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What would happen if Facebook were turned off?

如果停用脸书, 会发生什么?

Facebook is blamed for all sorts of social horrors: from addiction and bullying to the enabling of genocide. New research suggests such accusations are not entirely without merit. It may be time to consider what life without Facebook would be like.

从成瘾和欺凌, 到使种族灭绝成为可能, 脸书因为造成各种社会恐慌而受到责难。新的研究表明, 这些指责并非毫无价值。也许是时候该考虑一下, 没有脸书的生活会变怎样了。

Several thousand Facebookers were recruited and sorted into control and treatment groups. Members of the treatment group were asked to deactivate their Facebook profiles for four weeks in late 2018.

数千名脸书用户被招募参加实验, 并被分为对照组和实验组。实验组成员被要求在 2018 年年底停用他们的脸书账号四个星期。

Those booted off enjoyed an additional hour of free time on average. They consumed much less news, and were thus less aware of events but also less polarised in their views about them than those still on the network. Leaving Facebook boosted self-reported happiness and reduced feelings of depression and anxiety. Even so, most are loth to call it quits entirely. That reluctance would seem to indicate that Facebook, despite its problems, generates lots of value for consumers, which would presumably vanish were the network to disappear.

那些被迫停用脸书的人平均额外享有一小时的空闲时间。相比那些仍在使用脸书的人，他们获取到的新闻更少，因此对新闻事件的了解程度也更低，并且对这些事件的看法也不那么的两极分化。离开脸书提高了他们自我觉察到的幸福感，也减少了抑郁和焦虑的情绪。即便如此，大多数人也不愿意完全弃用脸书。这种不情愿的态度似乎表明，尽管脸书存在问题，但它为消费者创造了许多价值。如果这个社交网络平台消失了，这种价值可能就不复存在了。

How could that be? A social network thrives thanks to increasing returns to scale. The more people on a network, the more potential connections it facilitates and the larger its value to each user. Such effects helped power Facebook's rise. You could say Facebook is the world's first digital megacity, thronging with people, enabling huge amounts of human contact, both good and bad.

怎么会这样呢？由于规模报酬递增，社交网络得以蓬勃发展。使用一个网络的人越多，它能促成的潜在联系就越多，对于它的每个用户而言，这个网络的价值就越高。这些效应助推了脸书的崛起。你可以说，脸书是世界上第一个数字化大都市，人们蜂拥而至，使得大量的、不论好坏的社交联系成为了可能。

— Economist: What would happen if Facebook were turned off?

重点词汇

genocide/'dʒenəsaid/: n. 大屠杀，种族灭绝

词根词缀：geno-（民族和人群）；-cide（杀死）

merit/'merɪt/: n. 优点，价值

同义词：worth

搭配短语：on merit

例句：Zurini got the job on merit.

例句：Students are selected solely on merit.

deactivate/,di:'æktɪveɪt/: v. 关闭，使无效

词根词缀：de-（否定）

相关词汇：activate

搭配短语: deactivate the alarm

profile/'prɒfaɪl/: n. 档案; 账号

boot sb. off: 迫使...停止; 迫使...离开

相关词汇: boot (v. 猛踢)

英文释义: to force someone to stop taking part in an activity

polarise/'pəʊləraɪz/: v. 使两极分化, 使截然对立

词性拓展: polar (adj.)

词根词缀: -ise (...化)

boost/buːst/: v. 提高; 增强

英文释义: to make something increase, or become better or more successful

搭配短语: boost one's morale

self-reported/ˌself rɪ'pɔːrtɪd/: adj. 自我报告的

词性拓展: self-report (v.)

loth/ləʊθ/: adj. 不愿意的

例句: I'm loth to spend it all at once.

call it quits: 停止做; 同意已互不相欠

英文释义: to stop doing something

例句: I'm calling it quits.

例句: Let's call it quits.

reluctance/rɪ'lʌktəns/: n. 勉强; 不情愿

词性拓展: reluctant (adj.)

同义词: unwillingness

例句: I accepted his advice with great reluctance.

vanish/'vænɪʃ/: v. (尤指突然) 消失

搭配短语: vanish into thin air

thrive/θraɪv/: v. 繁荣, 兴旺; 茁壮成长

例句: The company managed to thrive during a recession.

搭配短语: lavender that thrives in poor soil

returns to scale: 规模报酬

facilitate/fə'sɪlɪteɪt/: v. 使...更容易, 使便利; 推动

搭配短语: to facilitate the development of tourism

megacity/'megəsɪti/: n. 特大城市

词根词缀: mega- (巨大的; 很重要的)

派生词: megastar (n. 超级巨星)

throng/θrɒŋ/: v. (人群) 蜂拥, 群集

搭配短语: throng/be thronged with sb./sth.

例句: The street is thronging with people.

例句: The street is thronged with people.

词性拓展: throng (n.)