to submit a pull request with your own suggestions.

First, install these system-level packages:

```
% sudo apt-get install git apache2 python-dev python-virtualenv postgresql libxml2-dev libxslt1-dev
```

(Optionally, change to the directory where you wish to install SFM. Your user will need write permissions here.)

Next, get this code using git:

```
% git clone https://github.com/gwu-libraries/social-feed-manager.git
```

Change directory into the social-feed-manager folder:

```
% cd social-feed-manager
```

To run a tagged release (tagged releases are listed at <https://github.com/gwu-libraries/social-feed-manager/releases>), rather than the latest development code (i.e. the “master” branch), then check out the appropriate tag:

```
% git checkout m5_004
```

Create and activate a virtualenv:

```
% virtualenv --no-site-packages ENV
% source ENV/bin/activate
```

Note that the first command creates a virtualenv, and the second command activates it. For nearly all of the following instructions, we assume you are active in the virtualenv you just created.

Prep PostgreSQL, the database SFM uses. First, update `/etc/postgresql/9.1/main/pg_hba.conf` to enable local database connections or otherwise as you prefer. Note that there’s more than one way to do this, so if this is new to you, read this background information, or ask a friendly sysadmin for help.

```
http://www.postgresql.org/docs/9.1/static/auth-pg-hba-conf.html
```

For example, you could add a line like this (you will probably need to use `sudo` to edit the file):

```
local    all                    all                                md5
```

When you’ve edited `pg_hba.conf`, save it, then restart postgresql.

```
% sudo service postgresql restart
```

When that succeeds, `su` to the `postgres` account to create a postgresql user and database. Substitute your own preferred values for the all caps values below, but do use the single quotes around your password when you create it in the third line.

```
% sudo su - postgres
(postgres)% psql
postgres=# create user YOURSFMDBUSERNAME with createdb password 'YOURSFMDBPASSWORD';
CREATE ROLE
postgres=# \q
(postgres)% createdb -O YOURSFMDBUSERNAME sfm -W
Password: YOURSFMDBPASSWORD
(postgres)% (ctrl-d to log out of postgres acct)
```

Now install the python library requirements in your virtualenv using `pip`. This might take a few minutes. This step requires that you successfully installed all of the system-level packages above. Note that these python packages are being installed into your virtualenv, not system-wide, which is what we want. They will only be available while you are in this activated virtualenv.

You’ll need to be using at least version 6.0 of `pip`, which you can check with `pip --version`. You can upgrade to the latest version of `pip` with `pip install pip --upgrade`.

Now to proceed with using `pip` to install SFM’s python library requirements in your virtualenv:

```
% pip install -r requirements.txt
```

That should be everything you have to install. Now it’s on to configuring the SFM app itself. Progress!

2.3 Configuration

Now we'll configure the SFM app itself. Before we do, though, did you go through all of the steps above? If not, or if you're using a different platform, you might have different results. So now's a good time to check that each of these tasks is done:

- installed system-level dependencies using `apt-get install`
- cloned the social-feed-manager repo using `git`
- activated the virtualenv sandbox for your sfm setup
- configured postgresql, restarted it, created a db and a user
- installed app-level dependencies in the sfm virtualenv using `pip`

If you haven't done all of these, please go back and be sure you do.

Next we configure the SFM app, which takes a few steps:

- set configuration parameters for SFM itself
- obtain Twitter API credentials and specify them in the SFM config
- set up the database

If you aren't already there, `cd` into the `social-feed-manager/sfm` directory first:

```
% cd sfm
```

Django uses a `settings.py` file for most configurations; SFM also uses a second `local_settings.py` file for installation details like database name and user and Twitter API authentication information. We include a template version of that file in the `social-feed-manager/sfm/sfm` directory to make it easy to get started. You'll copy that to your own `local_settings.py` file and edit that to specify your configuration.

Copy the template to your own local settings file:

```
% cp sfm/local_settings.py.template sfm/local_settings.py
```

Edit this file and set appropriate values for just these parameters at first, we'll go back later and get the rest:

- `ADMINS` (specify your name and email address in the format provided)
- `DATABASES` (`NAME`, `USER`, `PASSWORD` as you defined for postgres above; `HOST` should be `'localhost'` assuming your database and application are on the same server, as per these instructions.)
- `DATA_DIR` (create a directory to hold data files, then specify it here; use a new directory that is not inside the `social-feed-manager` directory)
- `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER` (the name of the twitter account you'll use to connect to the API; we'll specify the other `TWITTER_*` settings in a bit)

Next, do the same for the `wsgi.py` file, copy its template to a new file specific to your installation:

```
% cp sfm/wsgi.py.template sfm/wsgi.py
```

In this new file `wsgi.py`, uncomment just the three lines below the one that starts with "if using a virtualenv...", then specify the location of your virtualenv in the second of these lines. When you're done, it should look something like this:

```
import site
ENV = '/home/dchud/social-feed-manager/ENV'
site.addsitedir(ENV + '/lib/python2.7/site-packages')
```

WSGI is a specification for connecting applications like SFM to web servers; this file tells a web server where to look for the SFM app and its dependencies on your system. We'll configure the web server later.

Our next step is critical - register your SFM instance with Twitter's "Application Management" page. Log in to Twitter using the account you specified as `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER`, then visit this page:

```
https://dev.twitter.com/apps/new
```

Here, create an app for your instance of SFM. In addition to the required values, set the application type to "read only", and give it a callback URL. The callback URL can be the same as your website URL, but you have to provide a value or the authorization loop between twitter/oauth and django-social-auth/sfm will not work correctly.

Did you give it a callback URL? Good. It's required. Really.

When you finish this process, you'll see a OAuth consumer key and secret for your SFM instance. At the time of this writing, they're located on the "API Keys" tab listed as the API key and the API secret. Use these as the values for these two settings in `local_settings.py`:

- `TWITTER_CONSUMER_KEY`
- `TWITTER_CONSUMER_SECRET`

These two settings along with `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME` should all be defined now with real values from your account and your SFM app's OAuth key/secret.

2.4 First time running SFM

There are several layers of "users" with SFM; the next steps are critical because if the users aren't lined up just right, SFM won't be able to use Twitter's API. It can be a little confusing, but it's important to understand what's going on here.

The first few layers of users are at the system-level. You are logged in to your machine using a system user; using that account, you installed system-level dependencies (with `sudo` or as root, perhaps). You also configured PostgreSQL and cloned SFM and installed SFM's dependencies with the system user. When you configured PostgreSQL you also created a user for PostgreSQL. The PostgreSQL user is what SFM uses to connect to the PostgreSQL database.

Next, there are two kinds of Twitter users we are interested in. First, you used your own Twitter account to register your SFM install with Twitter; the OAuth keys you received for that user allow SFM to connect to the Twitter API. This is separate from the accounts of Twitter users for which you want to collect tweets, which we'll also record in the system later, in the database, using SFM.

Finally, to log in and use SFM through the web, there are two kinds of SFM app-level users. You can have administrative accounts (we'll create one in a second), strictly for housekeeping purposes, and you can also have Twitter-authenticated users for day-to-day use (we'll create one of these too). The administrative accounts may be Twitter-authenticated, but they don't have to be.

This is all very confusing, yes, but it will make more sense in a few minutes.

First, we set up the database using the regular django method `syncdb`, but read the next three paragraphs first, they're important.

`syncdb` will use the settings you configured in `local_settings.py` to connect to the database and set up the tables SFM requires.

This will also ask you to create a superuser. Do this, and name it `sfmadmin`. Don't name it the same thing as your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER`. You will be prompted for an email address and password, fill these in and remember your password.

Did you call the superuser `sfmadmin`? Really? Good.

```
% ./manage.py syncdb
```

When that completes, we need to “migrate” the database to the most recent data model:

```
% ./manage.py migrate
```

When that completes, we’re ready to run the app, finally:

```
% ./manage.py runserver
```

By default, this will run SFM using Python’s built-in web server, on a high port number like 8000. If you are on a server that doesn’t allow web traffic through port 8000 through the firewall, but does allow port 8080, you can specify a host and port:

```
% ./manage.py runserver sfm.example.com:8080
```

This will start the web application on `sfm.example.com` at port 8080.

The built-in web server is really only good for development and testing, not production, but it does provide access to everything the app does.

Next, visit the webapp in your browser: <http://sfm.example.com:8080/>

You should see a blue bar at the top and a request to “Please log in” and a button to “Log in with Twitter”. Click that button, and now log in through Twitter using the account you specified in your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME`. Maybe your browser is still logged in with this account because you configured your SFM instance at Twitter and got your OAuth credentials with it, in which case, great.

If this works, it should bounce you back to your `sfm.example.com` site and you should see an empty SFM, with no users listed, but you should be reassured to see “log out YOURNAME” in the top blue bar. If that works, you’re in great shape.

Now, click “log out YOURNAME” and log out. Yes, log back out.

Next, in your browser, then, visit: <http://sfm.example.com:8080/admin>

You’ll see a different user/pass challenge. Here, enter the SFM app-level superuser name “sfmadmin” and password you created above when you ran `syncdb`. This should drop you into the admin screen. Under “Site administration” -> “Auth”, click “Users”. You should see two different app users, one called “sfmadmin” and another with your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME`. “sfmadmin” should have “Staff status” with a green checkmark; the other account does not, and has a red circle with a white minus sign. If you see all this, you are in good shape.

Next, click on “Home”, then under “Social_Auth”, click “User social auths”. On the next screen you should see one user, with your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME`. Click the number next to its name, and you’ll see the OAuth access token for this user which allows SFM to connect to the Twitter API.

Why doesn’t “sfmadmin” have a social auth? Because it only ever logged in to SFM. The `sfmadmin` account is only for your housekeeping needs; the other account can be used to connect and read data from the API.

What’s the social auth? These are credentials that allow your SFM instance to connect to Twitter’s API on behalf of your Twitter account. `sfmadmin` never logged in through Twitter, so it doesn’t have one, and it doesn’t need one.

If this is still confusing, try this: log out again, then grab a colleague and have them log in to your SFM using their own Twitter account (with the “Log in with Twitter” button on the home page). After they’re done, log them out of SFM, then log back in using `sfmadmin` and the `/admin` URL. Under the Auth -> Users list, and in User social auths, you’ll see their new `sfm` account. Get the difference now?

The OAuth credentials you got when you registered your SFM instance allow SFM to connect to the Twitter API to do things like let users log in to SFM themselves through Twitter. Then, when you finally do connect to the Twitter API to get data, you’ll use a combination of your app-level OAuth credentials and the access token for your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER` or another credentialed user to get that data.

So let's do that now.

Logged in to the `/admin` page using your `sfmadmin` administrative account, go Home, then under “Ui” click “Twitter users”. There shouldn't be any yet - these are the names of accounts you want to collect. At the top right, click “Add twitter user”, and on the next screen, enter the name “bbcnews” (no quotes, though!), which is a good example because it's active all the time. At the bottom right, click “Save”.

If this succeeds, you should see that user “BBCNews” is now added to your system as a twitter user. Note that it's “BBCNews”, not “bbcnews” - when you clicked “Save”, SFM did the following:

- connected to Twitter's API using your `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER` account credentials
- queried Twitter's API for a user named “bbcnews”
- found the account “BBCNews” and its info
- stored this as a new `TwitterUser` in SFM, using the case-corrected name form

If it didn't work, double-check your spelling.

This is the easiest way to add users to SFM.

Now that you've added a `TwitterUser`, let's fetch its recent tweets.

Back in your terminal window, enter:

```
% ./manage.py user_timeline
```

Sit back and watch for a bit. SFM will connect to Twitter's API and make a series of calls to fetch 200 recent tweets at a time, up to 3200 total, pausing between each call. The numbers 200 and 3200 aren't arbitrary, they are set by Twitter (see https://dev.twitter.com/docs/api/1.1/get/statuses/user_timeline for details). SFM abides by Twitter's API and pauses regularly so that it can stay within the API's rate limits.

You are now up and running with SFM.

2.5 Apache integration

To run SFM in production, we recommend integrating with apache using WSGI. It's straightforward and well-tested. You will need to copy a configuration file into apache's `sites-available` directory, edit that file to match your installation details, enable that site (and optionally disable other versions), then restart apache. Let's get started.

First, copy our apache configuration template to `sites-available`. We like to append the appname “sfm” with the version number, e.g. `sfm_m5_004.conf`, so when we go to deploy a new version, we can just add a new config file and make the switchover easy. You could just call it `sfm.conf` if you want, but it can help to have the version number in there, so these instructions use that convention.

```
% sudo cp sfm/apache.conf /etc/apache2/sites-available/sfm_m5_004.conf
% sudo vim /etc/apache2/sites-available/sfm_m5_004.conf
```

You will need to change several things in this file:

- change references to `/PATH/TO/sfm` to the full absolute path to your `social-feed-manager/sfm` directory
- change references to `YOUR-HOSTNAME.HERE` to your public hostname
- change the reference to `/PATH/TO/YOUR/VENV` to the full absolute path to your virtualenv (ending in `ENV`) which you created above
- change the reference to `python/2.X` to `2.7`

When you've made all those changes, save the file.

Next, enable the site configuration you just created:

```
% sudo a2ensite sfm_m5_004
```

Assuming you are installing in a clean VM, disable the pre-existing default site:

```
% sudo a2dissite 000-default
```

Reload the apache configuration, as it suggests when you made the changes above:

```
% sudo service apache2 reload
```

That's it! It should be working now.

If you run into any problems, check the logs in `/var/log/apache2/`.

2.6 What next?

Some options for what to do next:

- add more `TwitterUsers` and run `user_timeline` again
- set up cronjobs for `user_timeline` and other [daily operations](#)
- [set up supervisord](#) and use it to capture one or more streams
- sign up to <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/sfm-dev> to ask questions or suggest improvements
- track SFM progress, file bug/enhancement tickets, fork the code and submit pull requests at: <https://github.com/gwu-libraries/social-feed-manager>

Daily Operations

SFM is not a set-it-and-forget-it kind of application. Things change constantly on social media platforms like Twitter, so we have to check constantly for these changes and act appropriately. For example, if you haven't yet read our summary of the [lifecycle of a TwitterUser](#), read it now and come back, you'll see what we mean.

We have added several commands and tweaks to the data model to account for these changes as we've been running SFM for the past few years. Please read through the descriptions below and consider how they should apply in your scenario, as well as what might be missing that you will want to supply yourself for your own environment, or perhaps to add to SFM itself and submit back to the project. There are likely to be more of these to come as more people use the app, and we welcome your ideas.

3.1 Administrative tasks

Once you have successfully [installed SFM](#) the first task is to add app users; if at least one other person will be using the app, go to the `/admin/` url and sign in with the administrative system account you created during installation. Under "Auth -> Users" you can add one or more additional SFM users (ask them to set their password). Once you've saved a new user, you can edit them from the list of Users and give them "superuser" status if you want them to be able to add users like you can with your own admin account. If one of these people ever leaves your organization or stops using the app, you can set their account to inactive by unchecking the "Active" box on their user edit page, too, instead of deleting their account entirely. Note that this functionality is all provided out-of-the-box by Django itself, with no custom SFM code.

An alternate way to add a user is to let them sign in at the `/` url by authenticating through Twitter. The advantage of this approach is that SFM will save a copy of authorized OAuth tokens for their account, which you can use later to manage a stream-based filter for that user. Once someone logs in successfully this way, you can edit their account under `/admin/` just like any other SFM user, but note that you can end up with two different SFM accounts for the same person by accident if you use both methods.

3.2 Data gathering

Now that you and your colleagues have accounts for your SFM, you can add TwitterUsers. This is the simplest way to capture data using SFM. From `/admin/` under "UI -> Twitter Users" add Twitter accounts to capture by their names, one by one, by entering their account name in the "Name" box. Be careful to spell it correctly! SFM will look up that account by name and verify that it's a public account, and will then store the Twitter UID. Try adding a few accounts.

Now that there are a few TwitterUsers in your database, to capture their recent tweets, use the `user_timeline` management command. Run the command once, and you'll see updates of the data-fetching process on the commandline. As it proceeds, you can go to `/` in your app and you'll see the data start to appear in the UI. You can also go to `/admin/`

and see these same tweets in the admin UI under “UI -> Twitter user items”. Finally, there will be a separate record of the `user_timeline` “job” you ran under “UI -> Twitter user timeline jobs”.

As you capture tweets this way, you might want to create a record of the urls linked to by shortened urls in tweet text. To do this, use the `fetch_urls` command.

Note that as you add more and more TwitterUsers and their tweet data, both of these commands can take a long time – even many hours – to run. It takes a while because SFM abides by the rate limits defined by the Twitter API, leaving a little multi-second buffer between every call to the API so the app never goes over the limits. The more users you’re collecting, the longer it will take.

Both the `user_timeline` and `fetch_urls` commands are well suited to being automated with something like a cronjob. There are subtle issues to consider here, though, namely that whenever you fetch a user’s tweets, the metadata associated with each tweet will be accurate as of the moment you fetch it, rather than from the moment the tweet was originally published. This means that the first time you grab, say, 500 old tweets from a TwitterUser you just added, *every* one of those 500 tweets will contain exactly the same follower/following counts on the TwitterUser. Also, if that 500th tweet you capture is only five minutes old, then the retweet count on your capture of that tweet only accounts for the five minutes of that tweet’s existence. Older tweets may have correspondingly higher retweet numbers.

It’s important to understand these issues because how regularly you capture tweets using `user_timeline` will determine how accurate these numbers are. If it is important to you to see how following/follower counts change tweet by tweet, you’ll want to run `user_timeline` often. If it’s important to get an accurate retweet count on each tweet, you might want to run it less often. Either way, there will be a bit of a sliding time gap over the range of tweets you capture at any given time because of these implementation details of the Twitter API, and the relative accuracy for a given purpose of the metadata you capture when you’ve captured it will vary accordingly. It also means that when you first capture a TwitterUser’s older tweets you will not be able to see how old tweets affected their follower/following counts. These details might be important to users of the data you collect, so please familiarize yourself with them.

At GW Libraries, as of July 2014, we track about 1,800 TwitterUsers, running the `user_timeline` command on a cronjob every six hours. We run the `fetch_urls` command on a cronjob once a day, limiting (with the optional start and end date parameters) to the previous day’s tweets. Each of these jobs takes several hours to complete. Our PostgreSQL database for SFM uses over 6Gb in production, and a complete export of the database to a single file compresses to about 1.5Gb.

3.3 Account maintenance

Due to the many changes that can occur on a single TwitterUser account (as described in [lifecycle of a TwitterUser](#)), you should run `update_usernames` regularly as well. Because SFM uses the Twitter uid of a TwitterUser rather than the name to capture new data, `user_timeline` will continue to work if SFM doesn’t have an updated username even after the Twitter account name changes, but it’s best all around if you have a record of the changes over time, and if you’re never too far out of date. At GW Libraries we’ve found that running it once a week during the weekend suffices.

If the `user_timeline` or `update_usernames` scripts report errors, such as an account no longer being available, or no longer being public, you can deactivate a TwitterUser the `/admin/` UI under “UI -> TwitterUsers”, just search for that account by its name or uid, click on its SFM id when you find it, then uncheck the “Is active” box on the TwitterUser edit page. When a TwitterUser is inactive, `user_timeline` will no longer check for new tweets, saving time and rate limit capacity. You can always re-activate a TwitterUser later if its account changes again.

3.4 Data movage

If you are using one or more [Supervisor-d-managed streams](#) to capture filtered queries live off the Twitter hose or the sample stream, you will want to establish an appropriate set of scripts to handle the resulting files. SFM has no opinion about how you manage digital content, aside from a bias toward gzipping text files at regular intervals. :) You might

want to set up a cronjob pipeline to package up files using BagIt, or move them to another server, or whatever works for you, but keep in mind that these files can grow to fill up gigabytes and terabytes of storage quickly.

SFM does provide the *organizedata* management command to walk through a set of gzipped stream files and sort them into a year/month/date/hour-based folder structure. This is optional, but we find it convenient to spread files out on a filesystem, and for the scripts we're working with to post-process files we generate at appropriate time intervals.

3.5 System considerations

These are outside of the scope of SFM proper, but worth keeping in mind.

It is best to establish a regular snapshot backup of the PostgreSQL SFM database, and to rotate those files to a secondary storage environment. This can help both with testing new versions of the software and should you ever otherwise need to restore your database from scratch.

The same logic holds for taking a snapshot backup of your configuration files, such as your `local_settings.py` and apache config file. These should be relatively easily reproduceable - you can get your OAuth keys back from Twitter, for example - but it can be a pain to have to do so.

At GW Libraries we have a twice-daily cronjob that performs these operations.

Management Commands

4.1 Introduction

Many of the key back-end functions of Social Feed Manager (SFM) are invoked using management commands. The SFM management commands are standard [Django management commands](#). As such, they are invoked like any other Django management commands:

1. First make sure that your virtualenv is activated.

```
$ source ENV/bin/activate
```

2. From `<PROJECT_ROOT>/sfm`, execute `./manage.py` followed by the desired management command, arguments and options.

```
$ cd sfm
$ ./manage.py <command> [args] [options]
```

SFM management commands may be run:

- manually (i.e. at the command line),
- using cron jobs, and/or
- using supervisor (in the case of filterstream and streamsample) as described in the section on [supervisor and streams](#).

Each SFM management command is described below.

4.2 user_timeline

`user_timeline` calls the Twitter API to retrieve the available tweets for either all *active* TwitterUsers in SFM, or for a specific *active* TwitterUser. Each tweet is created as a TwitterItem in SFM.

`user_timeline` connects to the Twitter API as `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME`, and requests the `user_timeline` by the Twitter account uid (not by account name). Through the tweepy library, it calls the [Twitter API user_timeline method](#).

For each TwitterUser `user_timeline` requests only tweets since the newest tweet that was previously retrieved. If no tweets were previously retrieved for that TwitterUser, it requests as many tweets as the Twitter API will provide (up to the 3200 most recent tweets).

To fetch tweets for all active TwitterUsers in SFM:

```
./manage.py user_timeline
```

To fetch tweets for a specific twitter user:

```
./manage.py user_timeline --user='twitter username'
```

The full specification of `user_timeline` options can be viewed using `-help`:

```
./manage user_timeline --help
```

Sample output for `user_timeline`:

```
user: pinkfloyd
since: 1
saved: 200 item(s)
since: 1
max: 326988934884249599
saved: 200 item(s)
since: 1
max: 168992796676591616
saved: 199 item(s)
since: 1
max: 117550550098247679
saved: 86 item(s)
stop: < 150 new statuses
```

4.3 update_usernames

Twitter account owners can, and often do, change the names of their accounts, although an account's UID never changes.

`update_usernames` looks up the names of the Twitter accounts corresponding to all active `TwitterUsers`. If a Twitter account's name has changed since SFM last verified the account's name, `update_usernames` will update the name of the `TwitterUser`, and will append the former name (and timestamp) to the `TwitterUser`'s `former_names` value. `former_names` is a json field; an example would be:

```
{"2014-02-19T21:50:56Z": "OldName", "2014-01-16T13:49:02Z": "EvenOlderName"}
```

Note that `update_username` is case sensitive; a change in capitalization *is* considered a name change.

To update names of all active `TwitterUsers`:

```
./manage.py update_usernames
```

To update names of a specific active `TwitterUser`, by its current name in SFM:

```
./manage.py update_usernames --user='current TwitterUser name in SFM'
```

4.4 populate_uids

Deprecated since version m5₀₀₁.

4.5 streamsample

The Twitter API provides a streaming interface which returns a random sample (approximately 0.5%) of all public tweets. The SFM *streamsample* management command directs the content of this stream to files. The location of these output files is determined by the `DATA_DIR` variable in the `local_settings.py` configuration file. As *streamsample* is intended to be run as an ongoing, streaming process, SFM provides a `streamsample.conf.template` file in `<PROJECT ROOT>/sfm/sfm/supervisor.d` that can be copied to `streamsample.conf` and edited to include the relevant pathnames, so that it can be run and managed using supervisor.

streamsample currently generates 2 GB worth of tweet data per day (roughly 2.2-2.5 million tweets), so it is important to plan storage capacity accordingly.

To run manually and view streaming output to the console:

```
./manage.py streamsample
```

To run manually and direct output to files in `DATA_DIR`:

```
./manage.py streamsample --save
```

Information on the Twitter API *streamsample* resource: <https://dev.twitter.com/docs/api/1.1/get/statuses/sample>

4.6 filterstream

The Twitter API provides a streaming interface which returns tweets that match one or more filter predicates. SFM administrative users can create multiple `TwitterFilters`, each with its own predicate parameters. The SFM *filterstream* management command directs the content of one or more active `TwitterFilters` to files. The location of these output files is determined by the `DATA_DIR` variable in the `local_settings.py` configuration file.

filterstream is intended to be run as a set of ongoing, streaming processes; SFM automatically generates the necessary supervisor configuration files. However, generation of these files requires the `DATA_DIR`, `SUPERVISOR_PROCESS_USER`, and `SUPERVISOR_UNIX_SOCKET_FILE` settings variables to be configured in `local_settings.py`.

Each `TwitterFilter` may contain the following predicates:

Words - It tracks comma-separated and space-separated list of words performing a fetch for tweets equivalent to logical 'OR' & 'AND' respectively. Please see the TwitterAPI for more info on track.

People - It tracks the twitter usernames to stream, can contain a comma-separated list of screen names.



Location - Geographic bounding boxes to track. A bounding box is of the format: `long1,lat1,long2,lat2` where each value is a floating-point number between -180 and 180. This parameter may include multiple bounding boxes; for example, two bounding boxes would be a comma-separated list of 8 values.

Sample twitterfilter rule:

Django administration

Home > Ui > Twitter filters > 145

Change twitter filter

Name:	<input type="text" value="loc_only"/>
	<small>Name of this TwitterFilter</small>
User:	<input type="text" value="DanKerchner"/>  
	<small>Account to use for authentication</small>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is active	
Words:	<input type="text" value="python Django, swift, rubyonRails"/>
	<small>List of keywords to track, words separated with space & comma are tracked as 'AND' & 'OR' respectively. See the track parameter documentation for more information.</small>
People:	<input type="text" value="github"/>
	<small>Space-separated list of user IDs for which tweets, retweets, and mentions will be captured. See the follow parameter documentation for more information.</small>
Locations:	<input type="text" value="-122.75,36.8,-121.75,37.8"/>
	<small>Specifies a set of bounding boxes to track. Specify only the coordinates, no special characters. See the locations parameter documentation for more information.</small>

filterstream takes the parameter `twitterfilterid`. To run manually and view streaming output to the console:

```
./manage.py filterstream [twitterfilterid]
```

To run manually and direct output to files in `DATA_DIR`, say for `twitterfilterid` 4:

```
./manage.py filterstream 4 --save
```

Information on the Twitter streaming API filter method: <https://dev.twitter.com/docs/api/1.1/post/statuses/filter>

4.7 organizedata

filterstream and *streamsample* produce sets of data files in the directory determined by `DATA_DIR` as configured in `local_settings.py`. The data files are written as rotating files; periodically (as determined by `SAVE_INTERVAL_SECONDS` in `local_settings.py`) each file is closed and subsequent data is written to a new file. The naming scheme for each data files includes a timestamp. Over time, this can create many files in the `DATA_DIR` directory.

The *organizedata* command organizes these files by creating subdirectories named “sample” to data files from *stream-sample*, and “twitterfilter-*n*” for data files from *filterstream*, for each TwitterFilter.

Within `<DATA_DIR>/sample` and each `<DATA_DIR>/twitterfilter-n` directory, *organizedata* creates a tree with a subdirectory for each year; within each year directory, it creates a subdirectory for each month; within each of these, a subdirectory for each day.

To run *organizedata*:

```
./manage.py organizedata
```

4.8 fetch_tweets_by_id

Each tweet in Twitter has a unique numerical ID. The *fetch_tweets_by_id* management command takes a file consisting of a list of tweet IDs (one per line), and fetches the associated tweets as JSON.

Errors are logged to a file given the same name as the input file (specified by *-inputfile*) with an appended extension of `.log` (e.g. `myinputfile.log`)

To fetch tweets and output to the console:

```
./manage.py fetch_tweets_by_id --inputfile='<PATH TO YOUR INPUT FILE>'
```

To fetch tweets and write to an output file:

```
./manage.py fetch_tweets_by_id --inputfile='<PATH TO YOUR INPUT FILE>' --outputfile='<PATH TO YOUR O
```

4.9 fetch_urls

Links in tweets are often link-shortened. *fetch_urls* iterates through all tweets (`TwitterItems`), extracts each URL found in a tweet and creates a `TwitterUserItemUrl` for it, and expands the URL if possible. The final URL is stored as part of the `TwitterUserItemUrl` object.

Note that *fetch_urls* extracts and expands URLs that are links to web pages as well as embedded media (photos etc.) which are generally `t.co` URLs.

fetch_urls can be run with the following options:

- `-start-date` – The earliest date of tweets to fetch URLs for
- `-end-date` – The latest date of tweets to fetch URLs for
- `-twitter-user` – The specific twitter username to fetch URLs for
- `-limit` – maximum number of URLs to fetch
- `-refetch` – include tweets for which URLs were already fetched; refetch URLs for these tweets.

To run:

```
./manage.py fetch_urls
```

4.10 export

Tweets stored in SFM associated with a `TwitterUser` or a `TwitterUserSet` can be exported in CSV (comma-separated value), Excel or line oriented JSON using the *export* management command. The user interface also offers CSV exports via a link on each `TwitterUser`'s page (currently there is no page in the UI for a set).

The format and meaning of each column in the CSV and Excel export is explained in the [Data Dictionary](#).

export can be run with the following options. Either *twitter-user* or *set-name* must be specified.

- format* – the output format, either CSV, XLS or JSON (default is CSV)
- start-date* – exports only tweets starting from the specified date (YYYY-MM-DD)
- end-date* – exports only tweets through the specified date (YYYY-MM-DD)
- twitter-user* – exports tweets for the specified *TwitterUser* (by name)
- set-name* – exports tweets for the specified *TwitterUserSet*
- filename* – file name for export file (required when –*xls* is used)

To export tweets for Twitter user “*sfmtwitteruser*”:

```
./manage.py export --twitter-user sfmtwitteruser
```

To export tweets for *TwitterUserSet* “*myset*”:

```
./manage.py export --set-name myset
```

4.11 createconf

The *createconf* command is used to create *supervisord* configuration files for each active *TwitterFilter*. This command should only need to be run if *TwitterFilters* were created in SFM prior to version m4₀02, as part of upgrading to SFM version m4₀02 or later.

createconf can be run with the *–twitter-filter* option, to create a *supervisord* configuration file only for the specified *TwitterFilter* (specified by numeric id).

To create configuration files for all active *TwitterFilters*:

```
./manage.py createconf
```

To create configuration files for *TwitterFilter* 5:

```
./manage.py createconf --twitter-filter 5
```

Using Supervisor to Manage Streaming Filters

Social Feed Manager uses `supervisord` to manage the `filterstream` and `streamsample` processes. As streaming processes, these are intended to be run on a continuous, ongoing basis, to collect tweets over time. Supervisor is a process control system that, among other features, manages the SFM streaming processes independently from the SFM web application, and can restart these processes if they fail or after a system reboot.

Twitterfilters and/or `streamsample` *can* still be run independently of `supervisord` if desired (e.g. for testing), by invoking them at the command line as [management commands](#).

5.1 Supervisor setup

Supervisord is installed as part of the standard SFM installation; it is one of SFM's ubuntu package dependencies. However, it must be configured in order to use filterstreams.

5.1.1 Configuring the supervisor process

To configure `supervisord` for SFM:

Edit `/etc/supervisor/supervisord.conf`:

In the `[unix_http_server]` section, add `chown=www-data:www-data` so that the socket file will be created with `www-data` as the owner (apache runs as the `www-data` user)

In the `[include]` section (in a new instance of supervisor, this is usually at the bottom) add `supervisor.d/*.conf` to the space-separated list of files:

```
files = /etc/supervisor/conf.d/*.conf <PATH_TO_YOUR_SFM>/sfm/sfm/supervisor.d/*.conf
```

NOTE: If you wish to modify (add/enable/remove/disable) filterstreams when running the app with django “run-server” rather than apache, you will need to ensure that the supervisor socket file has 777 permissions. After the `chown=www-data:www-data` line in `supervisord.conf`, modify the default `chmod=700` line to `chmod=777`.

5.1.2 Configuring the www-data system group

Next we will create a `www-data` group and add your user to it:

```
$ sudo vi /etc/group
```

You should see a line that looks something like this:

```
www-data:x:<a group number>:
```

add your own user to this group:

```
www-data:x:<a group number>:<your user name>
```

5.1.3 Setting up the log directory

Next, create a `/var/log/sfm` directory. The supervisor-supervised processes will write log files to this directory.

```
$ sudo mkdir /var/log/sfm
```

Change the directory group ownership to `www-data`:

```
$ sudo chown www-data:www-data /var/log/sfm
```

Edit `local_settings.py` to set `SUPERVISOR_PROCESS_OWNER` to a user who has rights to write to `/var/log/sfm` (such as your user).

5.1.4 Setting up the data directory for stream output

Edit `local_settings.py` to set `DATA_DIR` to the directory where you want stream output stored. Change its ownership to `www-data:www-data`:

```
$ sudo chown www-data:www-data <YOUR DATA DIRECTORY>
```

5.1.5 Setting ownership of `sfm/sfm/supervisor.d`

Set ownership of the `sfm/sfm/supervisor.d` directory to `www-data:www-data` allow the apache user (`www-data`) to write to it.

```
$ sudo chown www-data:www-data sfm/sfm/supervisor.d
```

5.1.6 Optional configurations

You may also wish to adjust `SAVE_INTERVAL_SETTINGS`, which controls how often `sfm` will save data to a new file (default is every 15 minutes, specified in `settings.py`).

5.1.7 Restarting supervisor

Finally, restart supervisor:

```
$ sudo service supervisor stop
$ sudo service supervisor start
```

5.2 Streamsample setup

A template streamsample configuration file “`streamsample.conf.template`” is included in the SFM distribution. To set up a streamsample process managed by supervisor:

Browse to the `supervisord.d` directory and copy `streamsample.conf.template` to `streamsample.conf`

```
$ cd sfm/sfm/supervisor.d
$ cp streamsample.conf.template streamsample.conf
```

Edit `streamsample.conf` to use the path to your `sfm` project, the value of the `PATH` environment variable set within your `virtualenv`, and to use your preferred system user account (to avoid having the output files owned by `root`).

To have supervisor refresh its list of configuration files and start the `streamsample` process, first run `supervisorctl`:

```
$ sudo supervisorctl
```

If you don't see a line that reads something like:

```
streamsample RUNNING pid 889, uptime 21:45:25
```

then at the supervisor prompt, run 'update' to reload the config files:

```
$ supervisor> update
```

Running update should result in the following message:

```
streamsample: added process group
```

Now verify that `streamsample` has been started by viewing the status of the processes:

```
$ supervisor> status
```

This should result in a list of processes which includes `streamsample`, for example:

```
streamsample RUNNING pid 889, uptime 21:45:25
```

To stop the `streamsample` process, run `supervisorctl` and use the command

```
$ supervisor> stop streamsample
```

5.3 Filterstream setup

`TwitterFilters` in SFM are intended to create filterstream Twitter processes.

While `streamsample` must be started and stopped using `supervisorctl`, supervisor's management of `TwitterFilter` processes is mediated by the SFM application.

SFM creates configuration files for filterstream processes when an administrative user adds new `TwitterFilters` in SFM. The files are created in the `sfm/sfm/supervisor.d` directory. SFM takes care of updating supervisor so that it starts the new filterstream process.

If an administrative user modifies an existing, active `TwitterFilter`, SFM deletes the old configuration file for that `TwitterFilter`'s filterstream process, writes a new configuration file containing the `TwitterFilter`'s updated parameters, and restarts the filterstream process.

If an administrative user deactivates or deletes a `TwitterFilter`, SFM deletes the configuration file for that `TwitterFilter`'s filterstream process, and stops the filterstream process.

5.4 OAuth constraints

To avoid triggering the Twitter API's rate limiting constraints, every SFM streaming connection must use a different set of Twitter credentials. SFM does not allow active filterstreams to run using the same Twitter credentials as `streamsample`, or as any other active filterstream.

The streamsample process connects to the Twitter API using the TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME set in local_settings.py. Each Filterstream process connects to the Twitter API using the User configured in its TwitterFilter.

6.1 Definitions

A *TwitterUser* in SFM is the entity used to collect tweets tweeted by the corresponding account in Twitter.

The fundamental, unique, unchanging identifier for a Twitter account is its numeric UID. The owner of a Twitter account might change the account's name, but the UID will never change.

Each *TwitterUser* is intended to map one-to-one to a Twitter account.

Given the rules above, we can derive two rules:

- A *TwitterUser* account should never be associated with tweets from more than one UID.
- A *TwitterUser* account's UID should never change.

6.2 Lifecycle of a *TwitterUser*

A *TwitterUser* in SFM exists in one of three states:

- *Nonexistence (Pre-creation/Post-deletion)*
- *Active* - SFM will attempt to collect new tweets for this *TwitterUser*, every time the *user_timeline* script is run.
- *Inactive* - The *TwitterUser* is still in SFM, but no new tweets will be collected while the *TwitterUser* is inactive.

An account in Twitter exists in one of four states:

- *Pre-creation*
- *Active/Public* - Tweets are visible to anyone
- *Active/Protected* - Tweets are only visible to this account's Twitter followers
- *Deactivated/Deleted* - If an owner deactivates a Twitter account, Twitter places it on a queue to be permanently deleted after 30 days.

6.3 State Transitions

TwitterUser Creation - The SFM user provides the username of the Twitter account to map to this SFM *TwitterUser*. SFM looks up the Twitter account's UID by the username provided. If:

- the username matches a Twitter account's username, and

- the Twitter account's UID is not already associated with any TwitterUser

then SFM will create the TwitterUser. The SFM user may create the new TwitterUser as either Active or Inactive.

If the name does not match any Twitter account OR the UID is already associated with a TwitterUser, then SFM will not create the TwitterUser, even in an Inactive state.

Inactivation of Active TwitterUser - An SFM user marks an Active TwitterUser as Inactive. This transition is always allowed. Inactive TwitterUsers are still shown on the SFM page listing users, and CSV extracts

Activation of Inactive TwitterUser - An SFM user marks an Inactive TwitterUser as Active. SFM looks up the corresponding Twitter account by the UID of the TwitterUser. If the UID is valid, it updates the TwitterUser's name if differs from the current name of the Twitter account, and saves the TwitterUser as Active. If the UID is not found, which may occur if the Twitter account has been deactivated, then SFM does not allow the TwitterUser to be saved as Active.

Deletion of a TwitterUser - An SFM administrative user deletes a TwitterUser. This is always allowed. However, it is important to note that *all TwitterItems associated with this TwitterUser will also be deleted.*

Name Change - What if the owner of a Twitter account changes the name of the account? If the TwitterUser in SFM was created to collect tweets from this Twitter account, it should continue to do so, since the UID never changes. However, the name of the TwitterUser may temporarily still show the old name of the Twitter account. If a cron job has been set up to run `update_usernames`, then the name of the TwitterUser will automatically be updated to match the new Twitter account name the next time `update_username` is run. When `update_username` observes a name change, the old name will be appended to the TwitterUser's `former_names`, along with the date and time that the change was detected by `update_usernames`. As an example, if a Twitter account named `NYTimes` was then changed to `NewYorkTimes`, then the `update_usernames` script would update the name of the TwitterUser, and would also append to `former_names` so it might have a value like `{"Thu Jan 16 13:48:56 2014": "NYTimes"}`

Twitter Account Goes Protected - What if the owner of a Twitter account marks the account as protected?

If the `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USERNAME` configured in `local_settings.py` is a Twitter account which is following the protected Twitter account in question, then SFM will continue to be able to download tweets from that account.

If this is not the case, then `user_timeline` jobs will encounter errors when attempting to retrieve new tweets for the account. These errors will be recorded in the `TwitterUserTimelineErrors` table.

Twitter Account Deletion - What if the owner of a Twitter account deletes the account?

If the owner of a Twitter account deletes the account and there is an active TwitterUser mapped to the account, then `user_timeline` jobs will encounter errors when attempting to retrieve new tweets for the account. These errors will be recorded in the `TwitterUserTimelineErrors` table.

CSV Export Data Dictionary

Social Feed Manager captures entire tweets, with all their data. To download selected, processed fields for each tweet in a user timeline, use the csv export option, available on each user page.

For more info about source tweet data, see the [Twitter API documentation](#), including [Tweets](#) and [Entities](#).

Field	Description	Example
sfm_id	SFM internal identifier for tweet	6114
created_at	UTC time when the tweet was created	2013-10-28T17:52:53Z
created_at_date	date in Excel-friendly format, MM/DD/YYYY	10/28/2013
twitter_id	Twitter identifier for the tweet	114749583439036416
screen_name	The screen name, handle, or alias that this user identifies themselves with. Screen_names are unique but subject to change.	NASA
followers_count	Number of followers this account had at the time the tweet was harvested	235
friends_count	Number of users this account is following at the time the tweet was harvested	114
retweet_count	Number of times the tweet has been retweeted at the time the tweet was harvested. If the tweet is a retweet AND the retweet was done using the Twitter retweet feature (i.e. is_retweet_strict = TRUE) the retweet_count reflects the retweet count for the original tweet. If the retweet was done by typing RT at the beginning (is_retweet_strict = FALSE) the retweet_count reflects retweets of the retweet.	25
hashtags	Hashtags which have been parsed out of the tweet text, separated by a comma and space	Mars, askNASA
in_reply_to_screen_name	If the tweet is a reply, the screen name of the original tweet's author	wiredscience
mentions	Other Twitter users mentioned in the text of the tweet, separated by comma and space.	@NASA_Airborne, @NASA_Ice
twitter_url	URL of the tweet. If the tweet is a retweet made using the Twitter retweet feature, the URL will redirect to the original tweet	http://twitter.com/NASA/status/394883921303056384 retweet redirecting to original tweet: http://twitter.com/NASA/status/394875351894994944
is_retweet_tweet	Tweet is a retweet of another tweet, using Twitter's retweet function	FALSE
is_retweet_sfm	SFM's best guess at whether tweet is a retweet of another tweet; includes retweets accomplished using old-style method of placing RT in front of tweet	TRUE
coordinates	The geographic coordinates of the tweet. This is only enabled if geotagging is enabled on the account. The value, if present, is of the form [longitude, latitude]	[-0.22012208, 51.59248806]
text	The UTF-8 text of the tweet	Observing Hurricane Raymond Lashing Western Mexico: Low pressure System 96E developed quickly over the... http://t.co/YpffdKVrgm
url1	First URL in text of tweet, as shortened by Twitter	http://t.co/WGJ9VmoKME
url1_expanded	Expanded version of URL; URL entered by user and displayed in Twitter. May itself be a user-shortened URL, e.g. from bit.ly. Further expansion available in sfm web interface, not in csv export.	http://instagram.com/p/gA_zQ5IaCz/
url2	Second URL in text of tweet, as shortened by Twitter	
url2_expanded	Expanded version of URL; URL entered by user and displayed in Twitter. May itself be a user-shortened URL, e.g. from bit.ly. Further expansion available in SFM web interface, not in csv export	

Frequently Asked Questions

8.1 Does Social Feed Manager capture photos and other media embedded in tweets?

As of version m5, no. But this is something we're looking forward to implementing in the near term.

8.2 How far back in time does SFM go when collecting a TwitterUser's tweets?

The Twitter API only provides up to the most recent 3200 tweets for an account. When a new TwitterUser is added in SFM, the `user_timeline` script will request as many tweets as the Twitter API can provide, i.e. up to 3200.

8.3 Does Social Feed Manager capture the followers list?

No. SFM does capture the number of followers at the time the tweet was retrieved. However, the Twitter API does provide a way to retrieve an account's follower list.

8.4 Do I have to set up supervisor in order to use filterstreams or streamsample?

No, filterstreams and streamsample can also be run manually using the *filterstream* and *streamsample* management commands described in the management commands page.

8.5 The number of retweets in a TwitterItem is inconsistent with the number of retweets shown on the tweet in Twitter. Why?

TwitterItems are created as they appear at the time they are captured from Twitter. However, tweets on Twitter can change afterwards; they can be further retweeted, they can be deleted, etc. In fact, an advantage of using SFM is that it takes a snapshot of tweets before they change or disappear!

Currently there is no way to “update” a `TwitterItem` with any changes that may have occurred to the corresponding tweet. This is something we might consider if there is a use case for it.

8.6 Does the SFM web interface provide a way to view the files generated by filterstream and streamsample?

Not yet.

8.7 When I click on the link to view a raw tweet, it’s difficult to read in my browser.

There are a number of browser plugins available (JSONovich, JSONView, and others) which improve the way that JSON is displayed.

8.8 Can I set this up on a Mac?

We haven’t been running this on a Mac, but a colleague we met at Code4Lib 2014 has done it. Check out his blog post here: <http://dicarve.blogspot.com/2014/04/an-relatively-easy-way-for-installing.html>

Troubleshooting

9.1 `TwitterUserItemUrls` is empty. Why isn't SFM fetching URLs?

Have you set up a cron job to run `fetch_urls`?

9.2 I tried to add a filterstream using the user that I've configured as `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER`, but SFM is telling me that `Stream-sample` is also configured to authenticate as that user. But I'm not using `Streamsample`!

SFM makes the assumption that `streamsample` either is being used or may be used in the future, and `streamsample` authenticates with the Twitter API using `TWITTER_DEFAULT_USER`. Due to Twitter API's rate limiting, SFM prevents the possibility of having multiple streams (in this case, `streamsample` and a `filterstream`) simultaneously calling the Twitter streaming API with the same Twitter user name.

Release Notes

Release notes for the official SFM releases. Each release note will tell you what's new in each version, and will also describe any backwards-incompatible changes made in that version.

For those upgrading to a new version of SFM, you will need to check all the backwards-incompatible changes and deprecated features for each 'final' release from the one after your current SFM version, up to and including the new version.

Final Releases:

10.1 m5_003 release notes

m5_003 is release which provides:

- Improvements to the extracts:
 - A header row with column titles has been added to the CSV version
 - A column has been added for ['coordinates'] when present in a tweet
- Efficiency improvements
 - Improvements to `fetch_urls`, making use of `django-queryset-iterator` and newer features of the `requests` library (thanks @cazzerson)
 - UID lookups by name are now done using a single bulk lookup API call
 - tweet rehydration (with the `fetch_tweets_by_id` management command) is now done using a bulk API call (thanks @edsu)
- Updated python dependencies, with `tweepy` version now pinned to 3.2.0 (prior to this, it was not pinned, and the app only worked with `=< 2.3.0`). `Requests` is now constrained to `> 2.4.1`
- Simplified naming scheme for the timestamped `filterstream` and `samplestream` files; colons have been removed from the naming scheme.
- Cleaner error messages in `add_userlist`. `add_userlist` now provides more readable and specific messages when an account name was found to be invalid or suspended.
- Elimination of blank lines between tweets written to zip files by `filterstream` (thanks @edsu). **NOTE: This may affect any scripts that read or process your filterstream output files.**
- Better use of the Twitter streaming API through SFM `TwitterFilters`. Rewrote `TwitterFilter` parsing of `Words`, `People`, and `Location` fields. These parameters now leverage the full capability of Twitter's streaming API, as follows:

- *Words* (passed to Twitter `track` parameter). Commas between terms function as logical ORs; spaces between terms function as logical ANDs. More information at [Twitter’s documentation of the streaming request parameters](#).
- *People* (passed to the Twitter `follow` parameter). This parameter is now a comma-separated list of valid Twitter usernames. Twitterfilters already present in SFM will be migrated as part of the database migration required for m5_003. Prior to m5_003, People values had been sent (incorrectly) as account names rather than uids; they are now sent as uids. Since the People parameter had been a space-separated list, People values are migrated to comma-separated lists. The migration script also looks up and stores the Twitter id for each account in the People list; accounts whose ids were not found (e.g. suspended accounts, accounts not found, etc.) are logged in the migration log file. When updating or saving a Twitterfilter in m5_003, SFM checks the validity of each of the values in the People list and will not allow saving to proceed if it contains an account name whose id cannot be found.
- *Locations* (passed to the Twitter `locations` parameter). This parameter should be a comma-separated list of numeric values, which each value between -180 and 180. Each set of 4 values defines a geographic bounding box (long, lat, long, lat); a list of 8, 12, etc. values would define multiple bounding boxes. While this parameter has not changed, m5_003 provides improved validation.

NOTE: The requirements.txt file has changed, so upgrading to m5_003 requires updating python library dependencies within your virtualenv. To update dependencies:

```
% source ENV/bin/activate
% pip install -r requirements.txt
```

NOTE: Upgrading to m5_003 requires running a database migration. To run the migration:

```
% ./manage.py migrate ui
```

The migration number is 0026. If any active TwitterFilters contained People values for which Twitter uids were not available (for example, if the account was not found or was suspended), then a migration log file, `0026_migration.log`, is generated, listing the account names for which uids were not available.

See the [complete list of changes for milestone m5_003](#) in [github](#).

10.2 m5_002 release notes

m5_002 is release which provides:

- a new management command, `add_userlist`, to add a list of users in bulk. This command can also add the new users to a `TwitterUserSet`
- a new `/status` page available to admin users. This page displays the current status of all supervisor-d-managed SFM streams
- a new `-list` option for the `filterstream` management command, to display the current status of all supervisor-d-managed SFM streams
- improvements to the CSV export
- links available in the UI header are now consistent across different pages
- an Excel (`.xls`) download link available on user timeline pages
- a new management command to export user timelines in `.xls` format
- encoding improvements in the CSV export
- improved instructions for supervisor-d setup and configuration
- minor documentation fixes

See the [complete list of changes](#) for milestone m5_002 in [github](#).

10.3 m5_001 release notes

m5_001 is release focused primarily on documentation. SFM now has substantial documentation on what it does, how it works, and how to use it.

Documentation contains a list of docs explaining:

- getting started
- the installation and working of Social Feed Manager
- its current use cases, where and how it's used now, and its scopes of enhancements
- user lifecycle
- features; how you can use them and automate them
- FAQ and troubleshooting

For more details visit the [Social Feed Manager docs](#).

Non-Documentation Issues and Bugfixes

- #146 - Improved validation and error handling for `TwitterUser.name`

See the [complete list of changes](#) for milestone m5_001 in [github](#).

10.4 m4_002 release notes

m4_002 improves process management under Supervisor. Previously it was necessary to start and stop SFM's supervisor-managed processes using the `supervisorctl` tool at the command line.

With m4_002, SFM now automatically starts and stops twitterfilter processes when `TwitterFilters` are created, activated, deactivated, or deleted by an SFM admin user.

A new management command, `fetch_tweets_by_id`, was also added. Given a list of tweet ids, the command fetches the associated tweets as JSON.

Significant issues and bugfixes

- #89 - Added management command to fetch tweets by a list of tweet ids.
- #154 - Enabled supervisor to pick up new twitterfilter conf files and initiate processes correctly.

See the [complete list of changes](#) for milestone m4_002 in [github](#).

10.5 m4_001 release notes

m4_001 introduces collecting expanded urls in tweets, improves use of supervisor to manage multiple processes, and enhances organizedata to better structure data files. It also fixes bugs related to supervisor and cleans up twitteruser status and filterstream issues.

If you are upgrading an existing SFM instance from a version prior to m4_001, to m4_001 or newer, and your instance contains active `TwitterFilters`, then you will need to run the `createconf` management command.

Enhancements

Social Feed Manager has `streamsample` and `filterstream` management commands which are used to fetch random or filtered twitter feeds. These management process are automated using `supervisord`. `Supervisord` manages the `streamsample` and `filterstream` processes, starting and stopping these processes when required.

Supervisord control:

- #135 - `streamsample` and `filterstream` are managed by `supervisord`, SFM no longer requires manual run of these commands, if `supervisord` is set up, everything is handled by `supervisord`. This is done using the `post_save` signal sent from the UI to initiate these processes.
- #133 - Twitter API doesn't allow parallel streams like `streamsample` and `filterstream` to run concurrently with the same authorization credentials, so run a validation in the admin UI when adding the filters using `twitterfilter`, and validate that active streams do not conflict.
- #170 - To simplify naming, renamed rules in admin UI to `twitterfilter` and throughout SFM.

Twitter data organization:

- #132 - Re-fit `organizedata` to use subdirs for different filters.
- #119 - Added command and table to fetch and store expanded form of urls found in tweets.

Other issues and bugfixes

- #177 - Refactored signal call to `createconf` to be specific to the appropriate filter.
- #150 - Better handling of deactivation of `TwitterUser` status for no-longer Twitter-valid accounts, validating and throwing errors if name is not unique.

See the [complete list of changes for milestone m4_001 in github](#).

Indices and tables

- `genindex`
- `modindex`
- `search`