Social media

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Social media are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques. Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue.

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content."[1] Businesses may also refer to social media as consumer-generated media (CGM). A common thread running through all definitions of social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value.[citation needed]

A Venn diagram of social media

Social media may have been integral to the Arab revolutions and revolts of 2011.[2][3] As one Cairo activist succinctly put it, "'We use Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world."[4] However, there is some debate about the extent to which social media facilitated this kind of change.[5]

Contents

Distinction from industrial media

People obtain information, education, news and other data from electronic media and print media. Social media are distinct from industrial or traditional media, such as newspapers, television, and film. They are relatively inexpensive and accessible to enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information, compared to industrial media, which generally require significant resources to publish information.

One characteristic shared by both social media and industrial media is the capability to reach small or large audiences; for example, either a blog post or a television show may reach no people or millions of people. Some

of the properties that help describe the differences between social media and industrial media are:

1. Reach - both industrial and social media technologies provide scale and are capable of reaching a global audience. Industrial media, however, typically use a centralized framework for organization, production, and dissemination, whereas social media are by their very nature more decentralized, less hierarchical, and distinguished by multiple points of production and utility.
2. Accessibility - the means of production for industrial media are typically government and/or privately owned; social media tools are generally available to the public at little or no cost.
3. Usability - industrial media production typically requires specialized skills and training. Conversely, most social media production does not require specialized skills and training, or requires only modest reinterpretation of existing skills; in theory, anyone with access can operate the means of social media production.
4. Immediacy - the time lag between communications produced by industrial media can be long (days, weeks, or even months) compared to social media (which can be capable of virtually instantaneous responses; only the participants determine any delay in response). However, as industrial media begin adopting aspects of production normally associated with social media tools, this feature may not prove distinctive over time.
5. Permanence - industrial media, once created, cannot be altered (once a magazine article is printed and distributed changes cannot be made to that same article) whereas social media can be altered almost instantaneously by comments or editing.

Community media constitute an interesting hybrid of industrial and social media. Though community-owned, some community radios, TV and newspapers are run by professionals and some by amateurs. They use both social and industrial media frameworks.

In his 2006 book, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*, Yochai Benkler analyzed many of these distinctions and their implications in terms of both economics and political liberty. However, Benkler, like many academics, uses the neologism network economy or "network information economy" to describe the underlying economic, social, and technological characteristics of what has come to be known as "social media".

Andrew Keen criticizes social media in his book *The Cult of the Amateur*, writing, "Out of this anarchy, it suddenly became clear that what was governing the infinite monkeys now inputting away on the Internet was the law of digital Darwinism, the survival of the loudest and most opinionated. Under these rules, the only way to intellectually prevail is by infinite filibustering."[6]

Tim Berners-Lee contends that the danger of social networking sites is that most are silos and do not allow users to port data from one site to another. He also cautions against social networks that grow too big and become a monopoly as this tends to limit innovation.[7]

There are various statistics that account for social media usage and effectiveness for individuals worldwide. Some of the most recent statistics are as follows:

- Social networking now accounts for 22% of all time spent online in the US.[8]
- A total of 234 million people age 13 and older in the U.S. used mobile devices in December 2009.[9]
- Twitter processed more than one billion tweets in December 2009 and averages almost 40 million tweets per day.[9]
- Over 25% of U.S. internet page views occurred at one of the top social networking sites in December 2009, up from 13.8% a year before.[9]
- Australia has some of the highest social media usage in the world. In usage of Facebook Australia ranks

highest, with over 9 million users spending almost 9 hours per month on the site.[10][11]

- The number of social media users age 65 and older grew 100 percent throughout 2010, so that one in four people in that age group are now part of a social networking site.[12]

Social media, Marketing, and "social authority"

One of the key components in successful social media marketing implementation is building "social authority". Social authority is developed when an individual or organization establishes themselves as an "expert" in their given field or area, thereby becoming an influencer in that field or area.[14]

Business metrics (revenues, reputation...)

Social media analytics (share of voice, resonation, support response...)

It is through this process of "building social authority" that social media becomes effective. That is why one of the foundational concepts in social media has become that you cannot completely

Engagement Data (clicks, fans, followers, views, check-ins...)

Social media ROI pyramid[13]

control your message through social media but rather you can simply begin to participate in the "conversation" in the hopes that you can become a relevant influencein that conversation.[15]

However, this conversation participation must be cleverly executed because while people are resistant to marketing in general, they are even more resistant to direct or overt marketing through social media platforms. This may seem counter-intuitive but is the main reason building social authority with credibility is so important. A marketer can generally not expect people to be receptive to a marketing message in and of itself. In the Edleman Trust Barometer report (http://www.edelman.com/trust/2008/) in 2008, the majority (58%) of the respondents reported they most trusted company or product information coming from "people like me" inferred to be information from someone they trusted. In the 2010 Trust Report (http://www.edelman.co.uk/trustbarometer/files/edelman-trust-barometer-2010.pdf) , the majority switched to 64% preferring their information from industry experts and academics. According to Inc. Technology's Brent Leary, "This loss of trust, and the accompanying turn towards experts and authorities, seems to be coinciding with the rise of social media and networks."[16][17]

Thus, using social media as a form of *marketing* has taken on whole new challenges. As the 2010 Trust Study (http://www.edelman.com/trust/2010/) indicates, it is most effective if marketing efforts through social media revolve around the *genuine* building of authority. Someone performing a "marketing" role within a company **must** *honestly* convince people of their *genuine* intentions, knowledge, and expertise in a specific area or industry through providing valuable and accurate information on an ongoing basis without a marketing angle overtly associated. If this can be done, trust with, and of, the recipient of that information – and that message itself – begins to develop naturally. This person or organization becomes a thought leader and value provider - setting themselves up as a trusted "advisor" instead of marketer. "Top of mind awareness" develops and the consumer naturally begins to gravitate to the products and/or offerings of the authority/influencer.[16][18]

Of course, there are many ways authority can be created – and influence can be accomplished – including: participation in Wikipedia which actually verifies user-generated content and information more than most people may realize; providing valuable content through social networks on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter; article writing and distribution through sites such as Ezine Articles and Scribd; and providing fact-based answers on "social question and answer sites" such as EHow and Yahoo! Answers.

As a result of social media – and the direct or indirect influence of social media marketers – today, consumers are as likely – or more likely – to make buying decisions based on what they read and see in platforms we call "social" but only if presented by someone they have come to trust. Additionally, reports have shown organizations have been able to bring back dissastisfied customers and stakeholders through social media channels.[19] This is why a purposeful and carefully designed social media strategy has become an integral part of any complete and directed marketing plan but must also be designed using newer "authority building" techniques.[20]

Examples

The Dutch man Ramon Stoppelenburg traveled around the world for free, without spending any money, from 2001 to 2003, thanks to his blog on Letmestayforaday.com (http://www.letmestayforaday.com) . His website was his profile with which he created his own necessary network of online offered places to stay for the night. This made Stoppelenburg one of the first people online who used the online media in a social and effective manner.

Social media can take on many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure) Kaplan and Haenlein created a classification scheme for different social media types in their Business Horizons article published in 2010. According to Kaplan and Haenlein there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing, and voice over IP, to name a few. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms.

Communication

- **Blogs**: Blogger, ExpressionEngine, LiveJournal, Open Diary, TypePad, Vox, WordPress, Xanga
- **Microblogging**: FMyLife, Foursquare, Jaiku, Plurk, Posterous, Tumblr, Twitter, Qaiku, Google Buzz, Identi.ca Nasza-Klasa.pl
- **Location-based social networks**: Foursquare, Geoloqi, Gowalla, Facebook places, The Hotlist, Google Latitude
- **Social networking**: ASmallWorld, Bebo, Cyworld, Diaspora, Facebook, Hi5, Hyves, LinkedIn, MySpace, Ning, Orkut, Plaxo, Tagged, XING , IRC, Yammer
- **Events**: Eventful, The Hotlist, Meetup.com, Upcoming
- **Information Aggregators**: Netvibes, Twine (website)
- **Online Advocacy and Fundraising**: Causes, Kickstarter

Collaboration/authority building

- **Wikis**: PBworks, Wetpaint, Wikia, Wikimedia, Wikispaces
- **Social bookmarking** (or social tagging):[21] CiteULike, Delicious, Diigo, Google Reader, StumbleUpon, folkd
- **Social Media Gaming**: Empire Avenue[22]
- **Social news**: Digg, Mixx, NowPublic, Reddit, Newsvine
- **Social navigation**: Trapster, Waze [23]
- **Content Management Systems**: Wordpress, Drupal, Plone
- **Document Managing and Editing Tools**: Google Docs, Syncplicity, Docs.com, Dropbox.com

- **Collaboration**: Central Desktop

Multimedia

- **Photography and art sharing**: deviantArt, Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa, SmugMug, Zooomr
- **Video sharing**: sevenload, Viddler, Vimeo, YouTube, Dailymotion, Metacafe, Nico Nico Douga, Openfilm
- **Livecasting**: Justin.tv, Livestream, OpenCU, Skype, Stickam, Ustream, blip.tv, oovoo, Youtube
- **Music and audio sharing**: ccMixter, Pandora Radio, Spotify, Last.fm, MySpace Music, ReverbNation.com, ShareTheMusic, The Hype Machine, Groove Shark, SoundCloud, Bandcamp, Soundclick, imeem.
- **Presentation sharing**: scribd, SlideShare

Reviews and opinions

- **Product reviews**: epinions.com, MouthShut.com
- **Business reviews**: Customer Lobby, Yelp, Inc.
- **Community Q&A**: Askville, EHow, Stack Exchange, WikiAnswers, Yahoo! Answers, Quora, ask.com

Entertainment

- **Media and entertainment platforms**: Cisco Eos
- **Virtual worlds**: Active Worlds, Forterra Systems, Second Life, The Sims Online, World of Warcraft, RuneScape
- **Game sharing**: Kongregate, Miniclip, Newgrounds, Armor Games
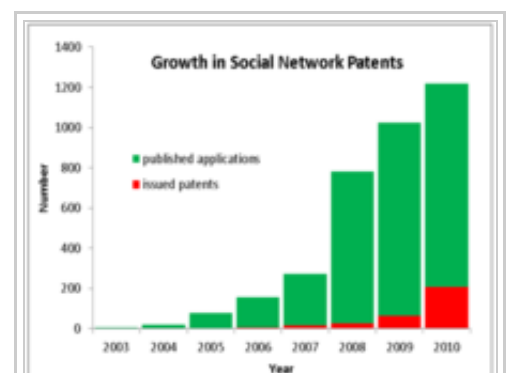
Brand monitoring

- **Social media measurement**: Attensity, General Sentiment, Radian6, Statsit, Sysomos, Vocus

Patents

There has been rapid growth in the number of US patent applications that cover new technologies related to social media. The number of published applications has been growing rapidly over the past five years. There are now over 250 published applications.[25] Only about 10 of these applications have issued as patents, however, largely due to the multi-year backlog in examination of business method patents[26]

Number of US social network patent applications published per year and patents issued per year[24]

See also

- Brand infiltration
- Citizen media
- Connectivism (learning theory)
- Human impact of Internet use#Internet and political revolutions
- Metcalfe's law
- MMORPG

- Networked learning
- New media
- Online research community
- Participatory media

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