Social Media Backgrounder
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Definition of Social Media

Social Media is any website that allows for interaction from multiple parties. This means that you as a user can add commentary and your input. This is considered "Web 2.0". In Web 2.0, a website is about the interaction of both parties rather than just a one way transfer of information.. This can take the form of allowing commentary on content or allowing users to post their own content. Social media allows for more open communication and for users to add their opinions to content.

Web 1.0 vs. Web 2.0

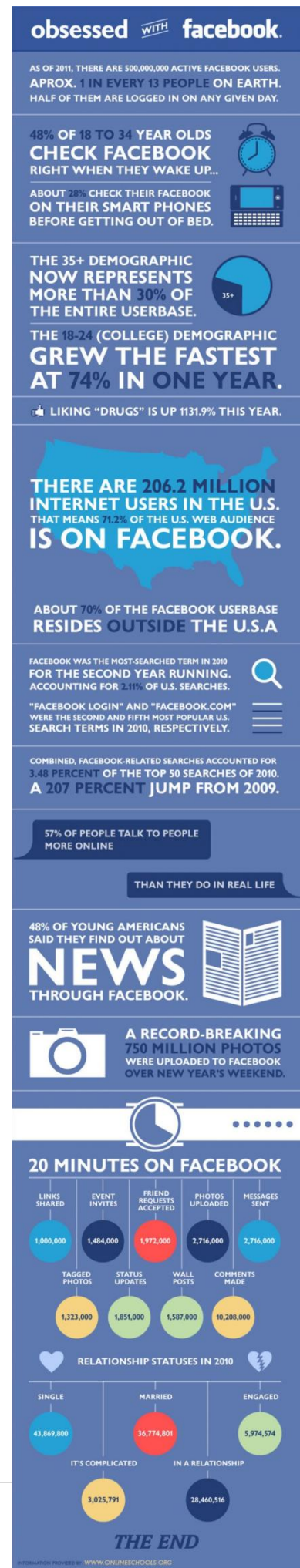| Web 1.0	→	Web 2.0
Double Click	→	Google
AdSense Ofoto	→	Flickr
Akamai	→	BitTorrent
Mp3.com	→	Napster
Britannica Online	→	Wikipedia
Personal websites	→	Blogging
Evite	→	Upcoming.org and EVDB
Domain name speculation	→	Search engine optimization
Page views	→	Cost per click
Screen scraping	→	Web services
Publishing	→	Participation
Content management systems	→	Wikis
Directories	→	Tagging
Stickiness	→	syndication

(O'Reilly, 2005)

Facebook

According to Facebook.com, it is a website that millions of people use everyday to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet.

This infographic on Facebook.com gives a general idea the scope that Facebook actually has and the impact that it has on its users (Kumar, 2011).

Businesses, nonprofits, and government organizations have used Facebook in a variety of ways to connect to their audiences. For instance, Victoria's Secret ran a promotion where once their hit their goal of a certain number of "Likes", they gave away a free panty. You had to "Like" them on Facebook in order to be able to print the coupon, and it was specifically related to their page by having the saying "You like this" and the symbolic thumbs up symbol from the website ("Free limited edition", 2011). Qdoba ran a similar promotion where they would give away a free burrito to every fan if they hit their goal (QdobaWI, 2011). While this campaign fell short, they still tried the same tactic. Facebook is about reaching your customers, and by offering incentives to follow their messages, these companies have found a reason for customers to want to follow what they are saying. Other examples of businesses using this medium are Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Coke has filled their page with a lot of interactive content for users such as videos and fan photos. Pepsi also has a large presence on Facebook with their Pepsi Refresh App. This application lets users vote for the Pepsi Refresh Project, which awards grants to worthy causes each month, without ever leaving Facebook ("Refresh the world.," 2011). Sephora has also edited their page a bit to be almost exclusively advertisements. Every inch of

obsessed WITH facebook.

AS OF 2011, THERE ARE 500,000,000 ACTIVE FACEBOOK USERS. APROX. 1 IN EVERY 13 PEOPLE ON EARTH. HALF OF THEM ARE LOGGED IN ON ANY GIVEN DAY.

48% OF 18 TO 34 YEAR OLDS CHECK FACEBOOK RIGHT WHEN THEY WAKE UP...

ABOUT 28% CHECK THEIR FACEBOOK ON THEIR SMART PHONES BEFORE GETTING OUT OF BED.

THE 35+ DEMOGRAPHIC NOW REPRESENTS MORE THAN 30% OF THE ENTIRE USERBASE.

THE 18-24 (COLLEGE) DEMOGRAPHIC GREW THE FASTEST AT 74% IN ONE YEAR.

LIKING "DRUGS" IS UP 1131.9% THIS YEAR.

THERE ARE 206.2 MILLION INTERNET USERS IN THE U.S. THAT MEANS 71.2% OF THE U.S. WEB AUDIENCE IS ON FACEBOOK.

ABOUT 70% OF THE FACEBOOK USERBASE RESIDES OUTSIDE THE U.S.A

FACEBOOK WAS THE MOST-SEARCHED TERM IN 2010 FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING. ACCOUNTING FOR 2.11% OF U.S. SEARCHES.

"FACEBOOK LOGIN" AND "FACEBOOK.COM" WERE THE SECOND AND FIFTH MOST POPULAR U.S. SEARCH TERMS IN 2010, RESPECTIVELY.

COMBINED, FACEBOOK-RELATED SEARCHES ACCOUNTED FOR 3.48 PERCENT OF THE TOP 50 SEARCHES OF 2010. A 207 PERCENT JUMP FROM 2009.

57% OF PEOPLE TALK TO PEOPLE MORE ONLINE

THAN THEY DO IN REAL LIFE

48% OF YOUNG AMERICANS SAID THEY FIND OUT ABOUT NEWS THROUGH FACEBOOK.

A RECORD-BREAKING 750 MILLION PHOTOS WERE UPLOADED TO FACEBOOK OVER NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND.

20 MINUTES ON FACEBOOK

LINKS SHARED	EVENT INVITES	FRIEND REQUESTS ACCEPTED	PHOTOS UPLOADED	MESSAGES SENT
1,000,000	1,484,000	1,972,000	2,716,000	2,716,000

TAGGED PHOTOS	STATUS UPDATES	WALL POSTS	COMMENTS MADE
1,323,000	1,851,000	1,587,000	10,208,000

RELATIONSHIP STATUSES IN 2010

SINGLE	MARRIED	ENGAGED
43,869,800	36,774,801	5,974,574

IT'S COMPLICATED	IN A RELATIONSHIP
3,025,791	28,460,516

THE END

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY WWW.ONLINESCHOOLS.ORG

their page offers a new product sample, rewards card, or sale. Again, it is all about offering the customer an incentive to check your page, and changing the incentive up to keep the customer coming back for more.

Many government figures have also had success here. The largest example of this would be Barack Obama. He was able to tap into the younger voting audience partially due to his presence on this website (Skirr, 2011). Wisconsin politician Scott Walker has a place on his page where voters can donate to his campaign, sign up on a list to vote, or become part of his mailing list (ScottWalker, 2011). On a local level, politicians such as Tammy Baldwin and Kim Hixon each have pages devoted to them and their past campaigns. At the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater, former student body president Tim Scully was able to win the election in part due to the active roll he took on Facebook. The common factor here is that government figures use Facebook to empower voters. It allows them to share their stance on issues, get voters to register, and allows them to have a direct way to converse with their voting public.

Nonprofits use this site in order to recruit more donors and volunteers, and to promote what they are already doing. Local nonprofits such as Special Methods in Learning Equine Skills, Inc. use the event listings to promote any fundraisers that they have organized (SMILES, 2011). On campus, organizations such as America Reads and Habitat for Humanity recruit new members via social media and also inform members of when meeting times and service opportunities are. Susan G. Komen for the Cure also alerts the public via Facebook of then their next breast cancer run will be, and the American Red Cross has postings on their disaster relief efforts. Many nonprofits also use the Causes section of Facebook, which allows users to add their favorite causes, recruit new followers, and give donations directly from the Causes page.

Twitter

Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting. Simply find the public streams you find most compelling and follow the conversations (About, 2011). Twitter is a microblogging site that allows users to post short messages (140 characters or less). The short format defines Twitter and is what separates it from other longwinded types of social media. With Twitter, you can not only reach out to your core followers and fan base, but if any of them Retweet what you have written, it also passes on to their followers and allows companies to broaden their fan base. A plus of this site is that Twitter constantly works to verify pages to make sure that companies are who they say they are, and when they do verify they put a blue checkmark next to the username to serve as a universal symbol to users that the page is legitimately from the business it states.

Photo taken from Twitter.com

Many national companies use Twitter such as Marriot hotel chain, Starbucks coffee, and OPI nail polish. They may do this is the form of promoted Tweets which are pushed to the highest importance by the site itself. Avon and similar companies that are driven from individual sales representatives have created tools to help each representative market themselves on Twitter. They can change their profile picture to a brand image, and are encouraged to post a new product with their specific store URL. Fashion businesses such as Marc Jacobs also do many giveaways of their products to increase their following. A major plus of Twitter is that you can link to your other pages like your Facebook or company website easily. It is a quick way for

users to be able to see all of the media that you have to offer and you can upload links to content with a short message.

Many nonprofits such as Blood Center of Wisconsin, Special Methods in Learning Equine Skills, Inc., the One Campaign, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and Amnesty International have Twitter accounts. A bonus of this type of organization using this medium is that they can send updates on events. The Blood Center of Wisconsin can post a link to sign up for the nearest blood drive, as well as post a short message saying when and where it will be so that users can get that information at a glance. National campaigns such as the One Campaign and Susan G. Komen for the Cure can list their events across the nation as well as share content from events such as video or blog entries. Another feature of Twitter is that you can encourage users to receive your tweets directly as a text message to their cell phone. Users do not need a smart phone to use this feature, so it has a broad reach. Special Methods in Learning Equine Skills, Inc. uses Twitter to post about special events or class cancellations with the specific intent that they will be delivered directly to their volunteers' cell phones if they have signed up for the service ("Special Methods in", 2011). This automates their process and allows them to get a message out even if their followers are on the go and not at a stationary computer.

Foursquare

Foursquare is a location-based mobile platform that makes cities easier to use and more interesting to explore. By "checking in" via a smartphone app or SMS, users share their location with friends while collecting points and virtual badges. Foursquare guides real-world experiences by allowing users to bookmark information about venues that they want to visit and surfacing relevant suggestions about nearby venues. Merchants and brands leverage the foursquare

platform by utilizing a wide set of tools to obtain, engage, and retain customers and audiences (Foursquare, 2011).

Many businesses offer discounts or incentives for checking in at the location or for being the user who checks in the most. Local businesses such as Pizza Hut and Qdoba offer discounts of free items for becoming the mayor of their locations. Harry and David offers coupons for $10 off of a $50 purchase just for being at their location. Other companies such as the television station Bravo or the South by Southwest Music Festival offer incentives in the form of a badge that will display on your page when you perform a certain task such as checking in at a location that they suggest. Part of the appeal of Foursquare is that businesses will offer you new badges or you have the competition of other people trying to steal the most visited position from you at all times. The competitive and ongoing nature makes Foursquare unique. Starbucks is an example of a company who offers a badge that is brand specific. You can receive this badge by visiting five or more Starbucks locations (Foursquare, 2011).

Nonprofits can also use Foursquare as a tool, but it seems less common than other types of businesses. Events that pop up in one location and then move can each have a location created on Foursquare. Things such as the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics can have a location created which is then cross promoted on sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Again, Susan G. Komen for the Cure can also post its run events each at different locations and promote them on other social media sites. Blood Center of Wisconsin and the American Red Cross can post where their permanent donation locations are as well as the locations that they are using temporarily for a blood drive.

A plus for nonprofits is that there are applications for many smart phones. This allows for geotagging which will pinpoint the exact location of the user and will tell them about any nearby tips or if any friends in the area have checked in. This means that if a user is close to your event, they may see a post about it and be further compelled to come to that event to help support your cause.

This site is less practical for politicians. Government buildings such as the White House of Lincoln Memorial may be places of interest, but as far as individual politicians, it would be much harder to justify having a Foursquare page unless you have a headquarters that outside individuals can visit.

Mobile Media Apps

Mobile media applications are Internet applications that run on smartphones and other mobile devices. Mobile applications usually help users by connecting them to Internet services more commonly accessed on desktop or notebook computers, or help them by making it easier to use the Internet on their portable devices. A mobile app may be a mobile Web site bookmarking utility, a mobile-based instant messaging client, Gmail for mobile, and many other applications (Webopedia, 2011).

Many businesses offer content that you can only view via their mobile application. Smart phones provide an instant way for customers to connect with the business. Starbucks has an application that will help you find the nutrition of your specific drink. Pizza Hut offers ordering directly from their application. Also the Groupon application offers the ability to have numerous people pay for a service so that they may all receive a discount (Groupon, 2011). Victoria's Secret offered a sneak peak into content from their annual fashion show. Also, companies like

Sephora offer incentive for even downloading their free application. You show the application in the store and will receive a free sample. Old Navy as well as many other clothing companies allow you to place an order straight from their application without even having to leave it to access the internet.

Nonprofits and government organizations are a bit slower in the adaptation of using mobile media applications. When nonprofits use this form of media they can leverage it to gain new volunteers, give their fan base a forum for communication, and promote their events.
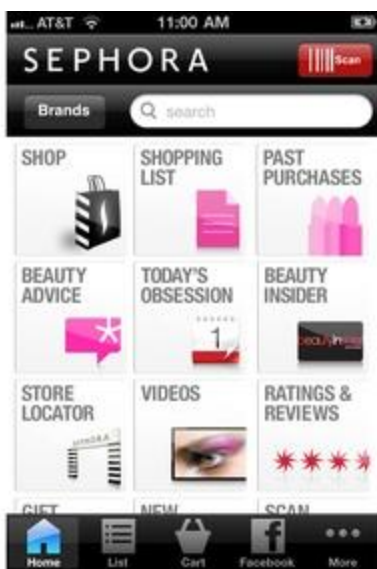
 Still from Sephora mobile media application for iPhone (Sephora, 2011).

YouTube

People post videos on YouTube and watch and comment on the videos others have posted. The video content can be anything and is decided upon almost completely by its users. The numbers generated by YouTube are staggering. One hundred million videos are on the YouTube servers, with 65,000 new ones uploaded every day. They're watched by 20 million viewers a month (Rankin, 2011).

Businesses can get more use out of content they have already created. This goes for commercials especially. Commercials such as the Doritos or Volkswagon from the Super Bowl created buzz when they were first seen. They went on to gain even more momentum online via YouTube. Companies can also create content where they teach users how to properly use or care for a product. The Global Business Resource Center on the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater campus created interviews with their staff. They then posted these taped interviews to YouTube to share with their partners and anyone who was interested in the resources that the center provides.

Nonprofits can also place content here to promote events. They can post successful video of an event. They can also post educational videos as to what their cause it.

Government figures may post speeches so that voters can see the impact they have speaking instead of just having to read a transcript of the speech. Barack Obama has his speeches reposted on YouTube and shared on a multitude of different media outlets in addition to being on the nightly news. This creates convenience for users due to the fact that they can view the medium by demand.

A plus of this for all of the above types of organizations would be viral videos. This is when a video becomes a phenomenon and is passed around via other social networking sites. This ensures that many more people will see it as many people are sharing it on these third party sites.

Blogs

A weblog, or simply a blog, is basically a journal that is available on the web. The activity of updating a blog is "blogging" and someone who keeps a blog is a "blogger". Blogs are typically updated daily using software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain the blog. Postings on a blog are mostly arranged in chronological order with the most recent additions featured most prominently.

In simple terms, a blog is a website, where you write material on an ongoing basis. New items show up at the top, so your visitors can read what's new. Then they may or may not comment on it, or link to it, or email you ("What is a", 2011).

Some popular examples of blogging sites include Wordpress.com and Tumblr.com. Tumblr differs in that it is focused more on a mix of different types of media such as photos and videos rather than focusing on text posting.

Businesses can use blogs to show that they are an expert on their product and in the field. People also create a business and brand by sharing their expertise via their blog. The Intern Queen has created her person based on sharing her expert opinion online, and has created a career out of her blogging (Berger, 2011). Nonprofits use blogs to share personal accounts of people who have been helped by their organization. Politicians can blog in order to share their stance on an issue.

In conclusion, social media can take many forms and offer many different things for many different types of organizations. It is how these businesses leverage their online presence and engage their audience that will determine how effective their efforts will be in the long run.

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