

Web 2.0 – The Web’s Edge

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Social Networking / Social News Groups – Class # 12 Chapter 1

What is Social Networking?

Social networking is the grouping of people into groups usually based on some common interest or relationship. Although this can happen in person, it has become very popular online using a social networking website.

Social networking sites are websites that connect people into an online Internet community. The members usually share a common interest such as hobbies, locale, values, dating, business, politics, etc. Once you join a social network, you can begin to socialize with other members by reading the profile pages and contacting them. You can also find other members by browsing or by specific key word searches. As with a physical social network, an online social network gives you the ability to meet others through your immediate friends, which makes it easy to establish networks of contacts.



How a Social Network is similar to a Computer Network

Recall that the Internet began with just a few interconnected computers. Eventually as more “nodes” were added to the network, it became a “network of networks”. Social networks follow a similar pattern. Beginning with just one or two friends, through them, you can expand your network to many friends or contacts.

A New Means of Communication

Social networking has emerged as a new way to **communicate and share information**. Social networking websites are being used regularly by millions of people, companies and businesses.

Web 1.0 vs Web 2.0

Web 1.0 websites connected “pages”. Web 2.0 websites **connect “people and communities.”**

Social Networking Summary

- The members usually have something in common
- Members share things (information, photos, video, comments)
- Has ability to interact with others and to form relationships
- The network provides a service, therefore it offers you something
- The network provides tools to use
- You can claim people as friends
- You can follow people
- You can browser or search for people or groups
- **Something of value (to the member), ultimately is obtained from the social network**

Most Social Networks have the Following in Common:

- Profile - contains basic information such as where you live and how old you are, etc
- Friends or connections – members that have permissions to interact with you in some way - form the unit of the social networking site
- Groups – way to connect with people on a similar interest topic
- Discussions – provide some sort of service to interact
- Blogs – many social networks provide a blog to help keep your friends up to date
- Widgets – to add interactivity to your page

Why Join a Social Network?

Social networking can be looked upon as a form of entertainment, especially for the 18 – 25 year age group. They are a great for meeting people with similar interests, and can be a very effective means to promote a business or seek employment.

The most popular, MySpace and Facebook, also have groups, which are feature-rich chat boards for members. A popular professional social networking site, LinkedIn, offers sections for jobs, service provider recommendations, and questions. All allow users to find people they know among the members, or look for other members with similar interests or affiliations.

Social network analysis views social relationships in terms of nodes and ties. Nodes are the individual actors within the networks, and ties are the relationships between the actors. The resulting graph-based structures are often very complex. There can be many kinds of ties between the nodes.

Popular Social Networks



MySpace (www.myspace.com)

Founded in 2003, has over two-hundred and fifty million subscribers, with actors, authors, musicians and comedians counted among them. Businesses are not displaying MySpace profiles.



Facebook (www.facebook.com)

Founded by Mark Zuckerberg, it was designed as a social networking site for Harvard students. After spreading from Harvard through the university ranks and down into high school, Facebook was opened to the public in 2006.



Hi5 (www.hi5.com)

A fast-growing social network with a strong base in Central America, Hi5 has over fifty million users worldwide.




Ning: (www.ning.com)

A social network for creating social networks, founded by Marc Andreessen (Netscape) and Gina Bianchini in October 2004

 **Friendster** (www.friendster.com)

Founded in 2002, Friendster is one of the web's older social networking services. The site currently has over 50 million users.

 **Socializr** (www.socializr.com)

Started by Johnathan Abrams, founder of Friendster, Socializr lets you share information about local parties, dinner or lunch get-togethers and any other type of event

 **LinkedIn** (www.linkedin.com)

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social network dedicated to helping professionals maintain a list of connections. These connections can then be used to find a job, find out more about potential employers including which of your contacts might be able to refer you, and fill your own job vacancies through the social network.

 **Last.fm** (www.last.fm)

Last.fm is a UK-based Internet radio and music community website, founded in 2002. It claims over 30 million active users based in more than 200 countries.

Who Uses Social Networks?

Nielsen Online, an analytics firm that tracks time spent online at various websites, has issued a report finding that throughout 2008 **social networking sites and blogs saw more time spent by users than personal email**. While not shocking, the finding does mark an important point in the history of the web.

Youth watchers have long argued that for young people, email is how you communicate with elders in formal situations, while social networks and SMS are the preferred method of communication among peers.

Nielsen found, however, that Facebook in particular saw greater growth among older people than it did among the young. This shift has primarily been driven by **Facebook, whose greatest growth has come from people aged 35-49 years** (+24.1 million). From December 2007 through December 2008, Facebook added almost twice as many 50-64 year old visitors (+13.6 million) than it had under-18 year old visitors (+7.3 million).

Social News Sites

A Social news site can be thought of as a social network, as it is a community based on a common theme or activity.

The term social news refers to websites where users submit and vote on news stories, articles or other Web links (photos, videos), thus determining which ones are most note worthy. The votes, will determine which articles will be given more visibility. These news articles or media are “shared” within the community and with the general public. Since the members are the ones doing the voting, it is the “collective” power of the community that shapes the content and direction of the website.

Social news is also a place for commenting on articles. It takes articles from various places and puts them all in one spot where the community can discuss them. If you are the type that likes to speak your mind, social news can give you a platform for your thoughts.

For bloggers, social news can also be used to generate traffic. This is especially effective if the subject of your blog coincides with a popular subject on the social news site.



Digg (www.digg.com)

Digg, started in 2004 by Kevin Rose, and Jay Adelson, is the most popular example of a social news website and probably the most well know. Digg is so named because users 'digg' articles they agree with and 'bury' articles they don't agree with. Articles are listed down the page with a brief description and a voting tag that prominently displays how many diggs the article has received. Users can choose to view listings of popular articles and upcoming articles. Upcoming articles are new articles that have not received enough diggs to make it to the popular listing.



Reddit (www.reddit.com)

Launched in 2005, Reddit is a social news website that displays news based on your personal preferences and what the community likes. Your preferences are determined based on your history of voting stories up or down.



Propeller (www.propeller.com)

Propeller is a user-driven social content site, similar to Digg. it has a control panel that will list out related articles while viewing a specific article. It was first launched in June 2006 under the Netscape domain, but now is separate.



Newsvine (www.newsvine.com)

Instead of letting an editor choose which stories are newsworthy, Newsvine publishes the entire Associated Press wire the second it becomes available. Stories have “Digg-like” up arrows, which along with user input is what controls placement of stories on the Newsvine site. In addition, article has an area for comments which builds on the community feel of the site. Newsvine also relies on users to point to, or “seed” the good stories they find around the web. Thousands of stories are seeded by users every day. Newsvine also gives users personal columns to express themselves.

Social Network Aggregators

Many social network sites have widgets that allow you to aggregate content from other social networks. A social network aggregator is an application (website, similar to feed aggregator) that allows you to collect content from multiple social network services, such as MySpace or Facebook. It helps a user consolidate multiple social network profiles into one.



FriendFeed (www.friendfeed.com)

FriendFeed enables you to keep up-to-date on the web pages, photos, videos and music that your friends and family are sharing. It offers a unique way to discover and discuss information among friends. FriendFeed automatically imports shared stuff from sites across the web, so if your friend favorites a video on YouTube, you get a link and a thumbnail of the video in your feed. And if your friend likes a news story on Digg, you get a link in your feed. FriendFeed makes all the sites you already use a little more social.



Plaxo (www.plaxo.com)

Plaxo builds a social network around third-party data. Plaxo Pulse allows users to stay connected to their friends' content updates across different social networks and platforms. Users can receive updates in a feed, and can easily keep tabs on friends from one location.