

The Complete Guide to Social Media

From The Social Media Guys

Contents

Articles

Social media	1
Social web	6
Social media measurement	8
Social media marketing	9
Social media optimization	11
Social network service	12
Digg	24
Facebook	33
LinkedIn	48
MySpace	52
Newsvine	70
Reddit	74
StumbleUpon	80
Twitter	84
YouTube	98
XING	112

References

Article Sources and Contributors	115
Image Sources, Licenses and Contributors	123

Article Licenses

License	125
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Social media

Social media are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media uses web-based technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogues. 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 also refer to social media as consumer-generated media (CGM). Social media utilization is believed to be a driving force in defining the current time period as the Attention Age. A common thread running through all definitions of social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value.

Distinction from industrial media

People gain information, education, news, etc., by 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 zero people or millions of people. The properties that help describe the differences between social media and industrial media depend on the study. Some of these properties are:

1. Reach - both industrial and social media technologies provide scale and enable anyone to reach a global audience.
2. Accessibility - the means of production for industrial media are typically owned privately or by government; social media tools are generally available to anyone at little or no cost.
3. Usability - industrial media production typically requires specialized skills and training. Most social media does not, or in some cases reinvent skills, so anyone can operate the means of production.
4. Recency - 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). As industrial media are currently adopting social media tools, this feature may well not be distinctive anymore in some 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."^[2]

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.^[3]
- A total of 234 million people age 13 and older in the U.S. used mobile devices in December 2009.^[4]
- Twitter processed more than one billion tweets in December 2009 and averages almost 40 million tweets per day.^[5]
- 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.^[6]
- Australia has some of the highest social media usage statistics in the world. In terms of Facebook use Australia ranks highest with almost 9 hours per month from over 9 million users.^{[7] [8]}

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"^[9] in that field or area.^[10]

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 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 influence in that conversation.^[11]

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^[12] is so important. A marketer can generally not expect people to be receptive to a marketing message in and of itself. In the Edelman Trust Barometer report^[13] 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^[14], 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."^{[15] [16]}

Thus, using social media as a form of *marketing* has taken on whole new challenges. As the 2010 Trust Study^[14] 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.^{[17] [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. That 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.^[19]

Examples

Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, 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 communities. 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, Yammer, Google Buzz
- **Location-based social networks:** Foursquare, Gowalla, Facebook places, The Hotlist
- **Social networking:** ASmallWorld,Cyworld, Facebook, Hi5, LinkedIn, MySpace, Orkut, Tagged, XING
- **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
- **Social bookmarking** (or social tagging):^[20] CiteULike, Delicious, Diigo, Google Reader, StumbleUpon, folkd
- **Social news:** Digg, Mixx, NowPublic, Reddit, Newsvine, MyWeboo
- **Social navigation:** Trapster, Waze ^[21]
- **Content Management Systems:** Wordpress
- **Document Managing and Editing Tools:** Google Docs, Syncplicity, Docs.com, Dropbox

Multimedia

- **Photography and art sharing:** deviantArt, Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa, SmugMug, Zoothmr, BetweenCreation
- **Video sharing:** sevenload, Viddler, Vimeo, YouTube, Dailymotion, Metacafe, Nico Nico Douga, Openfilm, TubeMogul
- **Livecasting:** Justin.tv, Livestream, OpenCU, Skype, Stickam, Ustream
- **Music and audio sharing:** ccMixter, Pandora Radio, Last.fm, MySpace Music, ReverbNation.com, ShareTheMusic, The Hype Machine
- **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

Entertainment

- **Media and entertainment platforms:** Cisco Eos
- **Virtual worlds:** Active Worlds, Forterra Systems, Second Life, The Sims Online
- **Game sharing:** Kongregate, Miniclip

Brand monitoring

- **Social media measurement:** Attensity, Statsit, Sysomos, Vocus

See also

- Brand infiltration
- Citizen media
- Connectivism (learning theory)
- *The Facebook Era* (book)
- Metcalfe's law
- Networked learning
- New media
- Online research community
- People's Voice Media
- Social media marketing
- Social media optimization
- Social sculpture
- Social television
- Social web
- Social software
- Tribe (internet)
- Participatory media

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- [4] <http://digital.venturebeat.com/2010/02/10/54-of-us-internet-users-on-facebook-27-on-myspace/trackback/>
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- [8] <http://www.socialmedianews.com.au/>
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- [10] European Journal of Social Psychology (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.355/abstract>)
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Further reading

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- Surowiecki, James (2004). *The Wisdom of Crowds*. New York: Anchor Books. ISBN 0385721706. OCLC 156770258.
- Tapscott, Don; Williams, Anthony D. (2006). *Wikinomics*. New York: Portfolio. ISBN 1591841380. OCLC 318389282.

External links

- Using Social Media to Build Community and Resistance (http://www.democracynow.org/2010/7/23/using_social_media_to_build_communityand) - video roundtable by *Democracy Now!*

Social web

The **Social Web** is a specified term for the World Wide Web as a kind of Social Media. The term is currently used to describe how people socialize or interact with each other throughout the Web. The **Social Web** mostly refers to social networking, myspace for example, and content-sharing sites (which also offer a social networking functionality) within Web 2.0.

These social websites are mostly formed around the connections of people of the same interest, but there are several theories that specifies exactly how this formation works. There are for example said to be "people focus" websites such as Bebo, Facebook, and Myspace, that focus of social interaction, often by making the user create an online identity (and a profile). There is also socializing on the web that is typified by "hobby focus". For example, if one is interested in photography and wants to share this with like-minded people, then there are photography websites such as Flickr, Kodak Gallery and Photobucket.

Often when speaking about the **Social Web**, collective intelligence is mentioned. Collective intelligence refers to the phenomena of internet users getting together, sharing content, in order to create something bigger than one single person could do. Sometimes, this is also called Wisdom of Crowds. Wikipedia is a perfect example of this.

The Social Web as a current description

The social web can be described as people interlinked and interacting with engaging content in a conversational and participatory manner via the Internet.^[1]

Since social web applications are built to encourage communication between people, they typically emphasize some combination of the following social attributes:^[2]

- Identity: who are you?
- Reputation: what do people think you stand for?
- Presence: where are you?
- Relationships: who are you connected with? who do you trust?
- Groups: how do you organize your connections?
- Conversations: what do you discuss with others?
- Sharing: what content do you make available for others to interact with?

Examples of social applications include Twitter, Facebook, and Jaiku.

The Social Web as a future network

The first is an open global distributed data sharing network similar to today's World Wide Web, except instead of linking documents, the Social Web will link people, organizations, and concepts.

The use of the term in this context was introduced in 1998 by a paper called "CSCW research at GMD-FIT^[3]: From Basic Groupware to the Social Web"^[4]^[5]. The paper identifies 6 research topics relevant to the Social Web: personal representation and virtual identities; mutual perception and social awareness; formation and establishment of norms and conventions; self organisation of groups and communities; social construction of community knowledge; software agents as mediators in social processes.

In July 2004 the paper "The Social Web: Building an Open Social Network with XDI" describes how the introduction of a new protocol for distributed mediated data sharing and synchronization, XDI, could enable a new layer of trusted data interchange applications. The key building blocks for this layer are I-names and I-numbers (based on the OASIS XRI specifications), Dataweb pages, and link contracts.^[6]

Open social networks using FOAF^[7] has been around since 2000.

Perhaps the best analogy for the Social Web is the worldwide banking and credit card system. This infrastructure has evolved over centuries to facilitate the global exchange of a very sensitive form of data — money — by establishing a common means of exchange among trusted third party service providers — banks. The Social Web takes the same approach for exchange of private, sensitive information by establishing a common means of exchange among trusted third party service providers — i-brokers.

Earlier uses of the term include:

- In 1955 the term "Social Web" was introduced by August C. Krey in the essay collection History and the Social Web published by the University of Minnesota press.^[8]

See also

- Online identity
- Online participation
- Presence information
- Sociology of the Internet
- Social media
- Social network service

social web systems

- Blog
- Wiki
- Social networking site
- Microblogging
- Social bookmarking

technical aspects

- FOAF (software)
- I-broker
- I-name
- I-number
- Identity Commons
- XRI
- XDI
- Activity Streams

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Notes

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- [10] <http://www.webuse.umd.edu/webshop/resources/kraut.pdf>
- [11] <http://tomgruber.org/writing/collective-knowledge-systems.htm>

External links

- The Augmented Social Network: Building Identity and Trust into the Next-Generation Internet (<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1068/988>)
- Social Web Incubator Group at the W3C (<http://www.w3.org/2005/Incubator/socialweb/>)

Social media measurement

Social media measurement refers to the tracking of various social media content such as blogs, wikis, micro-blogs, social networking sites, video/photo sharing websites, forums, message boards, and user-generated content in general as a way for marketers to determine the volume and sentiment around a brand or topic in social media.^[1]

See also

- Vocus
- Free Tools^[2]

References

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- [2] List of Free Social Media Monitoring tools (<http://takemetoyourleader.com/2009/03/24/free-social-media-monitoring-tools/>)

External links

- Dow Jones Insight Media Services (<http://www.dowjones.com/solutions-pr-corp-comm.asp>)
- How to track Social Media (<http://talkbackmedia.com/blog/2010/03/16/tracking-tweet-success/>)

Social media marketing

Social media marketing is a recent addition to organizations' integrated marketing communications plans. Integrated marketing communications is a principle organizations follow to connect with their targeted markets. Integrated marketing communications coordinates the elements of the promotional mix; advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing, and sales promotion.^[1] In the traditional marketing communications model, the content, frequency, timing, and medium of communications by the organization is in collaboration with an external agent, i.e. advertising agencies, marketing research firms, and public relations firms.^[2] However, the growth of social media has impacted the way organizations communicate. With the emergence of Web 2.0, the internet provides a set of tools that allow people to build social and business connections, share information and collaborate on projects online.^[3]

Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. A corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it is coming from a trusted source, as opposed to the brand or company itself.

Social media has become a platform that is easily accessible to anyone with internet access, opening doors for organizations to increase their brand awareness and facilitate conversations with the customer. Additionally, social media serves as a relatively inexpensive platform for organizations to implement marketing campaigns. Organizations can receive direct feedback from their customers and targeted markets.

Platforms

Social media marketing which is known as **SMO** Social Media Optimization benefits organizations and individuals by providing an additional channel for customer support, a means to gain customer and competitive insight, and a method of managing their reputation online. Key factors that ensure its success are its relevance to the customer, the value it provides them with and the strength of the foundation on which it is built. A strong foundation serves as a stand or platform in which the organization can centralize its information and direct customers on its recent developments via other social media channels, such as article and press release publications.^[4]

The most popular platforms include:

- Facebook
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- MySpace
- Reddit
- Delicious
- More...

See also

- Social Media
- Marketing
- Internet Marketing
- Integrated Marketing Communications
- Web 2.0

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-

Social media optimization

Internet marketing
Display advertising E-mail marketing E-mail marketing software Interactive advertising Social media optimization Web analytics Cost per impression
Affiliate marketing
Cost per action Contextual advertising Revenue sharing
Search engine marketing
Search engine optimization Pay per click advertising Paid inclusion Search analytics
Mobile advertising

Social Media Optimization (SMO) or Social SEO is the methodization of social media activity with the intent of attracting unique visitors to website content. SMO is one of two online methods of website optimization; the other method is search engine optimization or SEO.

There are two categories of SMO/Social SEO methods:

- (a) Social media features added to the content itself, including: RSS feeds, social news and sharing buttons, user rating and polling tools, and incorporating third-party community functionalities like images and videos
- (b) Promotional activities in social media aside from the content being promoted, including: blogging, commenting on other blogs, participating in discussion groups, and posting status updates on social networking profiles

Social media optimization is related to search engine marketing, but differs in several ways, primarily the focus on driving traffic from sources other than search engines, though improved search ranking is also a benefit of successful SMO.

Social media optimization is in many ways connected as a technique to viral marketing where word of mouth is created not through friends or family but through the use of networking in social bookmarking, video and photo sharing websites. In a similar way the engagement with blogs achieves the same by sharing content through the use of RSS in the blogosphere and special blog search engines.

Social Media optimization is considered an integral part of an online reputation management (ORM) or Search Engine Reputation Management (SERM) strategy for organizations or individuals who care about their online presence.

Social Media Optimisation (SMO), is not limited to marketing and brand building. Increasingly smart businesses are integrating social media participation as part of their knowledge management strategy (ie. product/service development, recruiting, employee engagement and turnover, brand building, customer satisfaction and relations, business development and more). Additionally, Social Media Optimization is oftentimes implemented to foster a community of the associated site, allowing for a healthy business to consumer relationship.

Origins

According to search engine expert Danny Sullivan^[1], the term "social media optimization" was first used and described by Rohit Bhargava. Bhargava's original five rules for conducting social media optimization are:^[2]

1. Increase your linkability
2. Make tagging and bookmarking easy
3. Reward inbound links
4. Help your content travel
5. Encourage the mashup
6. Get communities connected

Several authors added new rules to the original post. Today there are 16 rules, which were translated into French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, German, Japanese, Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Hebrew and recently also in Thai.

See also

- Customer engagement
- Search engine marketing
- Online Identity Management

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Social network service

A **social network service** is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people, e.g., who share interests and/or activities. A social network service essentially consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), his/her social links, and a variety of additional services. Most social network services are web based and provide means for users to interact over the internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging. Although online community services are sometimes considered as a social network service. In a broader sense, social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events, and interests within their individual networks.

The main types of social networking services are those which contain category places (such as former school-year or classmates), means to connect with friends (usually with self-description pages) and a recommendation system linked to trust. Popular methods now combine many of these, with Facebook and Twitter widely used worldwide; MySpace and LinkedIn being the most widely used in North America;^[1] Nexopia (mostly in Canada);^[2] Bebo,^[3] Hi5, Hyves (mostly in The Netherlands), StudiVZ (mostly in Germany), iWiW (mostly in Hungary), Tuenti (mostly in Spain), Nasza-Klasa (mostly in Poland), Decayenne, Tagged, XING^[4] Badoo^[5] and Skyrock in parts of Europe;^[6] Orkut and Hi5 in South America, India and Central America;^[7] and Friendster, Mixi, Multiply, Orkut, Wretch, renren and Cyworld in Asia and the Pacific Islands and Twitter, Orkut and Facebook in India.

There have been attempts to standardize these services to avoid the need to duplicate entries of friends and interests (see the FOAF standard and the Open Source Initiative).

Although some of the largest social networks were founded on the notion of digitizing real world connections, many networks focus on categories from books and music to non-profit business to motherhood as ways to provide both

services and community to individuals with shared interests.

History

The potential for computer networking to facilitate new forms of computer-mediated social interaction was suggested early on.^[8] Efforts to support social networks via computer-mediated communication were made in many early online services, including Usenet, ARPANET, LISTSERV, and bulletin board services (BBS). Many prototypical features of social networking sites were also present in online services such as America Online, Prodigy, and CompuServe.

Early social networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as Theglobe.com (1994),^[9] Geocities (1994) and Tripod.com (1995). Many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with each other through chat rooms, and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal webpages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive webspace. Some communities - such as Classmates.com - took a different approach by simply having people link to each other via email addresses. In the late 1990s, user profiles became a central feature of social networking sites, allowing users to compile lists of "friends" and search for other users with similar interests.

New social networking methods were developed by the end of the 1990s, and many sites began to develop more advanced features for users to find and manage friends.^[10] This newer generation of social networking sites began to flourish with the emergence of Friendster in 2002,^[11] and soon became part of the Internet mainstream. Friendster was followed by MySpace and LinkedIn a year later, and finally, Bebo. Attesting to the rapid increase in social networking sites' popularity, by 2005, MySpace was reportedly getting more page views than Google. Facebook,^[12], launched in 2004, has since become the largest social networking site in the world.^[13]

Today, it is estimated that there are now over 200 active sites using a wide variety of social networking models.^[14]

Social impacts

Web based social network services make it possible to connect people who share interests and activities across political, economic, and geographic borders.^[15] Through e-mail and instant messaging, online communities are created where a gift economy and reciprocal altruism are encouraged through cooperation. Information is particularly suited to gift economy, as information is a nonrival good and can be gifted at practically no cost.^[16] ^[17]

Facebook and other social networking tools are increasingly the object of scholarly research. Scholars in many fields have begun to investigate the impact of social networking sites, investigating how such sites may play into issues of identity, privacy^[18], social capital, youth culture, and education^[19]

Several websites are beginning to tap into the power of the social networking model for philanthropy. Such models provide a means for connecting otherwise fragmented industries and small organizations without the resources to reach a broader audience with interested users.^[20] Social networks are providing a different way for individuals to communicate digitally. These communities of hypertexts allow for the sharing of information and ideas, an old concept placed in a digital environment.

Typical structure

Basics

Social networking sites tend to share some conventional features. Most often, individual users are encouraged to create profiles containing various information about themselves. Users can often upload pictures of themselves to their profiles, post blog entries for others to read, search for other users with similar interests, and compile and share lists of contacts. In addition, user profiles often have a section dedicated to comments from friends and other users. To protect user privacy, social networks usually have controls that allow users to choose who can view their profile,

contact them, add them to their list of contacts, and so on.

In recent years, it has also become common for a wide variety of organizations to create profiles to advertise products and services.

Additional features

Some social networks have additional features, such as the ability to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload or stream live videos, and hold discussions in forums. Geosocial networking co-opts internet mapping services to organize user participation around geographic features and their attributes.

There is also a trend for more interoperability between social networks led by technologies such as OpenID and OpenSocial.

Lately, mobile social networking has become popular. In most mobile communities, mobile phone users can now create their own profiles, make friends, participate in chat rooms, create chat rooms, hold private conversations, share photos and videos, and share blogs by using their mobile phone. Mobile phone users are basically open to every option that someone sitting on the computer has. Some companies provide wireless services which allow their customers to build their own mobile community and brand it, but one of the most popular wireless services for social networking in North America is Facebook Mobile.

Emerging trends in social networks

As the increase in popularity of social networking is on a constant rise,^[21] new uses for the technology are constantly being observed.

At the forefront of emerging trends in social networking sites is the concept of "real time" and "location based." Real time allows users to contribute content, which is then broadcasted as it is being uploaded - the concept is similar to live television broadcasts. Twitter set the trend for "real time" services, where users can broadcast to the world what they are doing, or what is on their minds within a 140 character limit. Facebook followed suit with their "Live Feed" where users' activities are streamed as soon as it happens. While Twitter focuses on words, Clixtr, another real time service, focuses on group photo sharing where users can update their photo streams with photos while at an event. Friends and nearby users can contribute their own photos and comments to that event stream, thus contributing to the "real time" aspect of broadcasting photos and comments as it is being uploaded. In the location based social networking space, Foursquare gained popularity as it allowed for users to "check-in" to places that they are frequenting at that moment. Gowalla is another such service which functions in much the same way that Foursquare does, leveraging the GPS in phones to create a location based user experience. Clixtr, though in the real time space, is also a location based social networking site since events created by users are automatically geotagged, and users can view events occurring nearby through the Clixtr iPhone app. Recently, Yelp announced its entrance into the location based social networking space through check-ins with their mobile app; whether or not this becomes detrimental to Foursquare or Gowalla is yet to be seen as it is still considered a new space in the internet technology industry.^[22]

One popular use for this new technology is social networking between businesses. Companies have found that social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are great ways to build their brand image. According to Jody Nimetz, author of Marketing Jive,^[23] there are five major uses for businesses and social media: to create brand awareness, as an online reputation management tool, for recruiting, to learn about new technologies and competitors, and as a lead gen tool to intercept potential prospects.^[23] These companies are able to drive traffic to their own online sites while encouraging their consumers and clients to have discussions on how to improve or change products or services.

One other use that is being discussed is the use of Social Networks in the Science communities. Julia Porter Liebeskind et al. have published a study on how New Biotechnology Firms are using social networking sites to share exchanges in scientific knowledge.^[24] They state in their study that by sharing information and knowledge with one

another, they are able to "increase both their learning and their flexibility in ways that would not be possible within a self-contained hierarchical organization." Social networking is allowing scientific groups to expand their knowledge base and share ideas, and without these new means of communicating their theories might become "isolated and irrelevant".

Social networks are also being used by teachers and students as a communication tool. Because many students are already using a wide-range of social networking sites, teachers have begun to familiarize themselves with this trend and are now using it to their advantage. Teachers and professors are doing everything from creating chat-room forums and groups to extend classroom discussion to posting assignments, tests and quizzes, to assisting with homework outside of the classroom setting. Social networks are also being used to foster teacher-parent communication. These sites make it possible and more convenient for parents to ask questions and voice concerns without having to meet face-to-face.

Social networks are being used by activists as a means of low-cost grassroots organizing. Extensive use of an array of social networking sites enabled organizers of the 2009 National Equality March to mobilize an estimated 200,000 participants to march on Washington with a cost savings of up to 85% per participant over previous methods.^[25]

The use of online social networks by libraries is also an increasingly prevalent and growing tool that is being used to communicate with more potential library users, as well as extending the services provided by individual libraries.

A final rise in social network use is being driven by college students using the services to network with professionals for internship and job opportunities. Many studies have been done on the effectiveness of networking online in a college setting, and one notable one is by Phipps Arabie and Yoram Wind published in *Advances in Social Network Analysis*.^[26]

Social network hosting service

A social network hosting service is a web hosting service that specifically hosts the user creation of web-based social networking services, alongside related applications. Such services are also known as vertical social networks due to the creation of SNSes which cater to specific user interests and niches; like larger, interest-agnostic SNSes, such niche networking services may also possess the ability to create increasingly-niche groups of users.

Business model

Few social networks currently charge money for membership. In part, this may be because social networking is a relatively new service, and the value of using them has not been firmly established in customers' minds. Companies such as MySpace and Facebook sell online advertising on their site. Their business model is based upon large membership count, and charging for membership would be counterproductive.^[27] Some believe that the deeper information that the sites have on each user will allow much better targeted advertising than any other site can currently provide.^[28]

Social networks operate under an autonomous business model, in which a social network's members serve dual roles as both the suppliers and the consumers of content. This is in contrast to a traditional business model, where the suppliers and consumers are distinct agents. Revenue is typically gained in the autonomous business model via advertisements, but subscription-based revenue is possible when membership and content levels are sufficiently high.^[29]

Issues

Privacy

On large social networking services, there have been growing concerns about users giving out too much personal information and the threat of sexual predators. Users of these services also need to be aware of data theft or viruses. However, large services, such as MySpace and Netlog, often work with law enforcement to try to prevent such incidents.

In addition, there is a perceived privacy threat in relation to placing too much personal information in the hands of large corporations or governmental bodies, allowing a profile to be produced on an individual's behavior on which decisions, detrimental to an individual, may be taken.

Furthermore, there is an issue over the control of data—information that was altered or removed by the user may in fact be retained and/or passed to 3rd parties. This danger was highlighted when the controversial social networking site Quechup harvested e-mail addresses from users' e-mail accounts for use in a spamming operation.^[30]

In medical and scientific research, asking subjects for information about their behaviors is normally strictly scrutinized by institutional review boards, for example, to ensure that adolescents and their parents have informed consent. It is not clear whether the same rules apply to researchers who collect data from social networking sites. These sites often contain a great deal of data that is hard to obtain via traditional means. Even though the data are public, republishing it in a research paper might be considered invasion of privacy.^[31]

Privacy on social networking sites can be undermined by many factors. For example, users may disclose personal information, sites may not take adequate steps to protect user privacy, and third parties frequently use information posted on social networks for a variety of purposes. "For the Net generation, social networking sites have become the preferred forum for social interactions, from posturing and role playing to simply sounding off. However, because such forums are relatively easy to access, posted content can be reviewed by anyone with an interest in the users' personal information".^{[32] [33] [34]}

Following plans by the UK government to monitor traffic on social networks^[35] schemes similar to E-mail jamming have been proposed for networks such as Twitter and Facebook. These would involve "friending" and "following" large numbers of random people to thwart attempts at network analysis.

Notifications on websites

There has been a trend for social networking sites to send out only 'positive' notifications to users. For example sites such as Bebo, Facebook, and Myspace will not send notifications to users when they are removed from a person's friends list. Similarly Bebo will send out a notification if a user is moved to the top of another user's friends list but no notification is sent if they are moved down the list.

This allows users to purge undesirables from their list extremely easily and often without confrontation since a user will rarely notice if one person disappears from their friends list. It also enforces the general positive atmosphere of the website without drawing attention to unpleasant happenings such as friends falling out, rejection and failed relationships.

Access to information

Many social networking services, such as Facebook, provide the user with a choice of who can view their profile. This prevents unauthorized user(s) from accessing their information.^[36] Parents who want to access their child's MySpace or Facebook account have become a big problem for teenagers who do not want their profile seen by their parents. By making their profile private, teens can select who may see their page, allowing only people added as "friends" to view their profile and preventing unwanted parents from viewing it. Teens are constantly trying to create a structural barrier between their private life and their parents.^[37]

To edit information on a certain social networking service account, the social networking sites require you to login or provide an access code. This prevents unauthorized user(s) from adding, changing, or removing personal information, pictures, and/or other data.

Potential for misuse

The relative freedom afforded by social networking services has caused concern regarding the potential of its misuse by individual patrons. In October 2006, a fake Myspace profile created in the name of Josh Evans by Lori Janine Drew led to the suicide of Megan Meier.^[38] The event incited global concern regarding the use of social networking services for bullying purposes.

In July 2008, a Briton, Grant Raphael, was ordered to pay a total of GBP £22,000 (about USD \$44,000) for libel and breach of privacy. Raphael had posted a fake page on Facebook purporting to be that of a former schoolfriend Matthew Firsht, with whom Raphael had fallen out in 2000. The page falsely claimed that Firsht was homosexual and that he was dishonest.

At the same time, genuine use of social networking services has been treated with suspicion on the ground of the services' misuse. In September 2008, the profile of Australian Facebook user Elmo Keep was banned by the site's administrators on the grounds that it violated the site's terms of use. Keep is one of several users of Facebook who were banned from the site on the presumption that their names aren't real, as they bear resemblance to the names of characters like Sesame Street's Elmo.^[39]

Risk for child safety

Citizens and governments have been concerned by a misuse by child and teenagers of social network services, particularly in relation to online sexual predators. A certain number of actions have been engaged by governments to better understand the problem and find some solutions. A 2008 panel concluded that technological fixes such as age verification and scans are relatively ineffective means of apprehending online predators.^[40] In May 2010, a child pornography social networking site with hundreds of members was dismantled by law enforcement. It was deemed "the largest crimes against children case brought anywhere by anyone."^[41]

Trolling

A common misuse of social networking sites such as Facebook is that it is occasionally used to emotionally abuse individuals. Such actions are often referred to as trolling. It is not rare for confrontations in the real world to be translated online. Trolling can occur in many different forms, such as (but not limited to) defacement of deceased person(s) tribute pages, calling "Australians" "Austrians", playing online pranks on volatile individuals and controversial comments with the intention to cause anger and cause arguments. Trolling is not to be confused with cyber-bullying.

Online bullying

Online bullying (aka "Cyber-bullying") is a relatively common occurrence and it can often result in emotional trauma for the victim. Depending on the networking outlet, up to 39% of users admit to being "cyber-bullied".^[42] danah boyd, a researcher of social networks quotes a teenager in her article, Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites. The teenager expresses frustration towards networking sites like MySpace because it causes drama and too much emotional stress.^[43] There are not many limitations as to what individuals can post when online. Inherently individuals are given the power to post offensive remarks or pictures that could potentially cause a great amount of emotional pain for another individual.

Interpersonal communication

Interpersonal communication has been a growing issue as more and more people have turned to social networking as a means of communication."Benniger (1987) describes how mass media has gradually replaced interpersonal communication as a socializing force. Further, social networking sites have become popular sites for youth culture to explore themselves, relationships, and share cultural artifacts". A Privacy Paradox [44] Many teens and social networking users may be harming their interpersonal communication by using sites such as Facebook and MySpace. Stated by Baroness Greenfield, an Oxford University Neuroscientist, "My fear is that these technologies are infantilizing the brain into the state of small children who are attracted by buzzing noises and bright lights, who have a small attention span and who live for the moment."^[45]

Patent Issues

On June 15, 2010, the United States Patent and Trademark Office awarded Amazon.com a patent for "Social Networking System" based on its ownership of PlanetAll.^[46] The patent describes a Social Networking System as

A networked computer system provides various services for assisting users in locating, and establishing contact relationships with, other users. For example, in one embodiment, users can identify other users based on their affiliations with particular schools or other organizations. The system also provides a mechanism for a user to selectively establish contact relationships or connections with other users, and to grant permissions for such other users to view personal information of the user. The system may also include features for enabling users to identify contacts of their respective contacts. In addition, the system may automatically notify users of personal information updates made by their respective contacts.^[47]

The patent has garnered attention due to its similarity to the popular social networking site Facebook.^[48]

Investigations

Social network services are increasingly being used in legal and criminal investigations. Information posted on sites such as MySpace and Facebook has been used by police (forensic profiling), probation, and university officials to prosecute users of said sites. In some situations, content posted on MySpace has been used in court.^[49]

Facebook is increasingly being used by school administrations and law enforcement agencies as a source of evidence against student users. The site, the number one online destination for college students, allows users to create profile pages with personal details. These pages can be viewed by other registered users from the same school which often include resident assistants and campus police who have signed-up for the service.^[50] One UK police force has sifted pictures from Facebook and arrested some people who had been photographed in a public place holding a weapon such as a knife (having a weapon in a public place is illegal).^[51]

Application domains

Government applications

Social networking is more recently being used by various government agencies. Social networking tools serve as a quick and easy way for the government to get the opinion of the public and to keep the public updated on their activity. The Centers for Disease Control demonstrated the importance of vaccinations on the popular children's site Whyville and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has a virtual island on Second Life where people can explore underground caves or explore the effects of global warming.^[52] Similarly, NASA has taken advantage of a few social networking tools, including Twitter and Flickr. They are using these tools to aid the Review of U.S. Human Space Flight Plans Committee, whose goal it is to *ensure that the nation is* on a vigorous and sustainable path to achieving its boldest aspirations in space.^[53]

Business applications

The use of social network services in an enterprise context presents the potential of having a major impact on the world of business and work (Fraser & Dutta 2008).

Social networks connect people at low cost; this can be beneficial for entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to expand their contact bases. These networks often act as a customer relationship management tool for companies selling products and services. Companies can also use social networks for advertising in the form of banners and text ads. Since businesses operate globally, social networks can make it easier to keep in touch with contacts around the world.

One example of social networking being used for business purposes is LinkedIn.com, which aims to interconnect professionals. LinkedIn has over 40 million users in over 200 countries.^[54]

Another is the use of physical spaces available to members of a social network such as Hub Culture, an invitation only social network for entrepreneurs, and other business influentials, with Pavilions in major cities such as London, UK. Having a physical presence allows members to network in the real world, as well as the virtual, adding extra business value.

Applications for social networking sites have extended toward businesses and brands are creating their own, high functioning sites, a sector known as brand networking. It is the idea a brand can build its consumer relationship by connecting their consumers to the brand image on a platform that provides them relative content, elements of participation, and a ranking or score system. Brand networking is a new way to capitalize on social trends as a marketing tool.

Dating applications

see also: Online dating service

Many social networks provide an online environment for people to communicate and exchange personal information for dating purposes. Intentions can vary from looking for a one time date, short-term relationships, and long-term relationships.^[55]

Most of these social networks, just like online dating services, require users to give out certain pieces of information. This usually includes a user's age, gender, location, interests, and perhaps a picture. Releasing very personal information is usually discouraged for safety reasons.^[56] This allows other users to search or be searched by some sort of criteria, but at the same time people can maintain a degree of anonymity similar to most online dating services. Online dating sites are similar to social networks in the sense that users create profiles to meet and communicate with others, but their activities on such sites are for the sole purpose of finding a person of interest to date. Social networks do not necessarily have to be for dating; many users simply use it for keeping in touch with friends, and colleagues.^[57]

However, an important difference between social networks and online dating services is the fact that online dating sites usually require a fee, where social networks are free.^[58] This difference is one of the reasons the online dating industry is seeing a massive decrease in revenue due to many users opting to use social networking services instead. Many popular online dating services such as Match.com, Yahoo Personals, and eHarmony.com are seeing a decrease in users, where social networks like MySpace and Facebook are experiencing an increase in users.^[59]

The number of internet users in the U.S. that visit online dating sites has fallen from a peak of 21% in 2003 to 10% in 2006.^[60] Whether its the cost of the services, the variety of users with different intentions, or any other reason, it is undeniable that social networking sites are quickly becoming the new way to find dates online.

Educational applications

see also: Socio-Academic Networks

The National School Boards Association reports that almost 60 percent of students who use social networking talk about education topics online and, surprisingly, more than 50 percent talk specifically about schoolwork. Yet the vast majority of school districts have stringent rules against nearly all forms of social networking during the school day — even though students and parents report few problem behaviors online.

Social networks focused on supporting relationships between teachers and between teachers and their students are now used for learning, educator professional development, and content sharing. Ning for teachers, Learn Central,^[61] TeachStreet and other sites are being built to foster relationships that include educational blogs, eportfolios, formal and ad hoc communities, as well as communication such as chats, discussion threads, and synchronous forums. These sites also have content sharing and rating features.

Medical applications

Social networks are beginning to be adopted by healthcare professionals as a means to manage institutional knowledge, disseminate peer to peer knowledge and to highlight individual physicians and institutions. The advantage of using a dedicated medical social networking site is that all the members are screened against the state licensing board list of practitioners.^[62]

The role of social networks is especially of interest to pharmaceutical companies who spend approximately "32 percent of their marketing dollars" attempting to influence the opinion leaders of social networks.^[63]

A new trend is emerging with social networks created to help its members with various physical and mental ailments.^[64] For people suffering from life altering diseases, PatientsLikeMe offers its members the chance to connect with others dealing with similar issues and research patient data related to their condition. For alcoholics and addicts, SoberCircle gives people in recovery the ability to communicate with one another and strengthen their recovery through the encouragement of others who can relate to their situation. DailyStrength is also a website that offers support groups for a wide array of topics and conditions, including the support topics offered by PatientsLikeMe and SoberCircle. SparkPeople offers community and social networking tools for peer support during weight loss.

Open source software

There are couple of projects that aim to develop free and open source software to use for social networking services. The projects include Diaspora, Appleseed Project^[65] and OneSocialWeb.^[66]

See also

- Distributed social network
- Enterprise bookmarking
- Gender differences in social network service use
- Geosocial networking
- Lateral diffusion
- List of social networking websites
- Mobile social network
- Professional network service
- Social bookmark link generator
- Social identity
- Social network
- Social network aggregation
- Social networking in the Philippines
- Social software
- User profile
- Virtual community
- Web 2.0

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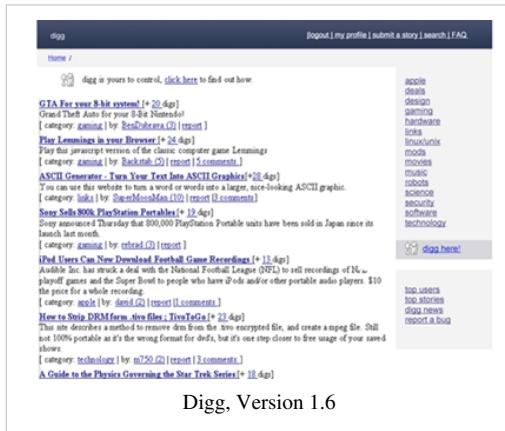
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Digg

	
Type	Private
Founded	San Francisco, California, United States ^[1]
Founder	Kevin Rose ^[2]
Headquarters	San Francisco, California, United States
Area served	Worldwide
Key people	Matt Williams ^[3] (CEO) Kevin Rose (Founder) (ex-CEO) Jay Adelson (ex-CEO) John Moffett (CFO) Owen Byrne (Co-Founder) Ron Gorodetzky (Co-Founder)
Revenue	US\$8.5 million (2008 est.) ^[4]
Employees	77 ^[2]
Website	digg.com ^[5]
Alexa rank	113 ^[6]
Type of site	Social news
Advertising	Banner ads, referral marketing
Registration	Optional
Available in	Multilingual
Launched	December 5, 2004
Current status	Active

Digg is a social news website. Formerly, the site's cornerstone function consisted of letting people vote stories up or down, called *digging* and *burying*, respectively, but as of Digg v4, the "bury" function has been removed. Digg's popularity has prompted the creation of other social networking sites with story submission and voting systems.^[7] The website traffic ranked 117th by Alexa.com as of October 20, 2010.^[6] Quantcast estimates Digg's monthly U.S. unique visits at 15.1 million.^[8]

History and description



Digg, Version 1.6

Digg started out as an experiment in November 2004 by Kevin Rose, Owen Byrne, Ron Gorodetzky, and Jay Adelson. Only Rose and Gorodetzky still play an active role in the management of the site. The original design was free of advertisements, and was designed by Dan Ries. As Digg became more popular, Google AdSense was added to the website. In July 2005, the site was updated to Version 2.0. The new version featured a friends list, the ability to "digg" a story without being redirected to a success page, and a new interface designed by web design company silverorange.^[9] The site developers have stated that in future versions a more minimalist design will likely be employed. On Monday June 26, 2006 version 3 of Digg was released with

specific categories for Technology, Science, World & Business, Videos, Entertainment and Gaming as well as a View All section where all categories are merged. Digg has grown large enough that submissions sometimes create a sudden increase of traffic to the "dugg" website. This is referred to by some Digg users as the "Digg effect" and by some others as the site being "dugg to death." However, in many cases stories are linked simultaneously on several popular bookmarking sites. In such cases, the impact of the "digg effect" is difficult to isolate and assess. On August 27, 2007, Digg altered its main interface, mostly in the profile area. The domain "digg.com" attracted at least 236 million visitors annually by 2008 according to a Compete.com survey.^[10]

Digg CEO Jay Adelson explained at the 2010 "Bigg Digg Shindigg," which is part of the South by Southwest Interactive Conference, that Digg is getting a major overhaul and redesign.^[11] In an interview with Wired magazine, Adelson explained that "Every single thing has changed" and that "the entire website has been rewritten."^[12] Adelson explains that the new Digg will essentially eliminate the duplication problem. It will also help prevent so called 'power users' from dominating the site with their submissions. The new Digg will also offer users a personalized homepage, based on their diggs, that is tailored to their specific interests. The commenting system will be updated to "help fight bad behavior like trolling or group-burying." The entire look of the site will also change. Adelson summed up the new Digg by saying, "We've got a new backend, a new infrastructure layer, a new services layer, new machines — everything." John Quinn wrote in a Digg blog post that the company was going to stop using MySQL and begin using Cassandra, a distributed database system.^[13]

On April 5, 2010, Kevin Rose announced that he would be assuming the position of CEO as Jay Adelson had stepped down.^[14] Although, some time later he has disclosed that he is actively seeking a replacement CEO as the role takes up too much of his time that he would rather spend doing other things, such as angel investing.

On August 25, 2010, Digg released v4. The site experienced a number of bugs and glitches that has resulted in a backlash from Digg users in the form of verbal opposition and, initially, heavy posting of articles from Reddit - a competitor of Digg's. Digg's business development director Matt Van Horn left Digg after the official update of version 4.^[15]

On September 1, 2010, Matt Williams took over as CEO, ending Rose's troubled tenure as interim chief executive.

Potential sale

Several reports have come forward claiming Digg has been trying to sell itself to a larger company since early 2006.^[16] While Adelson claims that Digg will meet with any potential buyers, he denies that they will actively begin talks for a sale. The most recent sale talks were with Google in July 2008 for approximately \$200 million. On July 25, during the due diligence part of the potential sale, Google informed Digg that they were not interested in the purchase.^[17] As a result of Google's decision, Digg entered into a third round of funding, receiving \$28.7 million

from investors such as Highland Capital Partners. With this funding, the company plans to move from their current offices to accommodate a bigger staff base.^[18] On December 2, 2008, *BusinessWeek* reported "Digg Chief Executive Officer Jay Adelson says the popular news aggregation Web site is no longer for sale, and the focus of the company is to build an independent business that reaches profitability as quickly as possible. That means the four-year-old startup will dial back some of its expansion plans, instead prioritizing projects that generate revenue and profit."^[19] On December 18, 2008, *BusinessWeek* analyzed Digg's financial statements. They reported that Digg lost \$4 million on \$6.4 million of revenue in the first three quarters of 2008.^[4]

Features

Facebook Connect

In May 2009, Digg launched a new feature integrating Facebook Connect with Digg.^[20] The Digg integration with Facebook connect allows users of Digg and Facebook to connect their accounts. When a Facebook account is connected to a Digg account, Digg articles can then be shared on the user's Facebook page.^[21] Facebook Connect also allows Facebook users to log into Digg with their Facebook account, thus bypassing the normally required Digg registration.

Digg Dialogg

Digg Dialogg allows Digg users to submit questions to a preselected famous individual who agrees to do an interview with a reporter chosen by Digg.^[22]

Digg Bar

On April 2, 2009, Digg released the Digg Bar, which provides a toolbar above the top of a site allowing the user to produce shortened urls, or access digg comments and analytics without leaving the page.^[23] On April 5, 2010, Kevin Rose announced on the official Digg blog that the controversial DiggBar would be eliminated with the implementation of the 4th version of the website.^[24] This was Rose's first major announcement since succeeding Jay Adelson as CEO.

Digg API

On April 19, 2007, Digg opened their API^[25] (Application Programming Interface) to the public.^[26] This allowed software developers to write tools and applications based on queries of Digg's public data, dating back to 2004. Since then, many blogs^[27] ^[28] have sought to keep up with all of the ongoing Digg API projects.

Criticism

Digg v4

On August 25, 2010, when Digg updated to version 4, the site was unreachable or unstable during the launch day and the weeks following. A large number of the site's members have complained about the new design and removed features (such as bury, favorites, friends submissions, upcoming pages, subcategories, and history search).^[29] Kevin Rose replied to complaints on his blog where he promised to restore upcoming pages and fix the algorithm.^[30]

In an open letter to Rose, Alexis Ohanian, founder of rival site Reddit, said :

this new version of digg reeks of VC meddling. It's cobbling together features from more popular sites and departing from the core of digg, which was to "give the power back to the people."^[31]

Ian Eure, former Digg engineer, explained on his blog why the update cannot be reverted, but the old features can still be ported to the new architecture.^[32]

Disgruntled Digg users declared August 30, 2010 as the 'quit Digg day' and began digging up stories submitted by Reddit's auto submitting publisher account filling up the front page.^[33] ^[34] ^[35] Reddit also temporarily added the Digg shovel to their logo to welcome fleeing Digg users.^[36]

Digg's traffic dropped significantly after the launch of version 4,^[37] and publishers reported a drop in direct referrals from stories on Digg's front page.^[38] Recently hired CEO Matt Williams attempted to address some of the users' concerns in a blog post on October 12, 2010, promising to reinstate many of the features that had been removed.^[39]

Moderation and algorithms

The purpose of Digg was to give editorial powers back to the masses. However, the second version of Digg began using a secret algorithm that blurs the transparency that was expected by the users. In 2006, the site began to be gamed by their top users.^[40] Supernova17 was banned after agreeing to promote a story for cash to an undercover Digg sting operation.^[41] Another group of users openly formed a niche 'bury brigade'.^[42] The users defended themselves claiming their actions were in accordance with the wishes of Digg users. Digg tried to offset criticism by hiring computer scientist Anton Kast to develop a diversity algorithm to prevent special interest groups from dominating Digg. A townhall was organized and the users demanded the shouts feature be discontinued.^[43] By 2008, Google increased their page rank for Digg and many 'pay for Diggs' startups were created to profit from the opportunity. According to a popular blog a single front page story was sold for \$500 at that time.^[44] Usocial and Diggfront were given cease and desist notices from Digg which they ignored.

Mob mentality

Unlike the present Digg algorithm, which works on user diversity, in 2006 it was much more dependent on flocking behavior among users to determine the promotion of content. During this period an anonymous user posted a blog accusing an O'Reilly writer of stealing Digg's CSS.^[45] The Digg mob flocked to the story and it was promoted with nearly 3000 votes. Digg founders Kevin Rose, Jay Adelson and Daniel Burka expressed dissatisfaction on finding Digg's code on Mallett's sites.^[46] Mallett responded and clarified that the theft of code was committed by the contributors to the open source Digg clone, Pligg, which he was using.^[47] Kevin acknowledged the misunderstanding and notified Pligg developers of the issue.^[48] Adelson contacted Mallett thanking him for clearing the issue and expressed support for his claims. Another O'Reilly blogger in defense of Mallett posted a criticism of Digg's mob mentality.^[49] Digg mob's failure to the Mallett story has also been attributed to 'groupthink' which is different from the wisdom of the crowds which requires independence among the nodes.^[50]

AACS encryption key controversy

On May 1, 2007, an article appeared on Digg's homepage that contained the encryption key for the AACS digital rights management protection of HD DVD and Blu-ray Disc. Then Digg, "acting on the advice of its lawyers," removed posting submissions about the secret number from its database and banned several users for submitting it. The removals were seen by many Digg users as a capitulation to corporate interests and an assault on free speech.^[51] A statement by Jay Adelson attributed the article's take-down to an attempt to comply with cease and desist letters from the Advanced Access Content System consortium and cited Digg's Terms of Use as justification for taking down the article.^[52] Although some users defended Digg's actions,^[53] ^[54] ^[55] as a whole the community staged a widespread revolt with numerous articles and comments being made using the encryption key.^[56] ^[57] The scope of the user response was so great that one of the Digg users referred to it as a "digital Boston Tea Party".^[58] The response was also directly responsible for Digg reversing the policy and stating: "But now, after seeing hundreds of stories and reading thousands of comments, you've made it clear. You'd rather see Digg go down fighting than bow down to a bigger company. We hear you, and effective immediately we won't delete stories or comments containing the code and will deal with whatever the consequences might be."^[59]

Organized ideologically-motivated censorship

On August 5, 2010, progressive blogger Ole Ole Olson (aka "Novenator") posted a report to AlterNet about a year-long effort of organized burying of seemingly-liberal articles from the Upcoming module of Digg by a conservative Yahoo! Groups mailing list known as *DiggPatriots* and an associated page on coRank; he also accused leading members of the mailing list of participating in behavior which violated the Digg Terms of Usage, such as creating "sleeper" accounts in the event of administrators banning their main accounts for terms-violating behavior as well as vexatious "reporting" of seemingly-liberal users for banning.^[60] ^[61] The post was immediately followed by the disbanding and closure of the DiggPatriots list, and an investigation into the matter by Digg.^[62]

Timeline

October 2004	Development on digg.com begins ^[63]
December 1, 2004	Kevin Rose creates the first profile
December 3, 2004	The first story is submitted to Digg ^[64]
December 5, 2004	Digg is open to public
December 13, 2004	Kevin Rose shows off Digg on The Screen Savers ^[65]
January 2, 2005	Comment section introduced for stories
February 28, 2005	Digg 1.6: duplicate story detection
March 19, 2005	Profile page now includes comment histories and sort by category
May 9, 2005	Digg spy is released
May 27, 2005	Digg 2.0 is released. Friends feature, ajax buttons for Digg/bury, and a non-linear promotion algorithm are implemented.
July 2, 2005	Diggnation podcast begins with Alex and Kevin ^[66]
October 2005	Raises \$2.8 million in venture capital
December 2005	Digg Spy 2.0 released
December 2005	KoolAidGuy saga results in anti-spam tools being introduced ^[67]
January 17, 2006	Top user Albertpacino resigns after accusations of him being on Digg payroll ^[68]
January 18, 2006	Digg Clouds is introduced, Search is improved
January 25, 2006	Acquisition rumors begins
February 2, 2006	Report stories as 'inaccurate' and Profanity filters are introduced
February 15, 2006	Digg widget for blogs and share by email is released
March 1, 2006	New Digg Comment System Released, threaded and Diggable comments.
April 20, 2006	Digg Army Saga: after an exposé by forevergeek.com Kevin bans dozens of top users. ^[69]
June 26, 2006	Digg v3 rolled out, site redesign, shouts, new categories: politics and sports.
July 24, 2006	Digg Labs Launches
August 15, 2006	Thumbnails added
August 27, 2006	Digg begins enforcing trademark rights

September 6, 2006	User rebellion against Friends System and vote rigging results in promises about the diversity algorithms and other tools that were never implemented. Top user p9 resigns.
September 8, 2006	digriver.com is launched for mobile devices
September 12, 2006	#1 Story feature added later renamed as favorites
December 18, 2006	New features: Podcast, Videos, Top 10 sidebar, wide-screen support and friends page
February 2, 2007	Top Diggers list removed after user complaints ^[70]
February 2, 2007	Big Spy Launched
February 26, 2007	The new US Elections 2008 section creates lots of buzz
March 1, 2007	Blog post leads to concern about 'bury brigades'. Digg investigates and find no evidence for these allegations
April 19, 2007	Digg API is made public, Contest launched for best app using the API
May 1, 2007	HD-DVD saga regarding the censorship of the leaked encryption key, Kevin sides with the users and ends the censorship
June 4, 2007	Facebook app is launched
June 21, 2007	New Comment System - Joe Stump edition. Instant backlash from community after slow loading.
July 10, 2007	iphone App beta launched
July 25, 2007	Ad partnership with Microsoft
August 27, 2007	Customizable homepage options. Images and videos now back to homepage.
September 19, 2007	New Digg profiles, story suggestion, email alerts
November 20, 2007	Digg the Candidates: Presidential candidates get their Digg accounts
February 1, 2008	Digg Town Halls
May 15, 2008	New comments system is released
June 30, 2008	Recommendation engine is released
July 23, 2008	facebook minifeeds of digg stories
July 31, 2008	m.digg.com - Mobile site is released
August 6, 2008	Firefox Extension released
August 25, 2008	Digg Dialogg
September 8, 2008	Digg warns users against script for auto digging friends stories.
September 24, 2008	\$28.7 million capital raised with Highland Capital Partners.
October 3, 2008	Many power users banned after they fail to follow guidelines against script digging. ^[71]
October 9, 2008	Digg Spy and podcasts discontinued
December 18, 2008	Related stories and "People who Dugg this also Dugg" boxes added to individual stories
April 2, 2009	DiggBar and short url launched
April 9, 2009	New Search
May 6, 2009	Facebook Connect

May 26, 2009	Shouts feature is removed
August 6, 2009	Diggable ads implemented
October 16, 2009	Partners with WeFollow for categorizing user in the upcoming version 4 release
November 4, 2009	Digg Trends launched
January 17, 2010	Chrome extension launched
March 23, 2010	iPhone app is launched
April 1, 2010	Android app is launched
April 5, 2010	Jay Adelson Steps Down as CEO, Kevin Rose becomes interim CEO
July 2, 2010	Digg version 4 alpha testing begins
August 3, 2010	Digg takes down new user registration in preparation for Digg 4.0 ^[72]
August 25, 2010	Digg v4 is released: My News and Publisher Streams launched
September 1, 2010	Matt Williams replaces Kevin Rose as CEO
October 27, 2010	Digg lays off 37% of its staffs along with refocusing the service ^[73]

See also

- Delicious
- Fark
- Mixx
- Propeller.com
- Reddit
- Slashdot
- Social bookmarking
- StumbleUpon
- Web 2.0

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External links

- Official site (<http://digg.com/>)
- Inc. Magazine profile of Kevin Rose (<http://www.inc.com/magazine/20081101/keevviin.html/>)

Facebook

	
Type	Private
Founded	Cambridge, Massachusetts ^[1] (2004)
Founder	Mark Zuckerberg Chris Hughes Dustin Moskovitz Eduardo Saverin
Headquarters	Palo Alto, California, U.S. (main headquarters; serves the Americas) Dublin, Ireland (headquarters for Europe, Africa, Middle East) Seoul, South Korea (headquarters for Asia) Wellington, New Zealand (headquarters for Oceania), Hyderabad, India ^[2] (Headquarters for South Asia)
Area served	Worldwide
Key people	Mark Zuckerberg (CEO) Chris Cox (VP of Product) Sheryl Sandberg (COO)
Revenue	▲ US\$800 million (2009 est.) ^[3]
Employees	1700+ (2010) ^[4]
Slogan	
Website	facebook.com ^[5]
Alexa rank	■ 2 (November 2010) ^[6]
Type of site	Social network service
Advertising	Banner ads, referral marketing, Casual games
Registration	Required
Users	500 million ^[7] (active in July 2010) ^[8]
Available in	Multilingual
Launched	February 4, 2004
Current status	Active

Facebook is a social network service and website launched in February 2004 that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc.^[1] As of July 2010 Facebook has more than 500 million active users,^[7] which is about one person for every fourteen in the world.^{[9] [8]} Users may create a personal profile, add other users as friends and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Additionally, users may join common interest user groups, organized by workplace, school, or college, or other characteristics. The name of the service stems from the colloquial name for the book given to students at the start of the academic year by university administrations in the US with the intention of helping students to get to know each other better. Facebook allows anyone who declares themselves to be at least 13 years old to become a registered user of the website.

Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates and fellow computer science students Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes.^[10] The website's membership was initially limited by the

founders to Harvard students, but was expanded to other colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League, and Stanford University. It gradually added support for students at various other universities before opening to high school students, and, finally, to anyone aged 13 and over.

Facebook has met with some controversy. It has been blocked intermittently in several countries including Pakistan,^[11] Syria,^[12] the People's Republic of China,^[13] Vietnam,^[14] Iran,^[15] Uzbekistan^[16] and North Korea. It has also been banned at many places of work to discourage employees from wasting time using the service.^[17] Facebook's privacy has also been an issue, and the safety of their users has been compromised several times. Facebook settled a lawsuit regarding claims over source code and intellectual property.^[18]

A January 2009 Compete.com study ranked Facebook as the most used social network by worldwide monthly active users, followed by MySpace.^[19] *Entertainment Weekly* put it on its end-of-the-decade "best-of" list, saying, "How on earth did we stalk our exes, remember our co-workers' birthdays, bug our friends, and play a rousing game of Scrabulous before Facebook?"^[20] Quantcast estimates Facebook has 135.1 million monthly unique U.S. visitors.^[21]

History

Mark Zuckerberg wrote Facemash, the predecessor to Facebook, on October 28, 2003, while attending Harvard as a sophomore. The site represented a Harvard University version of Hot or Not, according to the *Harvard Crimson*.^[22] According to *The Harvard Crimson*, Facemash "used photos compiled from the online facebooks of nine Houses, placing two next to each other at a time and asking users to choose the 'hotter' person".^[23]



Mark Zuckerberg co-created Facebook in his Harvard dorm room.

To accomplish this, Zuckerberg hacked into the protected areas of Harvard's computer network and copied the houses' private dormitory ID images. Harvard at that time did not have a student directory with photos and basic information, and the initial site generated 450 visitors and 22,000 photo-views in its first four hours online.^[23] That the initial site mirrored people's physical community—with their real identities—represented the key aspects of what later became Facebook.^[24]

The site was quickly forwarded to several campus group list-servers but was shut down a few days later by the Harvard administration. Zuckerberg was charged by the administration with breach of security, violating copyrights, and violating individual privacy, and faced expulsion, but ultimately the charges were dropped.^[25] Zuckerberg expanded on this initial project that semester by creating a social study tool ahead of an art history final by uploading 500 Augustan images to a website, with one image per page along with a comment section.^[24]

He opened the site up to his classmates and people started sharing their notes.

The following semester, Zuckerberg began writing code for a new website in January 2004. He was inspired, he said, by an editorial in *The Harvard Crimson* about the Facemash incident.^[26] On February 4, 2004, Zuckerberg launched "Thefacebook", originally located at thefacebook.com.^[27]

Just six days after the site launched, three Harvard seniors, Cameron Winklevoss, Tyler Winklevoss, and Divya Narendra, accused Zuckerberg of intentionally misleading them into believing he would help them build a social network called HarvardConnection.com, while he was instead using their ideas to build a competing product.^[28] The three complained to the *Harvard Crimson* and the newspaper began an investigation. The three later filed a lawsuit against Zuckerberg, later settling.^[29]

Membership was initially restricted to students of Harvard College, and within the first month, more than half the undergraduate population at Harvard was registered on the service.^[30] Eduardo Saverin (business aspects), Dustin Moskovitz (programmer), Andrew McCollum (graphic artist), and Chris Hughes soon joined Zuckerberg to help promote the website. In March 2004, Facebook expanded to Stanford, Columbia, and Yale.^[31] This expansion

continued when it opened to all Ivy League schools, Boston University, New York University, MIT, and gradually most universities in Canada and the United States.^{[32] [33]}

Facebook incorporated in the summer of 2004 and the entrepreneur Sean Parker, who had been informally advising Zuckerberg, became the company's president.^[34] In June 2004, Facebook moved its base of operations to Palo Alto, California.^[31] Facebook received its first investment later that month from PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel.^[35] The company dropped *The* from its name after purchasing the domain name facebook.com in 2005 for \$200,000.^[36]

Date	Users	Days later	Monthly growth ^[37]
August 26, 2008	100 ^[38]	1665	178.38%
April 8, 2009	200 ^[39]	225	13.33%
September 15, 2009	300 ^[40]	150	10%
February 5, 2010	400 ^[41]	143	6.99%
July 21, 2010	500 ^[7]	166	4.52%
—	600	110 (ongoing)	

+ Total active users^[8] (in millions) Facebook launched a high school version in September 2005, which Zuckerberg called the next logical step.^[42] At that time, high school networks required an invitation to join.^[43] Facebook later expanded membership eligibility to employees of several companies, including Apple Inc. and Microsoft.^[44] Facebook was then opened on September 26, 2006, to everyone of ages 13 and older with a valid e-mail address.^[45] [46]

On October 24, 2007, Microsoft announced that it had purchased a 1.6% share of Facebook for \$240 million, giving Facebook a total implied value of around \$15 billion.^[47] Microsoft's purchase included rights to place international ads on Facebook.^[48] In October 2008, Facebook announced that it was to set up its international headquarters in Dublin, Ireland.^[49] In September 2009, Facebook claimed that it had turned cash flow positive for the first time.^[50] In June 2010, an online marketplace for trading private company stock reflected a valuation of \$11.5 billion.^[51]

Traffic to Facebook has increased steadily since 2009. More people visited Facebook than Google.com for the week ending March 13, 2010.^[52] Facebook has also become the top social network across eight individual markets in the region, Philippines, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Vietnam, while other brands commanded the top positions in certain markets, including Google-owned Orkut in India, Mixi.jp in Japan, CyWorld in South Korea and Yahoo!'s Wretch.cc in Taiwan.

Company



Entrance to Facebook's current headquarters in the Stanford Research Park, Palo Alto, California.

Most of Facebook's revenues comes from advertising. Microsoft is Facebook's exclusive partner for serving banner advertising,^[53] and as such Facebook only serves advertisements that exist in Microsoft's advertisement inventory. According to comScore, an internet marketing research company, Facebook collects as much data from its visitors as Google and Microsoft, but considerably less than Yahoo!.^[54] In 2010, the security team began expanding its efforts to counter threats and terrorism from users.^[55] On November 6, 2007, Facebook launched Facebook Beacon, which was an ultimately failed attempt to advertise to friends of users using the knowledge of what purchases friends made.

Facebook generally has a lower clickthrough rate (CTR) for advertisements than most major websites. For banner advertisements, they have generally received one-fifth the number of clicks on Facebook compared to the Web as a whole.^[56] This means that a smaller percentage of Facebook's users click on advertisements than many other large websites. For example, while Google users click on the first advertisement for search results an average of 8% of the time (80,000 clicks for every one million searches),^[57] Facebook's users click on advertisements an average of 0.04% of the time (400 clicks for every one million pages).^[58]

Sarah Smith, who was Facebook's Online Sales Operations Manager, confirmed that successful advertising campaigns can have clickthrough rates as low as 0.05% to 0.04%, and that CTR for ads tend to fall within two weeks.^[59] Competing social network MySpace's CTR, in comparison, is about 0.1%, 2.5 times better than Facebook's but still low compared to many other websites. Explanations for Facebook's low CTR include the fact that Facebook's users are more technologically savvy and therefore use ad blocking software to hide advertisements, the users are younger and therefore are better at ignoring advertising messages, and that on MySpace, users spend more time browsing through content while on Facebook, users spend their time communicating with friends and therefore have their attention diverted away from advertisements.^[60]

Year	Revenue	Growth
2006	\$52 ^[61]	—
2007	\$150 ^[62]	188%
2008	\$280 ^[63]	87%
2009	\$800 ^[3]	186%
2010 ^[64]	\$1100 ^[65]	38%

+ Revenues

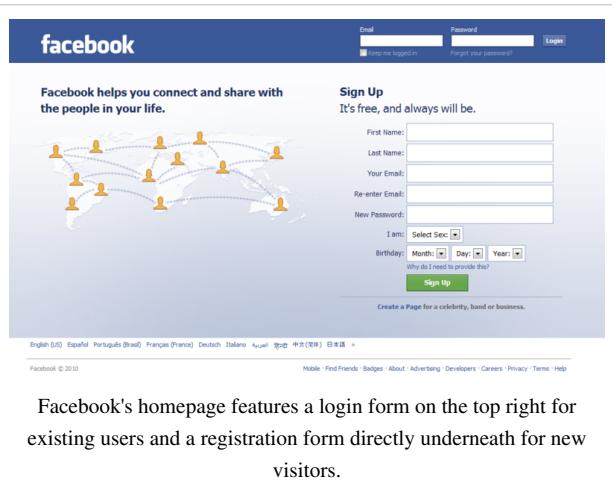
(estimated, in millions US\$) On Pages for brands and products, however, some companies have reported CTR as high as 6.49% for Wall posts.^[66] Involver, a social marketing platform, announced in July 2008 that it managed to attain a CTR of 0.7% on Facebook (over 10 times the typical CTR for Facebook ad campaigns) for its first client, Serena Software, managing to convert 1.1 million views into 8000 visitors to their website.^[67] A study found that for video advertisements on Facebook, over 40% of users who viewed the videos viewed the entire video, while the industry average was 25% for in-banner video ads.^[68]

Facebook has approximately 1,400 employees and offices in eight countries.^[69] Regarding Facebook ownership, Mark Zuckerberg owns 24% of the company, Accel Partners owns 10%, Dustin Moskovitz owns 6%, Digital Sky

Technologies owns 5%, Eduardo Saverin owns 5%, Sean Parker owns 4%, Peter Thiel owns 3%, Greylock Partners and Meritech Capital Partners own between 1 to 2% each, Microsoft owns 1.3%, Li Ka-shing owns 0.75%, the Interpublic Group owns less than 0.5%, a small group of current and former employees and celebrities own less than 1% each, including Matt Cohler, Jeff Rothschild, California U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, Chris Hughes, and Owen Van Natta, while Reid Hoffman and Mark Pincus have sizable holdings of the company, and the remaining 30% or so are owned by employees, undisclosed number of celebrities, and outside investors.^[70] Adam D'Angelo, chief technology officer and friend of Zuckerberg, resigned in May 2008. Reports claimed that he and Zuckerberg began quarreling, and that he was no longer interested in partial ownership of the company.^[71]

Website

Users can create profiles with photos, lists of personal interests, contact information and other personal information. Communicating with friends and other users can be done through private or public messages or a chat feature. Users can also create and join interest groups and "like pages" (formerly called "fan pages" until April 19, 2010), some of which are maintained by organizations as a means of advertising.^[72]



The screenshot shows the top portion of the Facebook homepage. At the top right, there is a login form with fields for 'Email' and 'Password', and links for 'Keep me logged in' and 'Forgot your password?'. Below the login form is a 'Sign Up' section with the text 'It's free, and always will be.' and a registration form. The registration form includes fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Your Email', 'Re-enter Email', 'New Password', 'I am:', 'Birthday:', and a 'Sign Up' button. There is also a link 'Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business.' at the bottom of the sign-up section.

Facebook's homepage features a login form on the top right for existing users and a registration form directly underneath for new visitors.



The screenshot shows a Facebook profile page for a user named 'Anirudh Just Anirudh'. The profile picture is a portrait of a person with white hair. The page includes sections for 'wall', 'Info', and 'Photos'. The 'wall' section contains several posts from friends like 'Batanya Jeneva' and 'Abdhyta Just Abdhyta'. The 'Info' section displays basic profile details such as 'Relationship Status: Single', 'Birthdate: November 2, 1996', 'Gender: Girl', and 'Hometown: Jaipur, India'. The 'Friends' section lists several friends with their profile pictures. At the bottom, there is a 'Create a Profile Badge' button and a 'Like Chat (3)' button.

Profile shown on Facebook in 2010.

To allay concerns about privacy, Facebook enables users to choose their own privacy settings and choose who can see what parts of their profile.^[73] The website is free to users and generates revenue from advertising, such as banner ads.^[74] Facebook requires a user's name and profile picture (if applicable) to be accessible by everyone. Users can control who sees other information they have shared, as well as who can find them in searches, through their privacy settings.^[75]

The media often compares Facebook to MySpace, but one significant difference between the two websites is the level of customization.^[76] Another difference is Facebook's requirement that users utilize their true identity, a demand that MySpace does not make.^[77] MySpace allows users to decorate their profiles using HTML and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), while Facebook only allows plain text.^[78] Facebook has a number of features with which users may interact. They include the Wall, a space on every user's profile page that allows friends to post messages for the user to see;^[79] Pokes, which allows users to send a virtual "poke" to each other (a notification then tells a user that they have been poked);^[80] Photos, where users can upload albums and photos;^[81] and Status, which allows users to inform their friends of their whereabouts and actions.^[82] Depending on privacy settings, anyone who can see a user's profile can also view that user's Wall. In July 2007, Facebook began allowing users to post attachments to the Wall, whereas the Wall was previously limited to textual content only.^[79]

Over time, Facebook has added features to its website. On September 6, 2006, a News Feed was announced, which appears on every user's homepage and highlights information including profile changes, upcoming events, and birthdays of the user's friends.^[83] This has enabled spammers and other users to manipulate these features by creating illegitimate events or posting fake birthdays to attract attention to their profile or cause.^[84] Initially, the News Feed caused dissatisfaction among Facebook users; some complained it was too cluttered and full of undesired information, while others were concerned it made it too easy for other people to track down individual activities (such as changes in relationship status, events, and conversations with other users).^[85]

In response to this dissatisfaction, Zuckerberg issued an apology for the site's failure to include appropriate customizable privacy features. Since then, users have been able to control what types of information are shared automatically with friends. Users are now able to prevent friends from seeing updates about certain types of activities, including profile changes, Wall posts, and newly added friends.^[86] On February 23, 2010, Facebook was granted US patent 7669123^[87] on certain aspects of their News Feed. The patent covers News Feeds where links are provided so that one user can participate in the same activity of another user.^[88] The patent may encourage Facebook to pursue action against websites that violate the patent, which may potentially include websites such as Twitter.^[89]

One of the most popular applications on Facebook is the Photos application, where users can upload albums and photos.^[90] Facebook allows users to upload an unlimited number of photos, compared with other image hosting services such as Photobucket and Flickr, which apply limits to the number of photos that a user is allowed to upload. During the first years, Facebook users were limited to 60 photos per album. As of May 2009, this limit has been increased to 200 photos per album.^{[91] [92] [93] [94]}

Privacy settings can be set for individual albums, limiting the groups of users that can see an album. For example, the privacy of an album can be set so that only the user's friends can see the album, while the privacy of another album can be set so that all Facebook users can see it. Another feature of the Photos application is the ability to "tag", or label users in a photo. For instance, if a photo contains a user's friend, then the user can tag the friend in the photo. This sends a notification to the friend that they have been tagged, and provides them a link to see the photo.^[95]

Facebook Notes was introduced on August 22, 2006, a blogging feature that allowed tags and embeddable images. Users were later able to import blogs from Xanga, LiveJournal, Blogger, and other blogging services.^[45] During the week of April 7, 2008, Facebook released a Comet-based^[96] instant messaging application called "Chat" to several networks,^[97] which allows users to communicate with friends and is similar in functionality to desktop-based instant messengers.

Facebook launched Gifts on February 8, 2007, which allows users to send virtual gifts to their friends that appear on the recipient's profile. Gifts cost \$1.00 each to purchase, and a personalized message can be

The screenshot shows the Facebook mobile interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs for Status, Home, Profile, Friends, and Inbox. Below that is a sub-navigation bar with News Feed, Events, and Requests (1). The main content area displays several news items:

- Alli Hsieh** is singing the 20th century FOX song.
- Jen Taillon** added new photos. Four thumbnail images of landscapes and people are shown.
- Dana Hornbeak** removed "piano" from her interests.
- Dave McClure** posted a video. A small video camera icon is next to his name.
- A note from **Toronto Garage** states: "Download not available The user has chosen not to allow download of this file. If you need it badly, send a request on his/her slidespace."
- A note from **meagan marks** (@ Toronto FB Dev Garage) says: "Facebook presentation by meagan marks @ Toronto FB Dev Garage. Interesting stats & metrics info, worth checking out."

At the bottom right, there's a "facebook" logo.

Facebook mobile graphical user interface

The screenshot shows a Facebook profile page for a user named "Scranton". The profile picture is a group photo of three people. The basic information section includes:

- Name:** Scranton
- Birthdate:** January 12, 2005
- Last Update:** February 3, 2005
- Gender:** Male
- Status:** Single
- Sex:** Male
- Year:** 2004
- Concentration:** Engineering Sciences Mathematics
- Phone:** (212) 555-1234
- High School:** Extended Info
- Extended Info:** Screenname: Scranton, Logging On: Now, Friendship: Dating, Relationship: Random play, Whatever I can get
- Interested In:** Relationship Status: Single, Political Views: Liberal, Interests: Dancing, Foodie!, Basketball, Tennis, Loving you/have that

On the left sidebar, there are links for quick search, My Profile, My Friends, My Events, My Away Message, My Privacy, My Account, and My Privacy.

Profile shown on Thefacebook in 2005

attached to each gift.^[98] ^[99] On May 14, 2007, Facebook launched Marketplace, which lets users post free classified ads.^[100] Marketplace has been compared to Craigslist by CNET, which points out that the major difference between the two is that listings posted by a user on Marketplace are only seen by users that are in the same network as that user, whereas listings posted on Craigslist can be seen by anyone.^[101]

On July 20, 2008, Facebook introduced "Facebook Beta", a significant redesign of its user interface on selected networks. The Mini-Feed and Wall were consolidated, profiles were separated into tabbed sections, and an effort was made to create a "cleaner" look.^[102] After initially giving users a choice to switch, Facebook began migrating all users to the new version beginning in September 2008.^[103] On December 11, 2008, it was announced that Facebook was testing a simpler signup process.^[104]

On June 13, 2009, Facebook introduced a "Usernames" feature, whereby pages can be linked with simpler URLs such as <http://www.facebook.com/facebook>^[105] as opposed to <http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=20531316728>^[106].^[107] Many new smartphones offer access to the Facebook services either through their web-browsers or applications. An official Facebook application is available for the iPhone OS, the Android OS, and the WebOS. Nokia and Research in Motion both provide Facebook applications for their own mobile devices. More than 150 million active users access Facebook through mobile devices across 200 mobile operators in 60 countries.

Facebook profile shown in 2007

Reception

According to comScore, Facebook is the leading social networking site based on monthly unique visitors, having overtaken main competitor MySpace in April 2008.^[108] ComScore reports that Facebook attracted 130 million unique visitors in May 2010, an increase of 8.6 million people.^[109] According to Alexa, the website's ranking among all websites increased from 60th to 7th in worldwide traffic, from September 2006 to September 2007, and is currently 2nd.^[110] Quantcast ranks the website 2nd in the U.S. in traffic,^[111] and Compete.com ranks it 2nd in the U.S.^[112] The website is the most popular for uploading photos, with 50 billion uploaded cumulatively.^[113] In 2010, Sophos's "Security Threat Report 2010" polled over 500 firms, 60% of which responded that they believed that Facebook was the social network that posed the biggest threat to security, well ahead of MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn.^[55]

Facebook is the most popular social networking site in several English-speaking countries, including Canada,^[114] the United Kingdom,^[115] and the United States.^[116] ^[117] ^[118] ^[119] In regional Internet markets, Facebook penetration is highest in North America (69 percent), Middle East-Africa (67 percent), Latin America (58 percent), Europe (57 percent), and Asia-Pacific (17 percent).^[120]

The website has won awards such as placement into the "Top 100 Classic Websites" by *PC Magazine* in 2007,^[121] and winning the "People's Voice Award" from the Webby Awards in 2008.^[122] In a 2006 study conducted by Student Monitor, a New Jersey-based company specializing in research concerning the college student market, Facebook was named the second most popular thing among undergraduates, tied with beer and only ranked lower than the iPod.^[123]

On March 2010, Judge Richard Seeborg issued an order approving the class settlement in *Lane v. Facebook, Inc.*, the class action lawsuit arising out of Facebook's Beacon program.

In 2010, Facebook won the Crunchie "Best Overall Startup Or Product" the third year in a row^[124] and was recognized as one of the "Hottest Silicon Valley Companies" by Lead411.^[125] However, in a July 2010 survey performed by the American Customer Satisfaction Index, Facebook received a score of 64 out of 100, placing it in

the bottom 5% of all private sector companies in terms of customer satisfaction, alongside industries such as the IRS e-file system, airlines, and cable companies. Reasons for why Facebook scored so poorly include privacy problems, frequent changes to the website's interface, the results returned by the News Feed, and spam.^[126]

In December 2008, the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory ruled that Facebook is a valid protocol to serve court notices to defendants. It is believed to be the world's first legal judgement that defines a summons posted on Facebook as legally binding.^[127] In March 2009, the New Zealand High Court associate justice David Glendall allowed for the serving of legal papers on Craig Axe by the company Axe Market Garden via Facebook.^[128] Employers (such as Virgin Atlantic Airways) have also used Facebook as a means to keep tabs on their employees and have even been known to fire them over posts they have made.^[129]

By 2005, the use of Facebook had already become so ubiquitous that the generic verb "facebooking" had come into use to describe the process of browsing others' profiles or updating one's own.^[130] In 2008, Collins English Dictionary declared "Facebook" as their new Word of the Year.^[131] In December 2009, the New Oxford American Dictionary declared their word of the year to be the verb "unfriend", defined as "To remove someone as a "friend" on a social networking site such as Facebook. As in, "I decided to unfriend my roommate on Facebook after we had a fight" ".^[132]

As of April 2010, according to *The New York Times*, countries with most Facebook users are the United States, the United Kingdom and Indonesia.^[133] Indonesia has become the country with the second largest number of Facebook users, after the United States, with 24 million users, or 10% of Indonesia's population.^[134] Also in early 2010, Openbook was established, an avowed parody website (and privacy advocacy website)^[135] that enables text-based searches of those Wall posts that are available to "Everyone", i.e. to everyone on the Internet.

Writers for *The Wall Street Journal* found in 2010 that Facebook apps were transmitting identifying information to "dozens of advertising and Internet tracking companies". The apps used a "referrer" which exposed the user's identity and sometimes their friends'. Facebook said, "We have taken immediate action to disable all applications that violate our terms".^[136]

Political impact

Facebook's role in the American political process was demonstrated in January 2008, shortly before the New Hampshire primary, when Facebook teamed up with ABC and Saint Anselm College to allow users to give live feedback about the "back to back" January 5 Republican and Democratic debates.^{[137] [138] [139]} Charles Gibson moderated both debates, held at the Dana Center for the Humanities at Saint Anselm College. Facebook users took part in debate groups organized around specific topics, register to vote, and message questions.^[140]

Over 1,000,000 people installed the Facebook application 'US politics' in order to take part, and the application measured users' responses to specific comments made by the debating candidates.^[141] This debate showed the broader community what many young students had already experienced: Facebook was an extremely popular and powerful new way to interact and voice opinions. An article written by Michelle Sullivan of Uwire.com illustrates how the "facebook effect" has affected youth voting rates, support by youth of political candidates, and general involvement by the youth population in the 2008 election.^[142]

In February 2008, a Facebook group called "One Million Voices Against FARC" organized an event that saw hundreds of thousands of Colombians march in protest against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, better known as the FARC (from the group's Spanish name).^[143] In August 2010, one of North Korea's official government



The stage at the Facebook – Saint Anselm College debates in 2008.

websites, Uriminzokkiri, joined Facebook.^[144]

In media

- At age 102, Ivy Bean of Bradford, England joined Facebook in 2008, making her one of the oldest people ever on Facebook. An inspiration to other residents,^[145] she quickly became more widely known and several fan pages were made in her honor. She visited Prime Minister Gordon Brown and his wife, Sarah, in Downing Street early in 2010.^[146] Some time after creating her Facebook page, Bean also joined Twitter, when she passed the maximum number of friends allowed by Facebook. She became the oldest person to ever use the Twitter website. At the time of her death in July 2010, she had 4,962 friends on Facebook and more than 56,000 followers on Twitter. Her death was widely reported in the media and she received tributes from several notable media personalities.^[147]
- "FriendFace", a December 2008 episode of the British sitcom, *The IT Crowd*, parodied Facebook and social networking sites, in general.^[148]
- American author, Ben Mezrich, published a book in July 2009 about Mark Zuckerberg and the founding of Facebook, titled *The Accidental Billionaires: The Founding of Facebook, A Tale of Sex, Money, Genius, and Betrayal*.^[149]
- In response to the Everybody Draw Mohammed Day controversy and the ban of the website in Pakistan, an Islamic version of the website was created, called MillatFacebook.^[150]
- "You Have 0 Friends", an April 2010 episode of the American animated comedy series, *South Park*, parodied Facebook.^[151]
- *The Social Network*, a drama film directed by David Fincher about the founding of Facebook, was released October 1, 2010.^[152] The film features an ensemble cast consisting of Jesse Eisenberg as Mark Zuckerberg, Andrew Garfield as Eduardo Saverin, Justin Timberlake as Sean Parker, and Armie Hammer as Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss. The film was written by Aaron Sorkin and adapted from Ben Mezrich's 2009 book. The film was distributed by Columbia Pictures. No staff members of Facebook, including Zuckerberg, was involved with the project. However, one of Facebook's co-founders, Eduardo Saverin, was a consultant for Mezrich's book. Mark Zuckerberg has said that *The Social Network* is inaccurate.^[153]

See also

- Ambient Awareness
- CampusNetwork
- Diaspora (software)
- List of social networking websites
- Social media
- *The Facebook Era* (book)
- Wirehog

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.facebook.com/>)
- "Facebook news and reviews" (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/>) at *The Daily Telegraph*
-  The Wiktionary definition of facebook
-  Media related to Facebook at Wikimedia Commons

bjn:Facebook

LinkedIn

	
URL	www.linkedin.com ^[1]
Commercial?	Yes
Type of site	Professional network service
Registration	Required
Created by	Reid Hoffman
Launched	May 2003 Mountain View, CA, USA
Alexa rank	▲ 22 (October 2010) ^[2]
Revenue	\$17 million (December 31, 2008 Fiscal Year)
Current status	Active

LinkedIn (pronounced /lɪŋkt.ɪn/) is a business-oriented social networking site. Founded in December 2002 and launched in May 2003,^[3] it is mainly used for professional networking. As of 2 November 2010, LinkedIn had more than 80 million registered users, spanning more than 200 countries and territories worldwide.^[4] The site is available in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.^[5] Quantcast reports LinkedIn has 21.4 million monthly unique U.S. visitors and 47.6 million globally.^[6]

Company background

LinkedIn's CEO is Jeff Weiner, previously a Yahoo! Inc. executive. The company was founded by Reid Hoffman and founding team members from Paypal and Socialnet.com (Allen Blue, Eric Ly, Jean-Luc Vaillant, Lee Hower, Konstantin Guericke, Stephen Beitzel, David Eves, Ian McNish, Yan Pujante, and Chris Saccheri).

Founder Reid Hoffman, previously CEO of LinkedIn, is now Chairman of the Board. Dipchand Nishar is Vice President of Products.^[7] LinkedIn is headquartered in Mountain View, California, with offices in Omaha, Chicago, New York and London. It is funded by Greylock, Sequoia Capital, Bain Capital Ventures,^[8] Bessemer Venture Partners and the European Founders Fund. LinkedIn reached profitability in March 2006.^[9]

On June 17, 2008, Sequoia Capital, Greylock Partners, and other venture capital firms purchased a 5% stake in the company for \$53 million, giving the company a post-money valuation of approximately \$1 billion.^[10]

In June 2010, LinkedIn announced it would be opening up a European headquarters in Dublin, Ireland.^[11]

On July 28, 2010, Tiger Global Management LLC purchased a 1% stake in the company at a valuation of approximately \$2 billion.^[12]

On August 4, 2010, LinkedIn announced Mspoke acquisition. This is the company's first acquisition for an undisclosed amount. This acquisition aims to help LinkedIn users do more than just find a job, increase users' activity^[13] and improve its 1% premium subscription ratio.^[14]

Membership

With 80 million users, LinkedIn is ahead of its competitors Viadeo (30 million)^[15] and XING (9 million).^[16] The membership grows by a new member approximately every second. About half of the members are in the United States and 11 million are from Europe. With 3 million users, India is the fastest-growing country as of 2009. The Netherlands has the highest adoption rate per capita outside the US at 30%.^[17] LinkedIn recently reached 4 million users in UK^[18] and 1 million in Spain.^[19]

Features

The purpose of the site is to allow registered users to maintain a list of contact details of people they know and trust in business. The people in the list are called *Connections*. Users can invite anyone (whether a site user or not) to become a connection.

This list of connections can then be used in a number of ways:

- A contact network is built up consisting of their direct connections, the connections of each of their connections (termed *second-degree connections*) and also the connections of second-degree connections (termed *third-degree connections*). This can be used to gain an introduction to someone a person wishes to know through a mutual, trusted contact.
- It can then be used to find jobs, people and business opportunities recommended by someone in one's contact network.
- Employers can list jobs and search for potential candidates.
- Job seekers can review the profile of hiring managers and discover which of their existing contacts can introduce them.
- Users can post their own photos and view photos of others to aid in identification.
- Users can now follow different companies and can get notification about the new joining and offers available.
- Users can save (i.e. bookmark) jobs which they would like to apply for.

The "gated-access approach" (where contact with any professional requires either a preexisting relationship, or the intervention of a contact of theirs) is intended to build trust among the service's users. LinkedIn participates in EU's International Safe Harbor Privacy Principles.^[20]

LinkedIn also allows users to research companies with which they may be interested in working. When typing the name of a given company in the search box, statistics about the company are provided. These may include the ratio of female to male employees, the percentage of the most common titles/positions held within the company, the location of the company's headquarters and offices, or a list of present and former employees.

The feature LinkedIn Answers,^[21] similar to Yahoo! Answers, allows users to ask questions for the community to answer. This feature is free and the main difference from the latter is that questions are potentially more business-oriented, and the identity of the people asking and answering questions is known.

The searchable LinkedIn Groups^[22] feature allows users to establish new business relationships by joining alumni, industry, or professional and other relevant groups. LinkedIn groups can be created in any subjects and by any member of LinkedIn. Some groups are specialised groups dealing with a narrow domain or industry whereas others are very broad and generic in nature.

Another LinkedIn feature is LinkedIn Polls.

A mobile version of the site was launched in February 2008 which gives access to a reduced feature set over a mobile phone. The mobile service is available in six languages: Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese and Spanish.^[23]

In mid-2008, LinkedIn launched LinkedIn DirectAds as a form of sponsored advertising.^[24]

In October, 2008, LinkedIn revealed plans to opening its social network of 30 million professionals globally as a potential sample for business-to-business research. And, in doing so it's testing a potential social-network revenue model-research that to some appears more promising than advertising.^[25]

In October, 2008, LinkedIn enabled an "applications platform" that allows other online services to be embedded within a member's profile page. For example, among the initial applications were an Amazon Reading List that allows LinkedIn members to display books they are reading, a connection to Tripit, and a Six Apart, WordPress and TypePad application that allows members to display their latest blog postings within their LinkedIn profile.^[26]

In November, 2010, LinkedIn allowed businesses to list products and services on company profile pages; it also permitted LinkedIn members to "recommend" products and services and write reviews.^[27]

Restricted access from some countries

In 2009 Syrian users reported that LinkedIn server stopped accepting connections originating from IP addresses assigned to Syria. As company's Customer Support stated, services provided by them are subject to US export and re-export control laws and regulations and "*As such, and as a matter of corporate policy, we do not allow member accounts or access to our site from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, or Syria.*"^[28]

Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria are not available in the list of countries that LinkedIn users can select as one's location. However, as of April 2010, North Korea is still present there.

SNA LinkedIn

The Search, Network, and Analytics team at LinkedIn has a web site^[29] that hosts the open source projects built by the group. The most notable one is Project Voldemort,^[30] a distributed key-value structured storage system with low-latency similar in purpose to Amazon's Dynamo and Google's BigTable.

See also

- Business network
- Information Routing Group
- LinkedIn Answers
- List of social networking websites
- Reputation systems
- Social network
- Social software

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MySpace



Type	Subsidiary
Founded	Santa Monica, California (2003)
Headquarters	Beverly Hills, California, U.S.
Area served	Worldwide
Key people	Tom Anderson (President) Austin "Chumlee" Russell (Co-Founder) Owen Van Natta (CEO) Mike Jones (COO) Jason Hirschhorn (CPO)
Revenue	US\$385 million (2009 est.) ^[1]
Owner	News Corporation
Employees	1000 ^[2]
Slogan	A Place for Friends
Website	www.myspace.com ^[3]
Alexa rank	▼ 40 (October 2010) ^[4]
Type of site	Social network service
Advertising	Google, AdSense
Registration	Required
Users	66 million (June 2010) ^[5]
Available in	15 languages
Launched	August 2003
Current status	Active

Myspace,^[6] stylized My____^[7] and previously MySpace, is a social networking website. Its headquarters are in Beverly Hills, California^[8] where it shares an office building with its immediate owner, News Corp. Digital Media, owned by News Corporation. Myspace became the most popular social networking site in the United States in June 2006.^[9] According to comScore, Myspace was overtaken internationally by its main competitor, Facebook, in April 2008, based on monthly unique visitors.^{[10] [11]} Myspace employs 1,000 employees, after laying off 30 percent of its workforce in June 2009;^[12] the company does not disclose revenues or profits separately from News Corporation. Quantcast estimates MySpace's monthly U.S. unique visitors at 43.2 million.^[13] The 100 millionth account was created on August 9, 2006,^[14] in the Netherlands.^[15]

History

After the 2002 launch of Friendster, several eUniverse employees with Friendster accounts saw its potential and decided to mimic the more popular features of the social networking website, in August 2003. Within 10 days, the first version of Myspace was ready for launch.^[16]

A complete infrastructure of finance, human resources, technical expertise, bandwidth, and server capacity was available for the site, right out of the gate, so the Myspace team wasn't distracted with typical start-up issues. The project was overseen by Brad Greenspan (eUniverse's Founder, Chairman, CEO), who managed Chris DeWolfe (MySpace's starting CEO), Josh Berman, Tom Anderson (MySpace's starting president), and a team of programmers and resources provided by eUniverse.



Fox Interactive Media headquarters, 407 North Maple Drive, Beverly Hills, California, where Myspace is also housed.

The very first Myspace users were eUniverse employees. The company held contests to see who could sign-up the most users.^[17] The company then used its resources to push Myspace to the masses. eUniverse used its 20 million users and e-mail subscribers to quickly breathe life into MySpace,^[18] and move it to the head of the pack of social networking websites. A key architect was tech expert Toan Nguyen who helped stabilize the Myspace platform when Brad Greenspan asked him to join the team.^[19]

The origin of the MySpace.com domain was a site owned by YourZ.com, Inc.^[20] It was intended to be a leading online data storage and sharing site up until 2002. By 2004, Myspace and MySpace.com, which existed as a brand associated with YourZ.com,^[21] had made the transition from a virtual storage site to a social networking site. This is the natural connection to Chris DeWolfe and a friend, who reminded him he had earlier bought the URL domain, MySpace.com, intending it to be used as a web hosting site,^[23] since both worked at one time in the virtual data storage business, which itself was a casualty of the "dot bomb" era.

Shortly after launching the site, team member Chris DeWolfe suggested that they start charging a fee for the basic Myspace service.^[24] Brad Greenspan nixed the idea, believing that keeping Myspace free and open was necessary to make it a large and successful community.^[25]

Some employees of Myspace including DeWolfe and Berman were later able to purchase equity in the property before MySpace, and its parent company eUniverse (now renamed Intermix Media) was bought in July 2005 for US\$580 million by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation (the parent company of Fox Broadcasting and other media enterprises).^[16] Of this amount, approximately US\$327 million has been attributed to the value of Myspace according to the financial adviser fairness opinion.^[27]

In January 2006, Fox announced plans to launch a UK version of Myspace in a bid to "tap into the UK music scene"^[28] which they have since done. They also released a version in China^[29] and have since launched similar versions in other countries.

By late 2007 into 2008, Myspace was considered the leading social networking site, and consistently beat out main competitor Facebook in traffic. When Facebook launched new features in an effort to attract a variety of users, Myspace found itself in a continuing decline of membership. As of July 2010, the site was ranked 25th in Internet traffic,^[30] opposed to the 2nd position held by Facebook.^[31]

The corporate history of Myspace as well as the status of Tom Anderson as a Myspace founder has been a matter of some public dispute.

New design

Throughout 2007 and 2008, Myspace redesigned many of the features of its site in both layout and in function. One of the first functions to be redesigned was the user home page, with features such as status updates, applications, and subscriptions being added in order to compete with Facebook. In 2008, the Myspace homepage was redesigned. Myspace Music was redecorated in 2008 and 2009, making it more like a online music store similar to iTunes and Rhapsody, along with the ability to create playlists. The use of Playlist.com on Myspace was abolished after the new Myspace music was launched. Some of the classic features of Myspace music, such as the artist directory, were also abolished.

On March 10, 2010, Myspace had some new features added like recommendation engine for new users which suggests games, music and videos based on their previous search habits. The security on Myspace was also accounted to, with the criticism of Facebook, to make it a safer site. The security of Myspace enables users to choose if the content could be viewed for Friends Only, 18 and older, or Everyone. The website will also release several mobile micro applications for Myspace gamers besides sending them games alerts. The site may release 20 to 30 micro apps and go mobile next year.^[32]

In Summer 2010, the color scene of Myspace changed. The classic blue has been replaced by a more white interface, to resemble the look and feel of Facebook, and to attract users of Facebook to join or rejoin Myspace. The simplification of the navigation bar also made it easier to find features quickly. In August 2010, the home page was modified to give new room for the Myspace Stream and to make it resemble Facebook further. Profile 3.0 was launched as well, which was an upgrade from profile 2.0. That enabled users to have more creativity with a simpler interface. Templates, like profile 2.0, are added too but it also enabled simpler template creation methods and module control. Building templates has become simpler; without the use of custom HTML or CSS, users can upload photos from their computer or find background images on the internet by typing a URL, to give it more of a personal, more sentimental and individualist image than the prepackaged layout sites that were used before. HTML and CSS can be still used on the profile, but an HTML or CSS module must be added to promote a neater layout but still use the sponsored layout sites.

In September 2010, Myspace continued to work on improving the website. A photos section was added and the Fotoflexer app was added to photos. Myspace also enabled users to integrate their Myspace activity to their Twitter and Facebook accounts, to attract and show others that they are still on Myspace and to bring users back to Myspace. Myspace Movies was also added to promote movies and movie related media.

New image

On October 27, 2010, Myspace introduced a beta version of a new site design on a limited scale, with plans to switch all interested users to the new site in late November. Chief executive Mike Jones said the site as no longer competing with Facebook as a general social networking site. Instead, Myspace would be music-oriented and would target younger people. Jones believed most younger users would continue to use the site after the redesign, though older users might not. The goal of the redesign is to increase the number Myspace of users and how long they spend there. On October 26, BTIG analyst Richard Greenfield said, "Most investors have written off MySpace now," and he was unsure whether the changes would help the company recover.^[33]

New logo design

A report in October 2010 at Techcrunch.com detailed Myspace's debut of a new logo. The "My" portion appears in a different font, while the part previously occupied by the word "Space" was replaced by a simple underline mark, representing a blank "space". The logo has not been implanted on Myspace's website yet.^[34]

Revenue model

Myspace operates solely on revenues generated by advertising as its user model possesses no paid-for features for the end user.^[35] Through its Web site and affiliated ad networks, Myspace is second only to Yahoo! in its capacity to collect data about its users and thus in its ability to use behavioral targeting to select the ads each visitor sees.^[36]

On August 8, 2006, search engine Google signed a \$900 million deal to provide a Google search facility and advertising on Myspace.^[37] ^[38] ^[39] Myspace has proven to be a windfall for many smaller companies that provide widgets or accessories to the social networking giant. Companies such as Slide.com, RockYou!, and YouTube were all launched on Myspace as widgets providing additional functionality to the site. Other sites created layouts to personalize the site and made hundreds of thousands of dollars for its owners most of whom were in their late teens and early twenties.^[40] ^[41]

In November 2008, Myspace announced that user-uploaded content that infringed on copyrights held by MTV and its subsidiary networks would be redistributed with advertisements that would generate revenue for the companies.^[42]

Despite losing popularity to Facebook and Twitter in recent months, Rupert Murdoch has no plans to sell off Myspace, nor to buy out Twitter. Murdoch gave the site his personal support, while feeling that Twitter has yet to find a way to make money on its own.^[43] However, in 2009, Myspace also added a new status update feature. If a Myspace user has a Twitter account, the tweet will also update the Myspace status. (Facebook also has a similar feature.) It does, however, require that the two accounts be synched up together.

Contents of a Myspace profile

Moods

Moods are small emoticons that are used to depict a mood the user is in. The feature was added in July 2007. The mood feature as of 2010 is not included by default with the status updates, but could be shared on the homepage as a separate updated.

Blurbs, blogs, multimedia

Profiles contain two standard "blurbs": "About Me" and "Who I'd Like to Meet" sections. Profiles also contain an "Interests" section and a "Details" section. In the "Details" section, "Status" and "Zodiac Sign" fields will always display. However, fields in these sections will not be displayed if members do not fill them in. Profiles also contain a blog with standard fields for content, emotion, and media. Myspace also supports uploading images. One of the images can be chosen to be the "default image", the image that will be seen on the profile's main page, search page, and as the image that will appear to the side of the user's name on comments, messages, etc. A photo editor powered by Fotoflexer is available which can not only crop images and adjust contrast but also convert the image to a cartoon or a line drawing made with neon lights, or put the user's face in a photo of a \$100 bill. Flash, such as on MySpace's video service, can be embedded. Blogging features are also available. These features could be hidden on a profile by using the module customizer or using HTML/CSS codes. Photos could be displayed on the Myspace profile instead of a link that it was used in previous years. Photos can be made into a slide show.

Comments

Below the User's Friends Space (by default) is the "comments" section, wherein the user's friends may leave comments for all viewers to read. Myspace users have the option to delete any comment or require all comments to be approved before posting. If a user's account is deleted, every comment left on other profiles by that user will be deleted, and replaced with the comment saying "This Profile No Longer Exists". The option of using HTML in comments could be enabled or disabled.

Profile customization (HTML/CSS)

Myspace allows users to customize their user profile pages by entering HTML (but not JavaScript) into such areas as "About Me", "I'd Like to Meet", and "Interests". Videos and flash-based content can be included this way. Users also have the option to add music to their profile pages via Myspace Music, a service that allows bands to post songs for use on Myspace.

A user can also change the general appearance of his or her page by entering CSS (in a `<style> ... </style>` element) into one of these fields to override the page's default style sheet using Myspace editors. This is often used to tweak fonts and colors. The fact that the user-added CSS is located in the middle of the page (rather than being located in the `<head>` element) means that the page will begin to load with the default Myspace layout before abruptly changing to the custom layout. A special type of modification is a div overlay, where the default layout is dramatically changed by hiding default text with `<div>` tags and large images.

There are several independent web sites offering Myspace layout design utilities which let a user select options and preview what their page will look like with them.

In 2008, Myspace launched a new Profile 2.0 as the next generation of the Myspace profile. Profile 2.0 features a cleaner interface and the ability to hide or show modules of the profile, along with customize the position of the module on the profile. Profile 2.0 layouts were released on the internet quickly as the use of the classic Myspace layouts do not work with profile 2.0. Profile 2.0 also was criticized for not looking right when trying to add custom CSS. To add custom CSS, the original theme has to be scrapped and many Myspace tweaks were not functional in the Profile 2.0 layout. In 2010, Myspace abandoned the Profile 1.0 layout and made Profile 2.0 the standard features of the profile. That promoted a cleaner interface and many themes are prepackaged with the customizer, along with the make a custom theme using various parameters of profile editing. Applications are used for decoration. While Profile 2.0 is the standard layout, a new profile was launch as an optional upgrade. The new profile was launched to keep up with the trends of the modern profile interface and gives it a more mature and simpler design. Profile 3.0 enables users more flexible customization and simpler theme building, but is not much different than the Profile 2.0 interface.

Music

Myspace profiles for musicians in the website's Myspace Music section differ from normal profiles in allowing artists to upload their entire discographies consisting of MP3 songs. The uploader must have rights to use the songs (e.g. their own work, permission granted, etc.). Unsigned musicians can use Myspace to post and sell music using SNOCAP, which has proven popular among Myspace users.

Shortly after Myspace was sold to Rupert Murdoch, the owner of Fox News and 20th Century Fox, in 2005, they launched their own record label, MySpace Records, in an effort to discover unknown talent currently on Myspace Music.^[23] Regardless of the artist already being famous or still looking for a break into the industry, artists can upload their songs onto Myspace and have access to millions of people on a daily basis. Some well known singers such as Lily Allen and Sean Kingston gained fame through Myspace. The availability of music on this website continues to develop, largely driven by young talent. Over eight million artists have been discovered by Myspace and many more continue to be discovered daily.^[44] In late 2007, the site launched The Myspace Transmissions, a series of live-in-studio recordings by well-known artists.

Myspace, in 2008, redesigned its music page adding new features for all musicians. These new features include the users' ability to create playlists, resembling the functions of Last.fm and other social music websites, along with the popular ProjectPlaylist that is popular on profiles. The new music features also archive songs from many popular artists, resembling the services of iTunes and Napster. In March 2010, listening to the full song in the search results has been disabled and had been replaced by 30 second samples. Myspace music also suggests songs based on the songs you are currently listening to or the songs you had added to the playlist, making it as a music discovery tool. Myspace Music also added an improved playlist feature and artist profile, along with better music suggestion features, making it one of the highest rated and advanced music discovery sites on the Web. The site features charts similar to Billboard charts and it keeps track of the most popular music liked by users of all genres. It also enables user to view popular music in other countries of the world, mostly in Europe and major Asian countries such as China and Russia. That helped promote international music throughout the globe, globalizing the music scene easier than before. The site also enables users to discover new songs and albums, to get the cutting edge with new music.

Myspace features

Bulletins

Bulletins are posts that are posted on to a "bulletin board" for everyone on a Myspace user's friends list to see. Bulletins can be useful for contacting an entire friends list without resorting to messaging users individually. They have also become the primary attack point for phishing. Bulletins are deleted after ten days.

Groups

Myspace has a Groups feature which allows a group of users to share a common page and message board. Groups can be created by anybody, and the moderator of the group can choose for anyone to join, or to approve or deny requests to join.

MySpaceIM

In early 2006, Myspace introduced MySpaceIM, an instant messenger that uses one's Myspace account as a screen name. A Myspace user logs in to the client using the same e-mail associated with his or her Myspace account. Unlike other parts of MySpace, MySpaceIM is stand-alone software for Microsoft Windows. Users who use MySpaceIM get instant notification of new Myspace messages, friend requests, and comments. MySpaceIM was added as a default feature of Myspace by the end of 2009.

MySpaceTV (video)

In early 2007, Myspace introduced MySpaceTV, a service similar to the YouTube video sharing website. Myspace has been showing videos as early as 2006, but it has changed its name to MySpaceTV for a while. In 2009, MySpaceTV has reverted back to Myspace Video once again. MySpace video continues to be not as popular as other video sharing sites such as YouTube, but many sites had partnered with Myspace such as Hulu to promote their media to the Myspace community.

Applications

In 2008, Myspace introduced an API with which users could create applications for other users to post on their profiles. The applications are similar to the Facebook applications. In May 2008, Myspace had added some security options regarding interaction with photos and other media. Many applications that are popular on Myspace had spin off versions on Facebook. The Myspace app Mafia Wars has become a Facebook sensation as well. On the other hand, Facebook applications such as Bumper Stickers and Farmville have been used in Myspace and was popular as well. Many application partnerships such as Zynga and Slide have been responsible for creating third party apps for

use on both Myspace and Facebook, along with use in the iTunes app store.

MySpace Mobile

There are a variety of environments in which users can access Myspace content on their mobile phone. American mobile phone provider Helio released a series of mobile phones in early 2006 that can utilize a service known as Myspace Mobile to access and edit one's profile and communicate with, and view the profiles of, other members.^[45] Additionally, UIEvolution and Myspace developed a mobile version of Myspace for a wider range of carriers, including AT&T,^[46] Vodafone^[47] and Rogers Wireless.^[48]

Myspace News

In the month of April 2007, Myspace launched a news service called Myspace News^[49] which displays news from RSS feeds that users submit. It also allows users to rank each news story by voting for it. The more votes a story gets, the higher the story moves up the page.

Myspace Classifieds

Full service classifieds listing offered beginning in August 2006. It has grown by 33 percent in one year since inception. Myspace Classifieds was launched right at the same time the site appeared on the internet.^[50]

Myspace Karaoke

Launched April 29, 2008, ksolo.myspace.com is a combination of Myspace and kSolo, which allows users to upload audio recordings of themselves singing onto their profile page. Users' friends are able to rate the performances. A video feature is not yet available, but Tom Anderson, Myspace co-founder and president, states that it is in the works.^[51]

Myspace Polls

Myspace Polls is a feature on Myspace that was brought back in 2008 to enable users to post polls on their profile and share them with other users.

MySpace forums

MySpace uses an implementation of Telligent Community for its forum system.^[52]

Politics

- During the 2008 presidential election in the United States, candidates set up Myspace profiles, presumably in an effort to attract younger voters. Most profiles feature photos, blogs, videos, and ways for viewers to get involved with campaigning. Myspace features these politicians' profiles on its front page in the "Cool New People" section, on what appears to be a random rotation.
- Many political organizations have created Myspace accounts to keep in touch with and expand their membership base. These range from larger organizations like the John Birch Society and the ACLU to smaller locally focused environmentalist groups and Food Not Bombs activists.

Criticism

Accessibility and reliability

Because most Myspace pages are designed by individuals with little HTML experience, a very large proportion of pages do not satisfy the criteria for valid HTML or CSS laid down by the W3C. Poorly formatted code can cause accessibility problems for those using software such as screen readers.^[53] The Myspace home page, as of May 20, 2009, fails HTML validation with around 101 errors (the number changes on sequential validations of the home page due to dynamic content), using the W3C's validator.^[54]

Furthermore, Myspace is set up so that anyone can customize the layout and colors of their profile page with virtually no restrictions, provided that the advertisements are not covered up by CSS or using other means. As Myspace users are usually not skilled web developers, this can cause further problems. Poorly constructed Myspace profiles could potentially freeze up web browsers due to malformed CSS coding, or as a result of users placing many high bandwidth objects such as videos, graphics, and Flash in their profiles (sometimes multiple videos and sound files are automatically played at the same time when a profile loads). While Myspace blocks potentially harmful code (such as JavaScript) from profiles, users have occasionally found ways to insert such code. *PC World* cited this as its main reason for naming Myspace as #1 in its list of twenty-five worst web sites ever.^[55]

In addition, new features have been gradually added (see featuritis).

Security

In October 2005, a flaw in MySpace's site design was exploited by "Samy" to create the first self-propagating cross-site scripting (XSS) worm. MSNBC has reported that "social-networking sites like Myspace are turning out to be hotbeds for spyware," and "infection rates are on the rise, in part thanks to the surging popularity of social-networking sites like MySpace.com."^[56] In addition to this, the customization of user pages currently allows the injection of certain HTML which can be crafted to form a phishing user profile, thus keeping the myspace.com domain as the address.^[57] More recently, there has been spam on bulletins that has been the result of phishing.^[58] Users find their Myspace homepage with bulletins they didn't post, realizing later they had been phished. The bulletin consists of an advertisement that provides a link to a fake login screen, tricking people into typing in their Myspace e-mail and password.

Other security fears regarding profile content itself are also present. For example, the embedding of videos inherently allows all of the format's abilities and functions to be used on a page. A prime example of this surfaced in December 2006, when embedded QuickTime videos were shown to contain hyperlinks to JavaScript files, which would be run simply by a user visiting a 'phished' profile page, or even in some cases by simply viewing a user's 'about me' elsewhere on the site. Users who entered their login information into a fake login bar that appeared would also become 'phished', and their account would be used to spam other members, thus spreading this security problem.^[59]

Myspace's anti-phishing and anti-spam measures have also come under fire. In 2007 Myspace made changes such that external links on profiles would be redirected through the <http://msplinks.com> domain. For example, <http://en.wikipedia.org> would be changed to <http://www.msplinks.com/MDFodHRwOi8vZW4ud2lraXBIZGlhLm9yZw==>. (The new links are determined by Base64 encoding, as there are ways of decoding the link back into its original URL.^[60]) Myspace staffers would be able to disable potentially dangerous links. (The changed links only work if the HTTP referrer is a Myspace page; otherwise, the link will appear to be disabled.) This move has been criticized that it makes profile editing inconvenient and that it does nothing to deter spammers. In February 2008 Myspace changed the system such that users who click such links (except for whitelisted domains like Wikipedia and YouTube) will receive a warning that they will be leaving the `myspace.com` domain. As of March 2008, this "feature" has been extended to blogs as well, although previous blog entries are unaffected unless the user updates them.

In January 2008 the state attorneys general of 49 states of the USA wrote guidelines for online safety for Myspace and other services. They included restrictions for behavior on social networking services.^[61]

On January 26, 2008, over 567,000 private Myspace user pictures were downloaded from the site by using a bug published on YouTube and put on the Piratebay torrent site for download.^[62]

Myspace party problems

Myspace is often used as a venue for publicizing parties, sometimes with the host's knowledge and sometimes without. There have been some well-publicized incidents where Myspace parties have caused thousands of dollars damage to property, and even (in at least one case) loss of life.

- A party hosted by Corey Worthington, a sixteen-year-old boy from Narre Warren in Melbourne, Australia, and advertised on MySpace, attracted 500 people. Police cars were attacked, and the dog squad and a helicopter were called in. The incident received international coverage. (Worthington subsequently found work as a party promoter, and appeared on the Ten Network's Australian version of *Big Brother*.)^[63] The *Sydney Morning Herald*'s online technology writer, Asher Moses, has noted that MySpace/Facebook parties are particularly prone to gatecrashing because news of events can spread to uninvited guests via "newsfeeds." He suspects some party hosts are oblivious to the actual number of people who get the message.^{[64] [65]}
- In April 2007, a seventeen-year-old British girl hosted a party after distributing information about it on Myspace that was reportedly subtitled "Let's trash the average family-sized house disco party." Her parents were left with an approximately £24,000 (\$48,000) bill from police.^{[64] [66]}
- Allen Joplin, a seventeen-year-old American high school student from Seattle, was shot dead at a party which had been publicized through Myspace.^{[64] [67]}

Child safety

The minimum age to register an account on Myspace is 13, but it was 14 at one time and some still think of it as being 14.^{[68] [69] [70]} Profiles with ages set from 13 to 15 years are automatically private. Users whose ages are set at 16 or over have the option to set their profile to public viewing. Accessing the full profile of, or messaging someone when their account is set to "private" (or if under sixteen) is restricted to a Myspace user's direct friends.

Myspace will delete fake profiles if the victim verifies their identity and points out the profile via e-mail.^[71] In July 2007, the company found and deleted 29,000 profiles belonging to registered sex offenders.^[72]

Recently, Myspace has been the focus of a number of news reports stating that teenagers have found ways around the restrictions set by Myspace. Stricter methods for enforcing age admission will be enforced in the future, such as blocking a person from accessing Myspace using a computer's IP address.^[73] In response, Myspace has given assurances to parents that the website is safe for people of all ages. Beginning in late June 2006, Myspace users whose ages are set over 18 could no longer be able to add users whose ages are set from 13 to 15 years as friends unless they already know the user's full name or email address.^[74] Some third party Internet safety companies such as Social Shield^[75] have launched online communities for parents concerned about their child's safety on Myspace.

In June 2006, sixteen-year-old American Katherine Lester flew to the Middle East, to Tel Aviv, Israel, after having tricked her parents into getting her a passport in order to be with a twenty-year-old man she met through Myspace.^[76] U.S. officials in Jordan persuaded the teen to turn around and go home.

In October 2006, thirteen-year-old Megan Meier committed suicide after being the victim of cyber-bullying instigated by the mother of a friend who had posed as a sixteen-year-old named "Josh Evans".^[77]

In December 2006, Myspace announced new measures to protect children from known sex offenders. Although precise details were not given they said that "tools" would be implemented to prevent known sex offenders from the USA creating a Myspace profile.^[78]

In February 2007, a U.S. District Judge in Texas dismissed a case when a family sued MySpace for negligence, fraud, and misrepresentation; a girl in the family had been sexually assaulted by a man she met through MySpace, after she had misrepresented her age as 18 when she was 13. Regarding his dismissal of the case, U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks wrote: "If anyone had a duty to protect young girls, it was her parents, not MySpace."^[79]

In October 2007, a study published in the *Journal of Adolescence* conducted by Sameer Hinduja (Florida Atlantic University) and Justin W. Patchin (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire) concluded that most adolescents use Myspace responsibly: "When considered in its proper context, these results indicate that the problem of personal information disclosure on Myspace may not be as widespread as many assume, and that the overwhelming majority of adolescents are responsibly using the website," they say.^[80]

Social and cultural

Dave Itzkoff, in the June 2006 *Playboy* magazine, related his experiences of experimentation with membership in Myspace. Among his other criticisms, one pertains to the distance afforded by the Internet that emboldens members, such as females who feature photos of themselves in scant clothing on their profile pages or behave in ways they would not in person, and he indicated that this duplicity undercuts the central design of MySpace, namely, to bring people together. Itzkoff also referenced the addictive, time-consuming nature of the site, mentioning that the *Playboy* Playmate and Myspace member Julie McCullough, who was the first to respond to his add-friend request, pointedly referred to the site as "cybercrack". Itzkoff argued that Myspace gives many people access to a member's life, without giving the time needed to maintain such relationships and that such relationships do not possess the depth of in-person relationships.

Furthermore, in terms of MySpace's potential for underhanded commercial exploitation, Itzkoff is particularly critical of the disturbing and fraudulent behavior of people who can contact a member, unsolicited, as when he was contacted by someone expressing a desire to socialize and date, but whose blog (to which Itzkoff was directed via subsequent emails) was found to be a solicitation for a series of commercial porn sites. Itzkoff is similarly critical of the more subtle commercial solicitations on the site, such as the banner ads and links to profiles and video clips that turn out to be, for example, commercials for new 20th Century Fox films. He also observed that MySpace's much-celebrated music section is heavily weighted in favor of record labels rather than breakthrough musicians.

In relating criticism from another person, whom Itzkoff called "Judas," he illustrated that, while the goal of attempting to bring together people who might not otherwise associate with one another in real life may seem honorable, Myspace inherently violates a social contract only present when people interact face-to-face, rendering, in his opinion, the website nothing more than a passing fad:

“There will come a moment when, like deer quivering and flicking up their ears toward a noiseless noise in the woods, the first adopters will suddenly realize they're spending their time blogging, adding, and gawking at the same alarming photos as an army of fourteen year olds, and quick as deer, they'll dash to the next trend. And before you know it, we'll all follow.”^[81]

Controversy over corporate history

After the sale of Myspace to News Corp, Brad Greenspan (the former CEO, founder, and shareholder of Intermix Media the parent company that owned and launched MySpace.com) contested the sell of the company to News Corp. Greenspan claimed that new Intermix Media CEO Richard Rosenblatt and other board members cheated shareholders by selling the company for less than it was actually worth.^[82] ^[83] Valleywag, a gossip blog that reported on the allegations, also claimed that founder and public face of MySpace, Tom Anderson, was a public relations invention.^[84] It was later confirmed by Newsweek that Anderson's age on the site had been lowered to "appeal" to younger users.^[85]

In October 2006, Greenspan published "The Myspace Report" on a personal website, calling for government investigation into News Corp's acquisition of Myspace.^[86] Greenspan's main allegation is that News Corp. should

have valued Myspace at US\$20 billion rather than US\$327 million, and had defrauded Intermix shareholders through an unfair deal process.^[87] However the report was not widely accepted by the financial press and a lawsuit led by Greenspan challenging the acquisition was dismissed by a judge.^{[88] [89]}

Censorship

Activist group MoveOn.org has criticized MySpace, claiming that the website practices censorship by not showing anti-media ads, removing fake profiles for high-profile media executives like Rupert Murdoch, and attempting to force users away from using certain third-party Flash applications on their profiles, a move necessary to improve site security.^[90]

Stalking

According to Alison Kiss, program director for Security on Campus, social networking websites such as Myspace and Facebook have made it easier for stalkers who target women on college campuses.^[91]

MySpace China

The simplified Chinese version of MySpace, launched in April 2007, has many censorship-related differences from other international versions of the service. Discussion forums on topics such as religion and politics are absent, and a filtering system that prevents the posting of content about Taiwan independence, the Dalai Lama, Falun Gong, and other "inappropriate topics" has been added.^[92] Users are also given the ability to report the "misconduct" of other users for offenses including "endangering national security, leaking state secrets, subverting the government, undermining national unity, and spreading rumors or disturbing the social order."^[93]

Religious discrimination

On January 30, 2008, Bryan J. Pesta, a Cleveland State University assistant professor, and moderator of the Atheist and Agnostic Group, accused Myspace of pandering to religious intolerance by deleting atheist users, groups and content. Specifically, Pesta alleges that Myspace deleted AAG's account, and his own personal profile, based on complaints from people offended by atheism, and this was the second time Myspace deleted the group since November 2007, even though, according to Pesta, it had never violated the site's Terms of Service.

International sites

Since early 2006, Myspace has offered the option to access the service in different regional versions. The alternative regional versions present automated content according to locality (e.g. UK users see other UK users as "Cool New People," and UK oriented events and adverts, etc.), offer local languages other than English, or accommodate the regional differences in spelling and conventions in the English-speaking world (e.g. United States: "favorites," mm/dd/yyyy; the rest of the world: "favourites," dd/mm/yyyy).

Sites currently offered are:

- Myspace Global [3]
- Myspace Australia [95]
- Myspace Brazil [97] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Canada [99] (**English**) (currently in beta)
- Myspace Canada [101] (**French**) (currently in beta)
- Myspace China [103] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Denmark [105]
- Myspace France [107]
- Myspace Finland [109]
- Myspace Germany [111] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Ireland [113]
- Myspace Latin America [115] (**Spanish**) (currently in beta)
- Myspace India [117] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Italy [119] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Japan [94] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Korea [96] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Mexico [98]
- Myspace Netherlands [100]
- Myspace New Zealand [102]
- Myspace Poland [104] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Portugal [106]
- Myspace Russia [108] (currently in beta)
- Myspace Spain [110]
- Myspace Sweden [112]
- Myspace Turkey [114] (currently in beta)
- Myspace UK [116]
- Myspace USA [118] (**English**) (this is, in fact, identical to the "global" site)
- Myspace USA [120] (**Spanish**)

MySpace Developer Platform (MDP)

On February 5, 2008, Myspace set up a developer platform which allows developers to share their ideas and write their own Myspace applications. The opening was inaugurated with a workshop at the MySpace, San Francisco offices two weeks before the official launch. The MDP [121] is based on the Open Social API which was presented by Google in November 2007 to support social networks to develop social and interacting widgets and can be seen as an answer to Facebook's developer platform. The first public beta of the Myspace Apps was released on March 5, 2008, with around 1,000 applications available.^[122] [123]

Myspace server infrastructure

At QCon London 2008,^[124] Myspace Chief Systems Architect Dan Farino indicated that Myspace was sending 100 gigabits of data per second out to the Internet, of which 10 gigabits was HTML content and the remainder was media such as videos and pictures. The server infrastructure consists of over 4,500 web servers (running Windows Server 2003, IIS 6.0, ASP.NET and .Net Framework 3.5), over 1,200 cache servers (running 64-bit Windows Server 2003), and over 500 database servers (running 64-bit Windows Server 2003 and SQL Server 2005) as well as a custom distributed file system which runs on Gentoo Linux.

As of 2009, Myspace has started migrating from HDD to SSD technology in some of their servers, resulting in space and power usage savings.^[125]

Musicians' rights and Myspace terms of use agreement

Until June 2006, there was a concern amongst musicians, artists, and bands on Myspace such as songwriter Billy Bragg owing to the fine print within the user agreement that read, "You hereby grant to MySpace.com a non-exclusive, fully paid and royalty-free, worldwide license (with the right to sublicense through unlimited levels of sublicensees) to use, copy, modify, adapt, translate, publicly perform, publicly display, store, reproduce, transmit, and distribute such Content on and through the Services." The fine print brought particular concern as the agreement was being made with Murdoch's News Corporation. Billy Bragg brought the issue to the attention of the media

during the first week of June 2006.^[126] Jeff Berman, a Myspace spokesman swiftly responded by saying, "Because the legalese has caused some confusion, we are at work revising it to make it very clear that Myspace is not seeking a license to do anything with an artist's work other than allow it to be shared in the manner the artist intends."

By June 27, 2006, Myspace had amended the user agreement with, "MySpace.com does not claim any ownership rights in the text, files, images, photos, video, sounds, musical works, works of authorship, or any other materials (collectively, 'Content') that you post to the Myspace Services. After posting your Content to the Myspace Services, you continue to retain all ownership rights in such Content, and you continue to have the right to use your Content in any way you choose."

Blocking

Multiple schools, public libraries, and employers in the United States, United Kingdom, France, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Russia, Australia and Malaysia have restricted access to MySpace, seeing it as "a haven for gossip and malicious comments."^[127]

A Catholic school in New Jersey has even prohibited students from using Myspace at home, an action made to protect students from online predators as claimed by the school, although experts questioned the legality of such a ban and if it is constitutional. In autumn of 2005 Pope John XXIII Regional High School in Sparta Township, New Jersey made headlines by forbidding its students to have pages on Myspace or similar websites (such as Gaia) under threat of suspension or expulsion.^{[128] [129] [130]}

In Turkey, Myspace had been blocked on September 19, 2009, due to copyright issues of MÜ-YAP. Turkish rock musician Aylin Aslim, who has a Myspace account said the block was a serious violation of rights for independent musicians of Turkey. As of October 6, the block has been lifted.^[131]

Legal issues

In May 2006, Long Island, New York teenagers Shaun Harrison and Saverio Mondelli were charged with illegal computer access and attempted extortion of MySpace, after both had allegedly hacked into the site to steal the personal information of Myspace users before threatening to share the secrets of how they broke into the website unless Myspace paid them \$150,000. Both teens were arrested by undercover Los Angeles police detectives posing as Myspace employees.^[132]

In April 2007, police in County Durham, United Kingdom, arrested a 17-year-old girl on charges of criminal damage following a party advertised on MySpace, held at her parents' house without their consent. Over 200 teenagers came to the party from across the country, causing £20,000 of damage, such as cigarette butts, urine on clothing, and writing on the walls. The girl's parents, who were away at the time, had to move out of the house.^{[133] [134]}

Acquisition of Imeem

On November 18, 2009, Imeem was acquired by Myspace Music for an undisclosed amount. After the acquisition was completed in December 8, 2009, it was confirmed that Myspace Music bought Imeem for less than US\$1 million in cash.^{[135] [136]} Myspace has also stated that they will be transitioning Imeem's users, and migrating all their play lists over to Myspace Music. On January 15, 2010, Myspace began restoring Imeem playlists.^[137]

YouTube

YouTube debuted in April 2005, and it quickly gained popularity on Myspace due to Myspace users' ability to embed YouTube videos in their Myspace profiles. Realizing the competitive threat to the new Myspace Videos service, Myspace banned embedded YouTube videos from its user profiles. Myspace users widely protested the ban, prompting Myspace to lift the ban shortly thereafter.^[138]

Since then YouTube has become one of the fastest-growing websites on the World Wide Web,^[139] outgrowing MySpace's reach according to Alexa Internet.^[140] In July 2006 several news organizations reported that YouTube had overtaken Myspace.^[141] In a September 2006 investor meeting, News Corp. COO Peter Chernin claimed that virtually all modern Web applications (naming YouTube, Flickr, Blogger, Google, and Photobucket) were really just "driven off the back of MySpace" and that "we ought to be able to match them if not exceed them."^[142]

See also

- AsianAve
- Bebo
- Buzznet
- gOS 2.9 "Space" - Linux distribution geared toward Myspace users, see gOS (operating system)
- List of Internet phenomena
- List of social networking websites
- LiveJournal
- Myartspace
- MyDeathSpace.com
- Social software
- SoundCloud

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.myspace.com>)
- Tom Anderson, Myspace co-founder (<http://www.myspace.com/tom>) at Myspace

Newsvine

	newsvine
URL	http://newsvine.com/
Commercial?	Yes
Type of site	Social News
Registration	Optional
Available language(s)	English
Owner	msnbc.com
Created by	Newsvine, Inc.
Launched	March 1, 2006
Alexa rank	6,782 (as of Jul 11, 08) ^[1]
Current status	Online

Newsvine is a community-powered, collaborative journalism news website, owned by msnbc.com, which draws content from its users and syndicated content from mainstream sources such as The Associated Press. Users can write articles, seed links to external content, and discuss news items submitted by both users and professional journalists.

Newsvine, the company, is not a news bureau and exercises no editorial voice, but acts as a social news platform for the community which has grown around it. Members decide with their actions what news makes it onto the site and what news is removed, and the Newsvine staff works to keep the platform operating and evolving.

Newsvine was named the *Top News Site of 2006* and one of the *50 Best Websites of 2007* by *Time* magazine.^[2]

History

Seattle-based Newsvine, Inc. was founded in the spring of 2005 by Mike Davidson, Calvin Tang, Lance Anderson and Mark Budos. Josh Yockey joined the company shortly after it opened its offices, with Tom Laramee and Tyler Adams being hired later. The development team consists of several veterans from the Walt Disney Internet Group and ESPN.

The company moved into its offices near Downtown Seattle on August 1, 2005, and launched newsvine.com into private alpha on December 1, 2005. On January 5, 2006, the site went into private beta, and then launched to the public on March 1, 2006.

On October 7, 2007, Newsvine announced its acquisition by the news website msnbc.com, effective October 5, 2007. Since the acquisition, Newsvine has continued to run as a separate website and brand from msnbc.com, operating out of its original headquarters in Seattle.

Features

Seeding

Newsvine allows users to "seed," or post links for others to view. Seeds usually contain a short description or direct quotation from the linked article. With the "Newsvine Button," users can select "Seed Newsvine" from their bookmarks and a seeding dialog will appear. Seeds allow for all of the same options as articles except the ability to insert photographs and/or polls.

The screenshot shows a Newsvine seed post. At the top, there are buttons for '28 Votes', '27 Comments', 'Email This', 'Chat', 'Clip', and a red 'Seed' button. The title of the seed is 'Apple fires employees who downloaded Leopard'. Below the title, it says 'News Type: Event — Seeded on Tue Aug 22, 2006 12:40 PM PDT'. A link to 'Read Article' is present. The main content of the seed is a text box containing a story about Apple firing employees for downloading Leopard. At the bottom right of the seed, it says 'A seed that has been voted for by the user.'

The screenshot shows a Newsvine article page. The title is 'Become a source for online article about Newsvine'. It includes a photo of Claus Jacobson, author of the article. The text discusses the creation of a new type of journalism and includes a screenshot of a Flickr photo of Microsoft's Windows Vista release party. A caption below the article reads: 'An article with a captioned photograph.'

Articles

One of the most defining features of Newsvine is the ability for users to write their own articles. Commonly known as citizen journalism, this allows users to express their opinions for public discussion or even report in a journalistic manner. The most popular articles for top tags appear in the "Featured Writers" section, where article writers can receive extra publicity.

While writing articles, users can upload their own photographs or choose from a list of Flickr photos registered under a Creative Commons license for addition to the post. Captions can be written to clarify the meaning of the photograph.

Voting

Another common feature among social bookmarking websites is the ability to vote for content. Users who enjoy reading an article/seed or agree with its content are encouraged to vote for the content. Articles and seeds with the most votes appear in the "Top Wire," "Top Seeds," or "Top of the Vine" sections of the site.

Newsvine also allows for users to vote for comments that they enjoyed reading. When a comment receives at least five votes, a green star is placed in the upper right-hand corner, signifying that many users enjoyed or agreed with the comment. Clicking the star will lead viewers to the next highly rated comment.

Negative votes are also registered, and a comment that receives too many negative votes will often be collapsed, so that it can only be viewed by deliberately opening it. This limits discussion under that comment, since new comments under it will not be seen automatically.

Commenting

The ability to comment on seeds and articles allows for extra discussions regarding the content. While debates are welcome, useless, insulting, and self-promoting comments are not. If a comment receives enough reports, that comment will be collapsed and its contents can only be shown by choosing to expand it. The Newsvine comment system also allows for semi-threaded comments, easing the confusion of comment direction. Users can edit but not delete their own comments, writers are allowed to delete comments on their own content. Unregistered users are also allowed to have their say, but comments by unregistered users are not made public until that user creates a registered account.

Welcome to my user column!

This is your main column area. By default, it contains your articles and seeds in chronological order.

Latest Seeds
The latest items you've seeded. These can be moved into the right column if you'd like to feature them less prominently.
Hide ▾ ▾

Alec Ananian's Friends
A list of all Newsvine members on your Friends list.
Edit ▾ ▾

Latest Articles
The latest articles you've posted. These can be moved into the right column if you'd like to feature them less prominently.
Hide ▾ ▾

Watchlist
If you choose to make your Watchlist public using the module Show ▾ ▾

Articles & Seeds By Tag
A place for you to list books, blogs, websites, and other items you'd like to recommend to other members of the Newsvine community.
Edit ▾ ▾

Recommendations
A place for you to list books, blogs, websites, and other items you'd like to recommend to other members of the Newsvine community.
Edit ▾ ▾

Comments & Feedback
An area for friends and other members of the Newsvine community to leave you comments.
Edit ▾ ▾

Customizable user column.

User Columns

Newsvine user columns give users the ability to manage and share their articles, seeds, friends, recommendations, and other statistical information. Every user has one, and each is given their own subdomain to access it (`<user>.newsvine.com`). User columns are customizable: aspects of the layouts can be moved or hidden, a user photo and biography can be added, a header (such as a welcome message) can be added, friends can be invited to Newsvine or added to the user's friends list, recommendations (such as favorite books, bands, blogs, etc.) can be shown, and comments and feedback from other users can be managed. Also, through user columns, members have the ability to add others to their watchlist and friend list or to send another

a chat invitation.

Earnings

Newsvine tells users that they will receive 90% of revenue from advertisements on their personal Newsvine pages. These earnings are "based on traffic to your articles and seeds," but it is unclear exactly how Newsvine calculate earnings. The remaining 10% go to whoever referred the user to Newsvine, or for site maintenance if there was no referrer. Newsvine does not publish the amount of revenue that has gone to users.

Watchlist

If a user finds a writer or tag that he/she enjoys to read content from, it can be added to the Watchlist. Watchlists are lists of members and tags that a user can compile to easily find interesting news. Items on a user's watchlist appear on the left column and, if there is content that the user has not read by a watchlisted author or tag, a number will appear next to the item name signifying how many articles or seeds have not been read.

Conversation Tracker

Much like the Watchlist, the Conversation Tracker allows users to track other members. However, the Conversation Tracker is a notifier of new comments. There are three sections to the Conversation Tracker: new comments from a user's Newsvine column, new comments from articles that a user has commented on, and new comments from an article a user's friend has commented on. If a user has added members to the friend list that share a common interest in content, the Conversation Tracker can act as a list of recommended articles.

Friends List

The Friends List gives users the ability to meet new people and find others with common interests, but there are no requirements in doing so. Creating a populated friends list gives users the ability to find interesting new articles through the Conversation Tracker. Once a user adds a friend to the list, the added friend receives a notification and is given the ability to accept or decline the offer.

Mike D. ONLINE	Calvin Tang ONLINE
TopJedi	Brian Ford ONLINE
Mykola Bilokonsky	Jon Nagelmakers ONLINE
Rukh	Paradox460
Maaz	Zaki ONLINE

List of friends and ability to see who's online

Vineacity

Vineacity is a measure of six elements that contribute to a Newsvine user's overall rating as a positive influence to the Newsvine community. Earned as 'branches' on a Newsvine logo icon displayed next to the user's name, the six areas of excellence include:

- Courtesy - earned when a user's positive feedback outweighs any abuse reports they may have received.
- Longevity - earned when the user has been active for at least two months after registering.
- Fruitfulness - earned when the user has submitted a substantial amount of content or comments that have received votes.
- Connectedness - earned when the user appears on a substantial number of watchlists and/or friendlists.
- Random Act of Vineness - earned for an exceptional moment of greatness on Newsvine.
- Lifetime achievement - earned when a user has received a combined number of votes on all articles, links and comments around Newsvine.

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External links

- Newsvine (<http://www.newsvine.com>)
- Newsvine Code of Honor (http://www.newsvine.com/_cms/info/codeofhonor)
- Inside the Net Episode 8 (<http://www.twit.tv/itn8>)
- Mike Davidson (co-founder, CEO) (<http://www.mikeindustries.com/blog/>)
- Calvin Tang (co-founder, COO) (<http://www.calvintang.com/blog/>)

Reddit

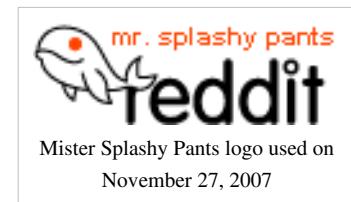


reddit	
Reddit front page on July 23, 2010	
URL	www.reddit.com [1]
Commercial?	Yes
Type of site	News aggregation, General discussion & advice forum.
Registration	Optional
Owner	Advance Publications via Condé Nast Publications
Created by	Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian
Launched	2005

Reddit (stylized as **reddit**; pronounced /'redit/, "red it") is a social news website, owned by Condé Nast Digital, a subsidiary of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. Users (also called *redditors*) can browse and have the option to submit links to content on the Internet or submit "self" posts that contain original, user-submitted text. Other users may then vote the posted links "up" or "down" with the most successful links gaining prominence by reaching the front page. In addition, users can comment on the posted links and reply to other commentators consequently forming an online community. Reddit users may create their own topical sections, called *subreddits*, for which to submit their links and to comment.^{[2] [3]}

Overview

The site has discussion areas in which users may discuss submissions and vote for or against other people's comments. When there are enough votes against a given comment, it will not be displayed by default, although a reader can display it by clicking an additional link or by changing the preferences. The default preferences cut-off comments whose value is -4 or less, meaning they had received at least five more negative votes than they did positive votes. The default comment sorting is set in such a way that so-called 'best' comments are displayed on top (defined by reddit's algorithm as having a better positive to negative ratio but still influenced by the amount of total votes), however the user can change that according to his preference. The appearance of submissions on the front page is determined by the age of the submission, positive to negative feedback ratio and the total vote count.^[4]



Subreddits

Reddit includes topical sections called "subreddits" which focus on specific topics, such as pics, funny, politics, worldnews, atheism, programming, travel, food, science or the all-encompassing reddit. Each section focuses on user-generated content that is relevant to each reddit. There are hundreds of reditts and users are encouraged to create their own.^[2] Submissions that are voted up receive prominence by being displayed on the front page of the specific reddit. Those submissions receiving a high rate of votes are then displayed on the main front page of Reddit.^[4] Users may also subscribe and unsubscribe to various reddit sections allowing them to choose which links

from which reddit is displayed on their personal front page.

Subreddit name	Subscribers	Age
pics	384,455	2 years
reddit.com	378,576	4 years
funny	385,041	2 years
politics	327,023	3 years
AskReddit	282,755	2 years
WTF	374,328	2 years
gaming	258,556	3 years
science	372,859	3 years
worldnews	296,064	2 years
programming	236,492	4 years

As of 16 October 2010 19:28 EDT

Karma system

Reddit.com employs a moderation-based "karma" reward system for users who make submissions and comment on stories. Users gain one point of link karma when another user votes up their submission and lose a point when a user votes down their submission. Individual comments may also be voted up or down by other users and result in a user's comment karma. Users stop losing karma after their submission reaches 0. This is not the case for comments.

Karma points are also not gained from votes for direct submissions of Reddit-hosted posts to reddits (also known as "self" posts, usually indicated by "self.(name of sub-reddit)" listed next to the name of the post);^[5] this was implemented by the administrators to counteract against "karma-whoring".

The site also fosters discussion and a sense of community by notifying users of replies to with an "orangered" envelope. The site administrators are also active users replying directly to users, submitting their own submissions and commenting on stories. They also host video interviews with questions submitted by the community. The community have also been known to socialize at local parks and bars around the world.

Logo

The Reddit logo changes for various holidays and pays homage to geek culture in general. It often changes in response to major discussion subjects within the site or major news stories. Subreddits exist for the purpose of designing such logos for both the main site^[6] and for new subreddits,^[7] usually featuring the Reddit "alien" mascot that has been called "Snoo", the name that the creators of Reddit reportedly wanted to originally give to the site itself (but couldn't because the name was already owned).^[8]

History

Reddit was founded by Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian in 2005, both 22-year-old graduates of the University of Virginia.^[3] It received its initial funding from Y Combinator. The team expanded to include Christopher Slowe and Aaron Swartz in 2005. Aaron Swartz joined in late January 2006 as part of the company's merger with Swartz's Infogami.^[9] The combined company was known as "not a bug." Condé Nast Publications, owner of *Wired*, acquired "not a bug" on October 31, 2006.^[10]

On June 18, 2008, Reddit became an open source project.^[11] With the exception of the anti-spam/cheating portions, all of the code and libraries written for Reddit became freely available on another website dubbed "Fixxit."^[12]

Reddit was named by Ohanian while browsing the University of Virginia's Alderman Library.^[13]

In January 2010, Reddit users raised over \$185,000 for the victims of the 2010 Haiti earthquake.^[14]

In July 2010 Reddit implemented Reddit Gold, offering new features for a price of \$3.99/month or \$29.99/year.^[15]

In July 2010 Reddit expanded their team, hiring Jeff Sandberg.^[16]

In August 2010, Ben Huh, owner of the popular comedy photoblog I Can Has Cheezburger and its spinoffs, made a public offer to acquire Reddit, believing that the site would deserve the benefit of more resources and decreased corporate influence he would bring to the site in the midst of conflicts between operators and Condé Nast.^[17]

The 'Restoring Truthiness' Campaign

In September 2010, Reddit users started a movement to persuade Stephen Colbert to have a rally in Washington DC.^[18] The movement was started by user mrsammercer, in a post where he describes waking up from a dream in which Stephen Colbert holds a satirical rally in D.C.^[19]

He writes, "This would be the high water mark of American satire. Half a million people pretending to suspend all rational thought in unison. Perfect harmony. It'll feel like San Francisco in the late 60s, only we won't be able to get any acid."

The idea resonated with the Reddit community, who quickly sprung into action creating webpages and Facebook groups to organize the call, as well as contacting producers for the show. Stephen acknowledged the building momentum on his show, saying that only a sign from God, in the form of a goose, could decide if he should hold a rally. The organized supporters of the rally quickly sent live and stuffed animal geese to the Colbert Report studio, by the hundreds.

In order to show how serious and potentially influential the Reddit community is, a donation drive for DonorsChoose.org was called into action by a Reddit moderator. Colbert sits on the Board of Directors for this particular charity. Reddit managed to raise more than \$100,000 in 24 hours, \$250,000 over 3 days, and over \$500,000 by the rally date to help teachers across United States buy supplies for their classrooms.

On September 13, 2010, Jon Stewart announced on The Daily Show the "Rally to Restore Sanity", to be held on October 30, 2010. In the following episode of The Colbert Report, Stephen Colbert announced a "March to Keep Fear Alive" counter-rally to be held on the same day at the same location, the National Mall. On October 14, 2010, Colbert appeared as a surprise guest on The Daily Show, and the two announced they were combining their two rallies into one: The Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear.

After the rally on October 30, during a press conference, Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian asked, "What role did the Internet campaign play in convincing you to hold this rally?" Stewart and Colbert responded by saying that, though it was a very nice gesture, the two had already thought of the idea prior and the deposit on using the National Mall was already paid during the summer, so it acted mostly as a "validation of what we were thinking about attempting."^[20]

Awards

Reddit received the 2008 Open Web Award.^[21]

In May 2010, Blurb is named in Lead411's "2010 Hottest San Francisco Companies" list.^[22]

Technology

Python backend

Reddit was originally written in Common Lisp but was rewritten in Python in 2005.^[23] The reasons given for the switch were faster performance, wider access to code libraries, and greater development flexibility. The Python web framework that former Reddit employee Aaron Swartz developed to run the site, *web.py*, is now available as an open-source project.^[24]

Reddit currently uses Pylons as its web framework.^[25] The site was hosted on several Linux servers running lighttpd, HaProxy, and paster;^[26] however, as of November 2009, Reddit has decommissioned their physical servers and migrated to Amazon Web Services.^[27] In early 2009, Reddit started using jQuery.^[28]

Mobile web

On June 7, 2010 Reddit staff launched a revamped mobile site located at i.reddit.com^[29] and m.reddit.com^[30], replacing a previous iteration. The new site features rewritten CSS, a new color scheme, and a multitude of improvements.^[31]

iPhone

On February 18, 2009, Reddit released an iPhone Application called iReddit for \$1.99, which allows users to more easily navigate the site while using the iPhone. There were also several other Reddit iPhone Applications available prior to the official application's release date. The first unofficial application was named "Satellite", which was released in November 2008. Satellite originally cost \$4.99 but its price was later reduced to just \$.99 after the release of the official Reddit application.^[32] The unofficial second application, released in December 2008 was called "Open Source Reddit", differing from Satellite by being free of charge. As of June 17, 2010, iReddit is available free of charge and had joined Open Source Reddit by making its source available for community updates on GitHub.^[33]

Android

There are several unofficial applications in the Android Market that use the Reddit API, including *Reddit is Fun*^[34] and *Andreddit*.^[35]

Notable Community contributions

- Reddit user Alan Schaaf created the popular free image hosting site Imgur.^[36]
- Graphic artist Mike Mitchell created the "I'm with Coco" poster, which has subsequently been adopted by Conan O'Brien for his The Legally Prohibited from Being Funny on Television Tour.

See also

- Diigo
- Delicious
- Digg
- Fark
- Imgur
- StumbleUpon
- Slashdot
- Social bookmarking
- Web 2.0

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- [29] <http://i.reddit.com>
- [30] <http://m.reddit.com>

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- [36] <http://www.mediaite.com/online/imgur-accounts-alan-schaaf-interview/>

External links

- Reddit (<http://reddit.com/>)
- Fixxit (Reddit's code repository) (<http://code.reddit.com/>)
- Reddit's job board (<http://redditjobs.com/>)

Reddit clones

- proddit, in Romanian (<http://www.proddit.com/>)
- culter in Spanish (<http://www.culter.com.mx/>)

SubReddit search engines
SubReddit Finder (http://subredditfinder.com/)
Reddit User Karmanaut's bubble diagram (http://s272568090.onlinehome.us/reddit/karmanaut-redditmap.html)
Metareddit (http://metareddit.com)

StumbleUpon



Original author(s)	Garrett Camp & Geoff Smith ^[1]
Developer(s)	Geoff Smith
Initial release	November 2001 ^[2]
Stable release	3.75 ^[3] / November 5, 2010
Platform	Firefox, Seamonkey, Internet Explorer, Safari, Opera, Google Chrome
Type	Web site ranking and discovery
License	Proprietary freeware
Website	http://www.stumbleupon.com/

StumbleUpon is a discovery engine that finds the best of the web, recommended to each unique user. It allows its users to discover and rate Web pages, photos, and videos that are personalized to their tastes and interests using peer-sourcing and social-networking principles.

Toolbar versions exist for Firefox, Mozilla Application Suite, Google Chrome and Internet Explorer, but StumbleUpon also works with some independent Mozilla-based browsers. Third party toolbars have also been created for Safari^[4] and Opera^[5].

History

The StumbleUpon was founded in November 2001^[2] by Garrett Camp, Geoff Smith, Justin LaFrance and Eric Boyd during Garrett's time in post-graduate school in Calgary, Canada. The idea of creating a company was established before the content: of the five or six ideas for products, StumbleUpon was chosen. Garrett describes in a BBC interview the moment for him in which he felt the company had really taken off: "When we passed the half a million mark (in registered users), it seemed more real."^[6]

The popularity of the software attracted Silicon Valley investor Brad O'Neill to take notice of the company and assist with a move to San Francisco, as well as bringing in subsequent fund-raising totaling \$1.2 million from other angel investors including Ram Shriram (Google), Mitch Kapor (Mozilla Foundation), First Round Capital, and Ron Conway. Garrett Camp and Geoff Smith now reside in San Francisco, where StumbleUpon is headquartered.

StumbleUpon was owned by eBay from May 2007, when it was acquired for \$75,000,000,^[7] until April 2009, when Garrett Camp, Geoff Smith and several investors bought it back.^[8] StumbleUpon is now an independent, investor-backed startup once again, with offices in San Francisco and New York City.

Service details

StumbleUpon uses collaborative filtering (an automated process combining human opinions with machine learning of personal preference) to create virtual communities of like-minded Web surfers. Rating Web sites updates a personal profile (a blog-style record of rated sites) and generates peer networks of Web surfers linked by common interest. These social networks coordinate the distribution of Web content, so that users "stumble upon" pages explicitly recommended by friends and peers. Giving a site a thumbs up results in the site being placed under the user's "favorites".

Users rate a site by giving it a thumbs up, thumbs down selection on the StumbleUpon toolbar, and can optionally leave additional commentary on the site's review page, which also appears on the user's blog. This social content discovery approach automates the "word-of-mouth" referral of peer-approved Web sites and simplifies Web navigation.

Stumblers also have the ability to rate and review each others' blogs and join interest groups, which are community forums for specific topics. Users can post comments in the manner of a discussion board in these groups and post links to Web sites that apply to the specific topic.

StumbleVideo

On December 13, 2006, StumbleUpon launched their StumbleVideo site at <http://video.stumbleupon.com/>. The new site allows users without a toolbar to "stumble" through all the videos that toolbar users have submitted and rate them using an AJAX interface. The site currently aggregates videos from CollegeHumor, DailyMotion, FunnyOrDie, Google, MetaCafe, MySpace, Vimeo and YouTube.

StumbleUpon launched a version of StumbleVideo for the Internet Channel Web browser that runs on the Wii console on February 12, 2007. This version of StumbleVideo is optimized for the Wii's smaller screen resolution and offers similar functionality to that of the original version.

StumbleThru

In April 2007, StumbleUpon launched the StumbleThru service, allowing users of the toolbar to stumble within sites such as Youtube, The Onion, Public Broadcasting Service and Wikipedia. According to the announcement of the feature, StumbleUpon plans on adding additional Web sites in the future.

As of June 13, 2010, sites using StumbleThru include BBC.com, Blogger, Break.com, CNN.com, Collegehumor, CreditLoan.com, Flickr.com, Funnyjunk.com, FunnyorDie.com, Howstuffworks.com, HuffingtonPost.com, Metacafe.com , MySpace, Pbs.org, PhysOrg, Rolling Stone, Scientific American, The Onion, Wikipedia, Wired.com, Wordpress, Youtube.com

Su.pr

In March 2009, StumbleUpon launched the Su.pr service. Its primary usage is for Twitter and Facebook statuses and updates.^[9] The service is similar to that of bit.ly and tinyURL. In March through May, the su.pr service was only available to people who have gotten an invite code. In June, the service went under public beta. This service has gotten mixed reviews.

Advertising

StumbleUpon uses knowledge of user preferences to deliver targeted advertising. A small proportion of the "stumbles" users come across (typically less than 2%) are sponsored pages matching their topics of interest. For example, those signed up for photography will occasionally see an ad related to photography. Such content is vetted by humans for "quality and relevance" prior to its delivery. A sponsored site is identifiable by a green "person" logo on the toolbar. Paid accounts (referred to as "Sponsors") have a variety of options, including the ability to turn off

such advertising.

Growth

In July 2006, StumbleUpon had 1 million users.^[10] StumbleUpon claims to have more than 8,772,000 members as of December 5, 2009. StumbleUpon said that before the end of May 2008, it would have collected its five-billionth "stumble", more than one billion of which would have taken place in 2008 alone.^[11]

eBay

In May 2007, StumbleUpon was purchased by eBay. Early reports indicated that the company was also in talks with Google before the eBay announcement. In September 2008 eBay hired Deutsche Bank to try to sell StumbleUpon again.^[12] On April 13, 2009, founders Garrett Camp and Geoff Smith and other investors including Ram Shriram bought the company.^{[8] [13]}

See also

- Delicious (website)
- Digg
- Fark
- Reddit
- Slashdot
- bit.ly
- tinyURL
- Social bookmarking
- Web 2.0

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.stumbleupon.com/>)
- Advanced Stumbling Wiki (http://stumbleupon.wikia.com/wiki/Advanced_Stumbling)
- StumbleVideo for Wii (<http://stumble.tv/>) (Browser sniffing forwards non-Wii visitors to the normal StumbleVideo interface)
- Garrett Camp in TR35 (<http://www.technologyreview.com/tr35/Profile.aspx?Cand=T&TRID=606>)

Twitter



Type	Private
Founded	San Francisco, California, United States
Founder	Jack Dorsey Evan Williams Biz Stone
Headquarters	795 Folsom St., Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94107 ^[1] , United States
Area served	Worldwide
Key people	Jack Dorsey (Chairman) Dick Costolo (CEO) Evan Williams (Product Strategy) Biz Stone (Creative Director)
Revenue	▲ US \$150 million (projected 2010) ^[2]
Employees	300 (2010) ^[3]
Slogan	What's happening?
Website	twitter.com ^[4]
Alexa rank	▲ 9 (October 2010) ^[5]
Type of site	mobile social network service, microblogging
Registration	Required
Users	190 million (visitors monthly) ^[6]
Available in	Multilingual English, Spanish, Japanese, German, French, and Italian
Launched	July 15, 2006 ^[7]
Current status	Active

Twitter is a website, owned and operated by Twitter Inc., which offers a social networking and microblogging service, enabling its users to send and read other users' messages called *tweets*. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the user's profile page. Tweets are publicly visible by default, however senders can restrict message delivery to their friends list. Users may subscribe to other users' tweets—this is known as *following* and subscribers are known as *followers*.^[8]

All users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, compatible external applications (such as for smartphones), or by Short Message Service (SMS) available in certain countries.^[9] While the service is free, accessing it through SMS may incur phone service provider fees. The website is based in San Francisco, California (where the website was first based). Twitter also has servers and offices in San Antonio, Texas and Boston, Massachusetts.

Since its creation in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Twitter has gained popularity worldwide and currently has more than 175 million users.^[10] Quantcast estimates Twitter has 54 million monthly unique U.S. visitors.^[11] It is sometimes

described as the "SMS of the Internet."^[12]

History

Twitter's origins lie in a "daylong brainstorming session" that was held by board members of the podcasting company Odeo. While sitting in a park on a children's slide and eating Mexican food, Jack Dorsey introduced the idea of an individual using an SMS service to communicate with a small group.^[13] The original project code name for the service was **twttr**, inspired by Flickr and the five character length of American SMS short codes. The developers initially considered "10958" as a short code, but later changed it to "40404" for "ease of use and memorability."^[14] Work on the project started on March 21, 2006, when Dorsey published the first Twitter message at 9:50 PM Pacific Standard Time (PST): "just setting up my twttr."^[15]

[W]e came across the word "twitter," and it was just perfect. The definition was "a short burst of inconsequential information," and "chirps from birds." And that's exactly what the product was.

—Jack Dorsey^[16]

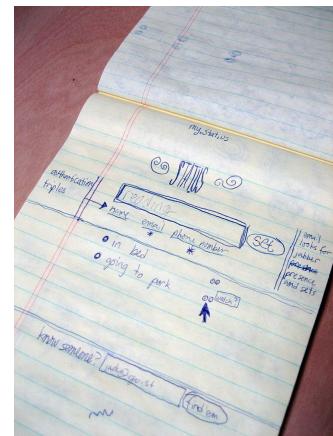
The first Twitter prototype was used as an internal service for Odeo employees and the full version was introduced publicly on July 15, 2006.^[7] In October 2006, Biz Stone, Evan Williams, Dorsey, and other members of Odeo formed Obvious Corporation and acquired Odeo and all of its assets—including Odeo.com and Twitter.com—from the investors and shareholders.^[17] Twitter spun off into its own company in April 2007.^[18]

The tipping point for Twitter's popularity was the 2007 South by Southwest (SXSW) festival. During the event Twitter usage increased from 20,000 tweets per day to 60,000.^[19] "The Twitter people cleverly placed two 60-inch plasma screens in the conference hallways, exclusively streaming Twitter messages," remarked *Newsweek's* Steven Levy. "Hundreds of conference-goers kept tabs on each other via constant twitters. Panelists and speakers mentioned the service, and the bloggers in attendance touted it."^[20]

Reaction at the festival was highly positive. Blogger Scott Beale said that Twitter "absolutely rul[ed]" SXSW. Social software researcher Danah Boyd said Twitter "own[ed]" the festival.^[21] Twitter staff received the festival's Web Award prize with the remark "we'd like to thank you in 140 characters or less. And we just did!"^[22]

On September 14, 2010, Twitter launched a redesigned site including a new logo.^[23]

On October 4, 2010, Evan Williams announced that he was stepping down as CEO. Dick Costolo, formerly COO of Twitter, took over Williams' position. Williams will stay with the company and "be completely focused on product strategy."^[24]



A blueprint sketch, circa 2006, by Jack Dorsey, envisioning an SMS-based social network.



Growth

Twitter had 400,000 tweets posted per quarter in 2007. This grew to 100 million tweets posted per quarter in 2008. By the end of 2009, 2 billion tweets per quarter were being posted. By March 2010, Twitter recorded over 70,000 registered applications, according to the company.^[25] In February 2010 Twitter users were sending 50 million tweets per day.^[26] In the first quarter of 2010, 4 billion tweets were posted. As of June 2010, about 65 million tweets are posted each day, equaling about 750 tweets sent each second, according to Twitter.^[27]

Twitter's usage spikes during prominent events. For example, a record was set during the 2010 FIFA World Cup when fans wrote 2,940 tweets per second in the 30 second period after Japan scored against Cameroon on 14 June

2010. The record was broken again when 3,085 tweets a second were posted after the Los Angeles Lakers' victory in the 2010 NBA Finals on 17 June 2010.^[28] When American singer Michael Jackson died on June 25, 2009, the Twitter server crashed after users were updating their status to include the words "Michael Jackson" at a rate of 100,000 tweets per hour.^[29]

Twitter acquired application developer Atebits on April 11, 2010. Atebits had developed the Apple Design Award-winning Twitter client Tweetie for Mac and iPhone. The application, now called "Twitter" and distributed free of charge, is the official Twitter client for the iPhone.^[30]

Overview

Technology author Steven Johnson describes the basic mechanics of Twitter as "remarkably simple."^[31]

As a social network, Twitter revolves around the principle of followers. When you choose to follow another Twitter user, that user's tweets appear in reverse chronological order on your main Twitter page. If you follow 20 people, you'll see a mix of tweets scrolling down the page: breakfast-cereal updates, interesting new links, music recommendations, even musings on the future of education.

Twitter has been compared to a web-based Internet Relay Chat (IRC) client.^[32]

Messages

Users can group posts together by topic or type by use of *hashtags* — words or phrases prefixed with a #.^[33] Similarly, the letter d followed by a username allows users to send messages privately. Finally, the @ sign followed by a username is used for mentioning or replying to other users.^[34]

In late 2009, the "Twitter Lists" feature was added, making it possible for users to follow (as well as mention and reply to) lists of authors instead of individual authors.^{[8] [35]}

Through SMS, users can communicate with Twitter through five gateway numbers: short codes for the United States, Canada, India, New Zealand, and an Isle of Man-based number for international use. There is also a short code in the United Kingdom which is only accessible to those on the Vodafone, O2^[36] and Orange^[37] networks. In India, since Twitter only supports tweets from Bharti Airtel,^[38] an alternative platform called smsTweet^[39] was set up by a user to work on all networks.^[40] A similar platform called GladlyCast^[41] exists for mobile phone users in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines.

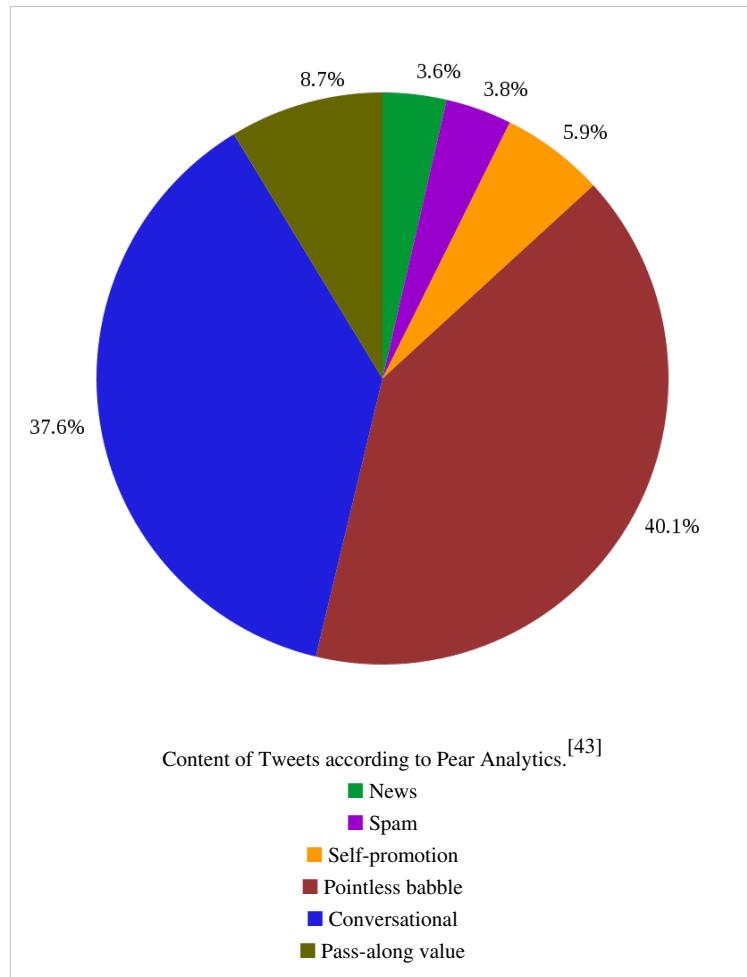
The messages were initially set to 140-character limit for compatibility with SMS messaging, introducing the shorthand notation and slang commonly used in SMS messages. The 140 character limit has also increased the usage of URL shortening services such as bit.ly, goo.gl, and tr.im, and content hosting services, such as Twitpic, memozu.com and NotePub to accommodate multimedia content and text longer than 140 characters. Twitter uses bit.ly for automatic shortening of all URLs posted on its website.^[42]

Tweet contents

San Antonio-based market research firm Pear Analytics analyzed 2,000 tweets (originating from the US and in English) over a 2-week period in August 2009 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM (CST) and separated them into six categories:^[43]

- Pointless babble — 40%
- Conversational — 38%
- Pass-along value — 9%
- Self-promotion — 6%
- Spam — 4%
- News — 4%^[43]

Social networking researcher Danah Boyd responded to the Pear Analytics survey by arguing that what the Pear researchers labelled "pointless babble" is better characterized as "social grooming" and/or "peripheral awareness" (which she explains as persons "want[ing] to know what the people around them are thinking and doing and feeling, even when co-presence isn't viable").^[44]



Rankings

Twitter is ranked as one of the 10 most visited websites worldwide by Alexa's web traffic analysis.^[45] Daily user estimates vary because the company does not release the number of active accounts. A February 2009 Compete.com blog entry ranked Twitter as the third most used social network based on their count of 6 million unique monthly visitors and 55 million monthly visits.^[46] In March 2009, a Nielsen.com blog ranked Twitter as the fastest-growing website in the Member Communities category for February 2009. Twitter had a monthly growth of 1,382%, increasing from 475,000 unique visitors in February 2008 to 7 million in February 2009. It was followed by Zimbio with 240% increase, and Facebook with 228% increase.^[47] However, only 40% of Twitter's users are retained.^[48]

Adding and following content

There are numerous tools for adding content, monitoring content and conversations including Tweetdeck, Salesforce.com, HootSuite, and Twitterfeed.^[49] Less than half of tweets are posted using the web user interface with most users using third-party applications (based on analysis of 500 million tweets by Sysomos).^[50]

Authentication

As of August 31, 2010, third-party Twitter applications are required to use OAuth, an authentication method that allows users to use applications without having to give the applications their passwords. Previously, this authentication method was optional, but now third-party applications that try to use a username and password will fail. Twitter stated that the move to OAuth will mean "increased security and a better experience."^[51]

Demographics

Twitter is mainly used by older adults who might not have used other social sites before Twitter, says Jeremiah Owyang, an industry analyst studying social media. "Adults are just catching up to what teens have been doing for years," he said.^[52] According to comScore only 11% of Twitter's users are aged 12 to 17.^[52] comScore attributes this to Twitter's "early adopter period" when the social network first gained popularity in business settings and news outlets attracting primarily older users. However, comScore as of late, has stated that Twitter has begun to "filter more into the mainstream", and "along with it came a culture of celebrity as Shaq, Britney Spears and Ashton Kutcher joined the ranks of the Twitterati."^[53]

According to a study by Sysomos in June 2009, women make up a slightly larger Twitter demographic than men — 53% over 47%. It also stated that 5% of users accounted for 75% of all activity, and that New York has the most Twitter users.^[54]

According to Quancast, 27 million people in the US used Twitter as of 09/03/2009. 63% of Twitter users are less than 35 years old, 60% of Twitter users are Caucasian, but a higher than average (compared to other Internet properties) are African American (16%) and Hispanic (11%); 58% of Twitter users have a total household income of at least \$60K.^[55]

Finances

Twitter raised over US\$57 million from venture capitalist growth funding, although exact numbers are not publicly disclosed. Twitter's first A round of funding was for an undisclosed amount that is rumored to have been between \$1 million and \$5 million.^[56] Its second B round of funding in 2008 was for \$22 million^[57] and its third C round of funding in 2009 was for \$35 million from Institutional Venture Partners and Benchmark Capital along with an undisclosed amount from other investors including Union Square Ventures, Spark Capital and Insight Venture Partners.^[56] Twitter is backed by Union Square Ventures, Digital Garage, Spark Capital, and Bezos Expeditions.^[58]



Twitter's San Francisco headquarters located at
795 Folsom St.

The Industry Standard has remarked that Twitter's long-term viability is limited by a lack of revenue.^[59] Twitter board member Todd Chaffee forecast that the company could profit from e-commerce, noting that users may want to buy items directly from Twitter since it already provides product recommendations and promotions.^[60]

On April 13, 2010, Twitter announced plans to offer paid advertising for companies that would be able to purchase "promoted tweets" to appear in selective search results on the Twitter website, similar to Google Adwords' advertising model. As of April 13, Twitter announced it had already signed up a number of companies wishing to advertise including Sony Pictures, Red Bull, Best Buy, and Starbucks.^{[61] [62]}

Some of Twitter's revenue and user growth documents were illegally published on TechCrunch by the hacker Croll Hacker. The documents projected 2009 revenues of \$400,000 in the third quarter and \$4 million in the fourth quarter along with 25 million users by the end of the year. The projections for the end of 2013 were \$1.54 billion in revenue, \$111 million in net earnings, and 1 billion users.^[2] No information about how Twitter plans to achieve those numbers has been published. In response, Twitter co-founder Biz Stone published a blog post suggesting the possibility of legal action against the hacker.^[63]

Technology

Implementation

The Twitter Web interface uses the Ruby on Rails framework,^[64] deployed on a performance enhanced Ruby Enterprise Edition implementation of Ruby.^[65]

From the spring of 2007 until 2008 the messages were handled by a Ruby persistent queue server called Starling,^[66] but since 2009 implementation has been gradually replaced with software written in Scala.^[67] The service's application programming interface (API) allows other web services and applications to integrate with Twitter.^[68] [69]

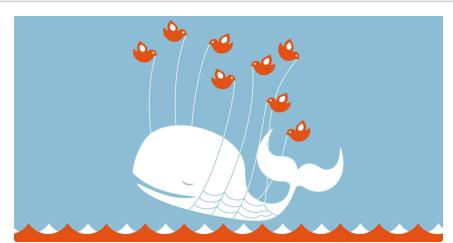
Interface

On April 30, 2009, Twitter adjusted its web interface, adding a search bar and a sidebar of "trending topics" — the most common phrases appearing in messages. Biz Stone explains that all messages are instantly indexed and that "with this newly launched feature, Twitter has become something unexpectedly important — a discovery engine for finding out what is happening right now."^[70]

Outages

When Twitter experiences an outage, users see the "fail whale" error message image created by Yiyiing Lu,^[71] illustrating several red birds using a net to hoist a whale from the ocean captioned "Too many tweets! Please wait a moment and try again."^[72]

Twitter had approximately 98% uptime in 2007 (or about six full days of downtime).^[73] The downtime was particularly noticeable during events popular with the technology industry such as the 2008 Macworld Conference & Expo keynote address.^[74] [75]



The Twitter fail whale error message.

- November 2010 A number of accounts encountered a fault that resulted in them seeing the 'fail whale' when they tried to login to their accounts. The accounts themselves weren't locked out as account holders could still see their 'mentions' page and post from there. But the timeline and a number of other features were unavailable during this outage (which remains ongoing).
- May 2008 Twitter's new engineering team made architectural changes to deal with the scale of growth. Stability issues resulted in down time or temporary feature removal.
- August 2008, Twitter withdrew free SMS services from users in the United Kingdom^[76] and for approximately five months instant messaging support via a XMPP bot was listed as being "temporarily unavailable".^[77]
- October 10, 2008, Twitter's status blog announced that instant messaging (IM) service was no longer a temporary outage and needed to be revamped. It was announced that Twitter aims to return its IM service pending necessary major work.^[78]
- June 12, 2009, in what was called a potential "Twitpocalypse", the unique numerical identifier associated with each tweet exceeded the limit of 32-bit signed integers (2,147,483,647 total messages).^[79] While Twitter itself was not affected, some third-party clients could no longer access recent tweets. Patches were quickly released, though some iPhone applications had to wait for approval from the App Store.^[80]
- September 22, the identifier exceeded the limit for 32-bit *unsigned* integers (4,294,967,296 total messages) again breaking some third-party clients.^[81]
- August 6, 2009, Twitter and Facebook suffered from a denial-of-service attack, causing the Twitter website to go offline for several hours.^[82] It was later confirmed that the attacks were directed at one pro-Georgian user around the anniversary of the 2008 South Ossetia War, rather than the sites themselves.^[83]

- 17 December 2009 a hacking attack replaced the website's welcoming screen with an image of a green flag and the caption "This site has been hacked by Iranian Cyber Army" for nearly an hour. No connection between the hackers and Iran has been established.^[84]

Privacy and security

Twitter collects personally identifiable information about its users and shares it with third parties. The service reserves the right to sell this information as an asset if the company changes hands.^[85] While Twitter displays no advertising, advertisers can target users based on their history of tweets and may quote tweets in ads^[86] directed specifically to the user.

A security vulnerability was reported on April 7, 2007, by Nitesh Dhanjani and Rujith. Since Twitter used the phone number of the sender of an SMS message as authentication, malicious users could update someone else's status page by using SMS spoofing.^[87] The vulnerability could be used if the spoofer knew the phone number registered to their victim's account. Within a few weeks of this discovery Twitter introduced an optional personal identification number (PIN) that its users could use to authenticate their SMS-originating messages.^[88]

On January 5, 2009, 33 high-profile Twitter accounts were compromised after a Twitter administrator's password was guessed by a dictionary attack.^[89] Falsified tweets — including sexually explicit and drug-related messages — were sent from these accounts.^[90]

Twitter launched the beta version of their "Verified Accounts" service on June 11, 2009, allowing famous or notable people to announce their Twitter account name. The home pages of these accounts display a badge indicating their status.^[91]

In May 2010, a bug was discovered by İnci Sözlük users that allowed Twitter users to force others to follow them without the other user's knowledge. For example, comedian Conan O'Brien's account which had been set to follow only one person was changed to receive nearly 200 malicious subscriptions.^[92]

In response to Twitter's security breaches, the Federal Trade Commission brought charges against the service which were settled on June 24, 2010. This was the first time the FTC had taken action against a social network for security lapses. The settlement requires Twitter to take a number of steps to secure users' private information including maintenance of a "comprehensive information security program" to be independently audited biannually.^[93]

"MouseOver" exploit

On 21 September 2010, an XSS Worm became active on Twitter. When an account user held the mouse cursor over blacked out parts of a tweet, the worm within the script would automatically open links and re-post itself on the reader's account.^[94] The exploit was then re-used to post pop-up ads and links to pornographic sites.

The origin is unclear but Pearce Delphin (known on Twitter as @zzap) and a Scandinavian developer, Magnus Holm, both claim to have modified the exploit of a user, possibly Masato Kinugawa, who was using it to create coloured Tweets.^[95] Kinugawa, a Japanese developer, reported the XSS vulnerability to Twitter on August 14. Later, when he found it was exploitable again, he created the account 'RainbowTwtr' and used it to post coloured messages.^[95]

Delphin says he exposed the security flaw by tweeting a JavaScript function for "onMouseOver",^[95] and Holm later created and posted the XSS Worm that automatically re-tweeted itself.^[94]

Accounts affected by the virus included Sarah Brown, wife of former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Security firm Sophos reported the virus was spread by people doing it for "fun and games", but noted it could be exploited by cybercriminals.^[96] Twitter issued a statement on their status blog at 13:50 UTC that "*The exploit is fully patched*".^[94] ^[97] Twitter representative Carolyn Penner has expressed that they will not be pressing charges over this incident.^[98]

Open source

Twitter released several open source projects developed while overcoming technical challenges of their service.^[99] Notable projects are the Gizzard Scala framework for creating distributed datastores and the distributed graph database FlockDB.

t.co

t.co is a URL shortening service created by Twitter.^[100] It is only available for links posted to Twitter and not available for general use.^[100] Eventually all links posted to Twitter will use a t.co wrapper.^[101]

Twitter hopes that the service will be able to protect users from malicious sites,^[100] and will use it to track clicks on links within tweets.^{[100] [102]}

History

Having previously used the services of third parties TinyURL and bit.ly,^[103] Twitter began experimenting with its own URL shortening service for direct messages in March 2010 using the twt.tl domain,^[101] before it purchased the t.co domain.

The service is being tested on the main site using the accounts @TwitterAPI, @rsarver and @raffi.^[101]

On 2 September 2010 an email from Twitter to users said they would be expanding the roll-out of the service to users.

Reception

Change of focus

Twitter emphasized their news and information network strategy in November 2009 by changing the question asked users for status updates from "What are you doing?" to "What's happening?".^{[104] [105]}

Entertainment Weekly put it on its end-of-the-decade, "best-of" list, saying, "Limiting yourself to 140 characters—the maximum for messages on this diabolically addictive social-networking tool—is easy."^[106]

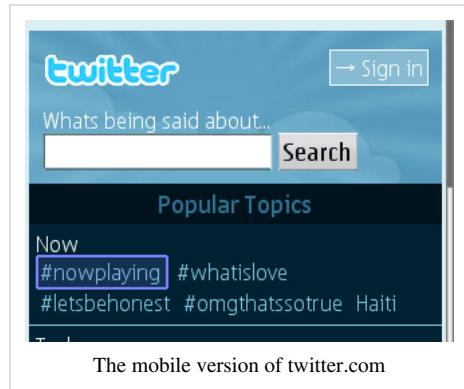
Criticism

The Wall Street Journal wrote that social-networking services such as

Twitter "elicit mixed feelings in the technology-savvy people who have been their early adopters. Fans say they are a good way to keep in touch with busy friends. But some users are starting to feel 'too' connected, as they grapple with check-in messages at odd hours, higher cellphone bills and the need to tell acquaintances to stop announcing what they're having for dinner."^[107]

"Using Twitter for literate communication is about as likely as firing up a CB radio and hearing some guy recite the *Iliad*", said tech writer Bruce Sterling.^[108] "For many people, the idea of describing your blow-by-blow activities in such detail is absurd," hypothesized writer Clive Thompson. "Why would you subject your friends to your daily minutiae? And conversely, how much of their trivia can you absorb? The growth of ambient intimacy can seem like modern narcissism taken to a new, supermetabolic extreme—the ultimate expression of a generation of celebrity-addled youths who believe their every utterance is fascinating and ought to be shared with the world."^[109]

On the other hand Steve Dotto opines that part of Twitter's appeal is the challenge of trying to publish such messages in tight constraints.^[110] "The qualities that make Twitter seem inane and half-baked are what makes it so powerful,"



says Jonathan Zittrain, professor of Internet law at Harvard Law School.^[111]

Nielsen Online reports that Twitter has a user retention rate of 40%. Many people stop using the service after a month therefore the site may potentially reach only about 10% of all Internet users.^[112] In 2009, Twitter won the "Breakout of the Year" Webby Award.^{[113] [114]}

During a February 2009 discussion on National Public Radio's *Weekend Edition*, Daniel Schorr stated that Twitter accounts of events lacked rigorous fact-checking and other editorial improvements. In response, Andy Carvin gave Schorr two examples of breaking news stories that played out on Twitter and said users wanted first-hand accounts and sometimes debunked stories.^[115]

In an episode of *The Daily Show* on February 26, 2009, guest Brian Williams described tweets as only referring to the condition of the author. Williams implied that he would never use Twitter because nothing he did was interesting enough to publish in Twitter format.^[116] During another episode of *The Daily Show* on March 2, 2009, host Jon Stewart negatively portrayed members of Congress who chose to "tweet" during President Obama's address to Congress (on February 24, 2009) rather than pay attention to the content of the speech. The show's Samantha Bee satirized media coverage of the service saying "there's no surprise young people love it — according to reports of young people by middle-aged people."^[117]

In March 2009, the comic strip *Doonesbury* began to satirize Twitter. Many characters highlighted the triviality of tweets although one defended the need to keep up with the constant-update trend.^[118] SuperNews! similarly satirized Twitter as an addiction to "constant self-affirmation" and said tweets were nothing more than "shouts into the darkness hoping someone is listening".^[119]

In August 2010, South Korea tried to block certain content on Twitter due to the North Korean government opening a Twitter account.^[120] The North Korean Twitter account created on August 12, @uriminzok, loosely translated to mean "our people" in Korean, acquired over 4,500 followers in less than one week. On August 19, 2010, South Korea's state-run Communications Standards Commission banned the Twitter account for broadcasting "illegal information."^[121] According to BBC US and Canada, experts claim that North Korea has invested in "information technology for more than 20 years" with knowledge of how to use social networking sites to their power.^[122] This appears to be "nothing new" for North Korea as the reclusive country has always published propaganda in its press, usually against South Korea, calling them "warmongers."^[122] With only 36 tweets, the Twitter account was able to accumulate almost 9,000 followers. To date, the South Korean Commission has banned 65 sites, including this Twitter account.^[121]

See also

- Ambient Awareness
- Blauk
- Comparison of micro-blogging services
- List of Twitter services and applications

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External links

- Official website (<http://twitter.com/>)
- Twitter (<http://twitter.com/twitter>) on Twitter
- Twitter Demographics and Audience Profile (<http://www.quantcast.com/twitter.com#demographics>) at Quantcast
- Twitter in Depth Archive (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/twitter/>) by *The Daily Telegraph*
- The Library of Congress is Archiving Your Tweets (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126086325>) – audio report by *NPR*
- Twittermania sweeps Russia's politicians (http://rt.com/Top_News/2010-08-31/russia-politicians-twitter-mania.html) (RT article)

YouTube

 Broadcast Yourself™	
Type	Subsidiary, limited liability company
Founded	February 2005
Founder	Steve Chen Chad Hurley Jawed Karim
Headquarters	901 Cherry Ave, San Bruno, California, United States
Area served	Worldwide
Key people	Salar Kamangar, CEO Chad Hurley, Advisor
Owner	YouTube LLC (2005–2006) Google Inc. (2006–present)
Slogan	Broadcast Yourself
Website	[youtube.com youtube.com] (see list of localized domain names)
Alexa rank	■ 3 (July 2010) ^[1]
Type of site	video hosting service
Advertising	Google AdSense
Registration	Optional
Available in	34 languages are available through the user interface ^[2]
Launched	February 14, 2005
Current status	Active

YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, share, and view videos. Three former PayPal employees created YouTube in February 2005.^[3]

The company is based in San Bruno, California, and uses Adobe Flash Video technology to display a wide variety of user-generated video content, including movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, although media corporations including CBS, BBC, VEVO and other organizations offer some of their material via the site, as part of the YouTube partnership program.^[4]

Unregistered users can watch the videos, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos. Videos that are considered to contain potentially offensive content are available only to registered users 18 and older. In November 2006, YouTube, LLC was bought by Google Inc. for \$1.65 billion, and now operates as a subsidiary of Google.

Company history



YouTube's current headquarters in San Bruno, California

YouTube was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, who were all early employees of PayPal.^[5] Hurley studied design at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, while Chen and Karim studied computer science together at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.^[6]

According to a story that has often been repeated in the media, Chad Hurley and Steve Chen developed the idea for YouTube during the early months of 2005, after they had experienced difficulty sharing videos that had been shot at a dinner party at Chen's apartment in San Francisco. Jawed Karim did not attend the party and denied that it had occurred, while Chad Hurley commented that the idea that YouTube

was founded after a dinner party "was probably very strengthened by marketing ideas around creating a story that was very digestible."^[7]

YouTube began as a venture-funded technology startup, primarily from a US\$11.5 million investment by Sequoia Capital between November 2005 and April 2006.^[8] YouTube's early headquarters were situated above a pizzeria and Japanese restaurant in San Mateo, California.^[9] The domain name www.youtube.com was activated on February 14, 2005, and the website was developed over the subsequent months.^[10] The first YouTube video was entitled *Me at the zoo*, and shows founder Jawed Karim at San Diego Zoo.^[11] The video was uploaded on April 23, 2005, and can still be viewed on the site.^[12]

YouTube offered the public a beta test of the site in May 2005, six months before the official launch in November 2005. The site grew rapidly, and in July 2006 the company announced that more than 65,000 new videos were being uploaded every day, and that the site was receiving 100 million video views per day.^[13] According to data published by market research company comScore, YouTube is the dominant provider of online video in the United States, with a market share of around 43 percent and more than 14 billion videos viewed in May 2010.^[14] YouTube says that 24 hours of new videos are uploaded to the site every minute, and that around three quarters of the material comes from outside the United States.^[15] ^[16] It is estimated that in 2007 YouTube consumed as much bandwidth as the entire Internet in 2000.^[17] Alexa ranks YouTube as the third most visited website on the Internet, behind Google and Facebook.^[18]

The choice of the name www.youtube.com led to problems for a similarly named website, www.utube.com. The owner of the site, Universal Tube & Rollform Equipment, filed a lawsuit against YouTube in November 2006 after being overloaded on a regular basis by people looking for YouTube. Universal Tube has since changed the name of its website to www.utubeonline.com.^[19] ^[20] In October 2006, Google Inc. announced that it had acquired YouTube for US\$1.65 billion in Google stock, and the deal was finalized on November 13, 2006.^[21] Google does not provide detailed figures for YouTube's running costs, and YouTube's revenues in 2007 were noted as "not material" in a regulatory filing.^[22] In June 2008, a Forbes magazine article projected the 2008 revenue at US\$200 million, noting progress in advertising sales.^[23]

In November 2008, YouTube reached an agreement with MGM, Lions Gate Entertainment and CBS, allowing the companies to post full-length films and television episodes on the site, accompanied by advertisements in a section for US viewers called "Shows". The move was intended to create competition with websites such as Hulu, which features material from NBC, Fox, and Disney.^[24] ^[25] In November 2009, YouTube launched a version of "Shows" available to UK viewers, offering around 4000 full-length shows from more than 60 partners.^[26] In January 2010, YouTube introduced an online film rentals service,^[27] which is currently available only to users in the United States.^[28] ^[29]

In March 2010, YouTube began free streaming of certain content, including 60 cricket matches of the Indian Premier League. According to YouTube, this was the first worldwide free online broadcast of a major sporting event.^[30]

On March 31, 2010, the YouTube website launched a new design, with the aim of simplifying the interface and increasing the time users spend on the site. Google product manager Shiva Rajaraman commented: "We really felt like we needed to step back and remove the clutter."^[31] In May 2010, it was reported that YouTube was serving more than two billion videos a day, which it described as "nearly double the prime-time audience of all three major US television networks combined."^[32] In October 2010, Google published its third quarter financial results for the year, which stated that YouTube was serving two billion videos a week accompanied by advertising.^[33]

In October 2010, Chad Hurley announced that he would be stepping down as chief executive officer of YouTube to take an advisory role, and that Salar Kamangar would take over as head of the company.^[34]

Social impact

Before the launch of YouTube in 2005, there were few easy methods available for ordinary computer users who wanted to post videos online. With its simple interface, YouTube made it possible for anyone with an Internet connection to post a video that a worldwide audience could watch within a few minutes. The wide range of topics covered by YouTube has turned video sharing into one of the most important parts of Internet culture.

An early example of the social impact of YouTube was the success of the Bus Uncle video in 2006. It shows a heated conversation between a youth and an older man on a bus in Hong Kong, and was discussed widely in the mainstream media.^[35] Another YouTube video to receive extensive coverage is *guitar*,^[36] which features a performance of Pachelbel's Canon on an electric guitar. The name of the performer is not given in the video, and after it received millions of views *The New York Times* revealed the identity of the guitarist as Jeong-Hyun Lim, a 23-year-old from South Korea who had recorded the track in his bedroom.^[37]

YouTube was awarded a 2008 George Foster Peabody Award and cited for being "a 'Speakers' Corner' that both embodies and promotes democracy."^[38] ^[39] *Entertainment Weekly* put it on its end-of-the-decade, "best-of" list, saying, "Providing a safe home for piano-playing cats, celeb goof-ups, and overzealous lip-synchers since 2005."^[40]

Criticism

Copyrighted material

YouTube has been criticized for failing to ensure that uploaded videos comply with the law of copyright. At the time of uploading a video, YouTube users are shown a screen with the message "Do not upload any TV shows, music videos, music concerts or advertisements without permission, unless they consist entirely of content that you created yourself".^[41] Despite this advice, there are still many unauthorized clips of copyrighted material on YouTube. YouTube does not view videos before they are posted online, and it is left to copyright holders to issue a takedown notice under the terms of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Organizations including Viacom, Mediaset and the English Premier League have filed lawsuits against YouTube, claiming that it has done too little to prevent the uploading of copyrighted material.^[42] ^[43] ^[44] Viacom, demanding US\$1 billion in damages, said that it had found more than 150,000 unauthorized clips of its material on YouTube that had been viewed "an astounding 1.5 billion times". YouTube responded by stating that it "goes far beyond its legal obligations in assisting content owners to protect their works". Since Viacom filed its lawsuit, YouTube has introduced a system called Video ID, which checks uploaded videos against a database of copyrighted content with the aim of reducing violations.^[45] ^[46] On June 23, 2010, Viacom's lawsuit against Google was rejected in a summary judgment, with Judge Louis Stanton stating that Google was protected by provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Viacom announced its intention to appeal against the ruling.^[47]

In August 2008, a U.S. court ruled in *Lenz v. Universal Music Corp.* that copyright holders cannot order the removal of an online file without first determining whether the posting reflected fair use of the material. The case involved Stephanie Lenz from Gallitzin, Pennsylvania, who had made a home video of her 13-month-old son dancing to Prince's song "Let's Go Crazy" and posted the 29-second video on YouTube.^[48]

Privacy

In July 2008, Viacom won a court ruling requiring YouTube to hand over data detailing the viewing habits of every user who has watched videos on the site. The move led to concerns that the viewing habits of individual users could be identified through a combination of their IP addresses and log in names. The decision was criticized by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which called the court ruling "a set-back to privacy rights".^[49] U.S. District Court Judge Louis Stanton dismissed the privacy concerns as "speculative", and ordered YouTube to hand over documents totaling around 12 terabytes of data. Judge Stanton rejected Viacom's request that YouTube hand over the source code of its search engine, saying that it was a "trade secret."^[50] [51]

Controversial content

YouTube has also faced criticism over the offensive content in some of its videos. The uploading of videos containing defamation, pornography and material encouraging criminal conduct is prohibited by YouTube's terms of service.^[52] Controversial areas for videos have included conspiracy theories, religion, Holocaust denial, and the Hillsborough Disaster, in which 96 football fans from Liverpool were crushed to death in 1989.^[53] [54]

YouTube relies on its users to flag the content of videos as inappropriate, and a YouTube employee will view a flagged video to determine whether it violates the site's terms of service.^[52] However, this procedure has been criticized by the United Kingdom government: in July 2008 the Culture and Media Committee of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom stated that it was "unimpressed" with YouTube's system for policing its videos, and argued that "Proactive review of content should be standard practice for sites hosting user generated content." YouTube responded by stating: "We have strict rules on what's allowed, and a system that enables anyone who sees inappropriate content to report it to our 24/7 review team and have it dealt with promptly. We educate our community on the rules and include a direct link from every YouTube page to make this process as easy as possible for our users. Given the volume of content uploaded on our site, we think this is by far the most effective way to make sure that the tiny minority of videos that break the rules come down quickly."^[55]

User comments

Most videos enable users to leave comments, and these have attracted attention for the negative aspects of both their form and content. When *Time magazine* in 2006 praised Web 2.0 for enabling "community and collaboration on a scale never seen before", it added that YouTube "harnesses the stupidity of crowds as well as its wisdom. Some of the comments on YouTube make you weep for the future of humanity just for the spelling alone, never mind the obscenity and the naked hatred".^[56] *The Guardian* in 2009 described users' comments on YouTube as follows: "Juvenile, aggressive, misspelled, sexist, homophobic, swinging from raging at the contents of a video to providing a pointlessly detailed description followed by a LOL, YouTube comments are a hotbed of infantile debate and unashamed ignorance – with the occasional burst of wit shining through".^[57] In September 2008, the *Daily Telegraph* commented that YouTube was "notorious" for "some of the most confrontational and ill-formed comment exchanges on the internet", and reported on YouTube Comment Snob, "a new piece of software that blocks rude and illiterate posts".^[58]

Blocking

Several countries have blocked access to YouTube:

- As of October 2010, YouTube is blocked in the People's Republic of China.^[59] ^[60]
- Morocco shut down access to YouTube in 2008.^[61]
- Thailand blocked YouTube between 2006 and 2007 due to offensive videos relating to King Bhumibol Adulyadej.^[62] ^[63]
- Turkey blocked access to YouTube between 2008 and 2010 after controversy over videos deemed insulting to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.^[64] ^[65] ^[66] The block was lifted briefly but reimposed in November 2010.^[67]
- On December 3, 2006, Iran temporarily blocked access to YouTube, along with several other sites, after declaring them as violating social and moral codes of conduct. The YouTube block came after a video was posted online that appeared to show an Iranian soap opera star having sex.^[68] The block was later lifted and then reinstated after Iran's 2009 presidential election.^[69]
- On February 23, 2008, Pakistan blocked YouTube because of "offensive material" towards the Islamic faith, including display of the Danish cartoons of the prophet Muhammad.^[70] This led to a near global blackout of the YouTube site for around two hours, as the Pakistani block was inadvertently transferred to other countries. Pakistan lifted its block on February 26, 2008.^[71] Many Pakistanis circumvented the three-day block by using virtual private network software.^[72] In May 2010, following the Everybody Draw Mohammed Day, Pakistan again blocked access to YouTube, citing "growing sacrilegious content".^[73]
- On January 24, 2010, Libya blocked access to YouTube after it featured videos of demonstrations in the Libyan city of Benghazi by families of detainees who were killed in Abu Salim prison in 1996, and videos of family members of Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi at parties. The blocking was criticized by Human Rights Watch.^[74]

Some schools have blocked access to YouTube, citing the inability to determine what sort of video material might be accessed by students.^[75]

Features

Video technology

Playback

Viewing YouTube videos on a personal computer requires the Adobe Flash Player plug-in to be installed in the browser. The Adobe Flash Player plug-in is one of the most common pieces of software installed on personal computers and accounts for almost 75% of online video material.^[76]

In January 2010, YouTube launched an experimental version of the site that uses the built-in multimedia capabilities of web browsers supporting the HTML5 standard. This allows videos to be viewed without requiring Adobe Flash Player or any other plug-in to be installed.^[77] ^[78] The YouTube site has a page that allows supported browsers to opt in to the HTML5 trial. Only browsers that support HTML5 Video using the H.264 or WebM formats can play the videos, and not all videos on the site are available.^[79] ^[80]

Uploading

Videos uploaded to YouTube by standard account holders are limited to 15 minutes in duration. When YouTube was launched in 2005 it was possible to upload longer videos, but a ten minute limit was introduced in March 2006 after YouTube found that the majority of videos exceeding this length were unauthorized uploads of television shows and films.^[81] ^[82] The ten minute limit was increased to fifteen minutes in July 2010.^[83] Partner accounts are permitted to upload longer videos, subject to acceptance by YouTube.^[84] File size is limited to 2 GB for uploads from YouTube web page, and to 20 GB if Java-based Advanced Uploader is used.

YouTube accepts videos uploaded in most container formats, including .AVI, .MKV, .MOV, .MP4, DivX, .FLV, and .ogg and .ogv. These include video formats such as MPEG-4, MPEG, and .WMV. It also supports 3GP, allowing videos to be uploaded from legacy mobile phones.^[85] Videos with progressive scanning or interlaced scanning can be uploaded, but for the best video quality, YouTube prefers interlaced videos to be deinterlaced prior to uploading. All the video formats on YouTube use progressive scanning.^[86]

Quality and codecs

YouTube originally offered videos at only one quality level, displayed at a resolution of 320x240 pixels using the H.263 Sorenson Spark codec, with mono MP3 audio.^[87] In June 2007, YouTube added an option to watch videos in 3GP format on mobile phones.^[88] In March 2008, a high quality mode was added, which increased the resolution to 480x360 pixels^[89] In November 2008 720p HD support was added.^[90] With this new feature, YouTube began a switchover to H.264/MPEG-4 AVC as its default video codec. In November 2008, the YouTube player was also changed from a 4:3 aspect ratio to a widescreen 16:9. In November 2009, 1080p HD support was added. In July 2010, YouTube announced that it had launched a range of videos in 4k format, which allows a resolution of up to 4096x3072 pixels.^{[91] [92]}

YouTube videos are available in a range of quality levels. The former names of standard quality (SQ), high quality (HQ) and high definition (HD) have been replaced by numerical values representing the vertical resolution of the video. The default video stream is encoded in H.264/MPEG-4 AVC format, with stereo AAC audio.^[93]

Comparison of YouTube media encoding options

fmt value ^[1]		5	34	35	18	22	37	38	43	45	17
Default container		FLV			MP4				WebM ^[94]		3GP
Video	Encoding	H.263	MPEG-4 AVC (H.264)						VP8		MPEG-4 Visual
Video	Max width (pixels)	400	640	854	480	1280	1920	4096	854	1280	176
	Max height (pixels)	240	360	480	360	720	1080	3072	480	720	144
	Bitrate ^[2] (Mbit/s)	0.25	0.5	0.8 - 1	0.5	2	3.5 - 5	-	-	-	-
	Encoding	MP3	AAC						Vorbis		AAC
Audio	Channels	1–2	2 (stereo)								
	Sampling rate (Hz)	22050	44100				48000	44100			
	Bitrate, Kbit/s ^[2]	-	-	-	-	-	-	96	128	-	

1 *fmt* is an undocumented URL parameter that allows selecting YouTube quality mode without using player user interface.

2 Approximate values based on statistical data; actual bitrate can be higher or lower due to variable encoding rate.^{[95] [96] [97] [98]}

3D videos

In a video posted on July 21, 2009,^[99] YouTube software engineer Peter Bradshaw announced that YouTube users can now upload 3D videos. The videos can be viewed in several different ways, including the common anaglyph (cyan/red lens) method which utilizes glasses worn by the viewer to achieve the 3D effect.^{[100] [101] [102]}

Content accessibility

One of the key features of YouTube is the ability of users to view its videos on web pages outside the site. Each YouTube video is accompanied by a piece of HTML, which can be used to embed it on a page outside the YouTube website. This functionality is often used to embed YouTube videos in social networking pages and blogs.^[103] Embedding, as well as ranking and commenting, can be disabled by the video owner.

YouTube does not usually offer a download link for its videos, and intends for them to be viewed through its website interface.^[104] A small number of videos, such as the weekly addresses by President Barack Obama, can be downloaded as MP4 files.^[105] Numerous third-party web sites, applications and browser plug-ins allow users to download YouTube videos.^[106] In February 2009, YouTube announced a test service, allowing some partners to offer video downloads for free or for a fee paid through Google Checkout.^[107]

Platforms

Some smart phones are capable of accessing YouTube videos, dependent on the provider and the data plan. YouTube Mobile was launched in June 2007, and uses RTSP streaming for the video.^[108] Not all of YouTube's videos are available on the mobile version of the site.^[109]

Since June 2007, YouTube's videos have been available for viewing on a range of Apple products. This required YouTube's content to be transcoded into Apple's preferred video standard, H.264, a process that took several months. YouTube videos can be viewed on devices including Apple TV, iPod Touch and the iPhone.^[110] A TiVo service update in July 2008 allowed the system to search and play YouTube videos.^[111] In January 2009, YouTube launched "YouTube for TV", a version of the website tailored for set-top boxes and other TV-based media devices with web browsers, initially allowing its videos to be viewed on the PlayStation 3 and Wii video game consoles.^[112] [113] In June 2009, YouTube XL was introduced, which has a simplified interface designed for viewing on a standard television screen.^[114]

Localization

On June 19, 2007, Google CEO Eric E. Schmidt was in Paris to launch the new localization system.^[115] The interface of the website is available with localized versions in 24 countries and a worldwide version.^[116] [117]

Country	Language	Launch date
 Argentina	Spanish	September 8, 2010 ^[116]
 Australia	English (Australia)	October 22, 2007 ^[118]
 Brazil	Portuguese (Brazil)	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Canada	English (Canada) and French (Canada)	November 6, 2007 ^[119]
 Czech Republic	Czech	October 9, 2008 ^[120]
 France	French	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Germany	German	November 8, 2007 ^[121]
 Hong Kong	English and Chinese (Traditional)	October 17, 2007 ^[122]
 Israel	Hebrew	September 16, 2008
 India	English (India) and Hindi	May 7, 2008 ^[123]
 Ireland	English (Ireland)	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Italy	Italian	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Japan	Japanese	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Korea	Korean	January 23, 2008
 Mexico	Spanish (Mexico)	October 11, 2007 ^[124]
 Netherlands	Dutch	June 19, 2007 ^[115]

 New Zealand	English (New Zealand)	October 22, 2007 ^[118]
 Poland	Polish	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 Russia	Russian	November 13, 2007
 Spain	Spanish	June 19, 2007 ^[115]
 South Africa	English (South African)	May 17, 2010 ^[115]
 Sweden	Swedish	October 22, 2008
 Taiwan	Chinese (Traditional)	October 18, 2007 ^[122]
 United Kingdom	English (United Kingdom)	June 19, 2007 ^[115]

The YouTube interface suggests which local version should be chosen on the basis of the IP address of the user. In some cases, the message "This video is not available in your country" may appear because of copyright restrictions or inappropriate content.^[125]

The interface of the YouTube website is available in 29 different languages, including Danish, Finnish, Greek, Hungarian, Slovenian and Norwegian, which do not have local channel versions.^[2]

Plans for YouTube to create a local version in Turkey have run into problems, since the Turkish authorities asked YouTube to set up an office in Turkey, which would be subject to Turkish law. YouTube says that it has no intention of doing this, and that its videos are not subject to Turkish law. Turkish authorities have expressed concerns that YouTube has been used to post videos insulting to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and some material offensive to Muslims.^{[126] [127]}

In March 2009, a dispute between YouTube and the British royalty collection agency PRS for Music led to premium music videos being blocked for YouTube users in the United Kingdom. The removal of videos posted by the major record companies occurred after failure to reach agreement on a licensing deal. The dispute was resolved in September 2009.^[128] In April 2009, a similar dispute led to the removal of premium music videos for users in Germany.^[129]

April Fools

YouTube has featured an April Fools prank on the site on April 1 of every year since 2008:

- **2008:** All the links to the videos on the main page were redirected to Rick Astley's music video "Never Gonna Give You Up", a prank known as "Rickrolling".^{[130] [131]}
- **2009:** When clicking on a video on the main page, the whole page turned upside down. YouTube claimed that this was a new layout.^[132]
- **2010:** YouTube temporarily released a "TEXTp" mode, which translated the colors in the videos to random upper case letters. YouTube claimed in a message that this was done in order to reduce bandwidth costs by \$1 per second.^[133]

See also

- Alternative media
- CNN-YouTube presidential debates
- Comparison of video services
- Dailymotion Similar video sharing site located in Paris, France
- List of Internet phenomena
- List of YouTube personalities
- Motion picture rating system#YouTube YouTube ratings
- Viacom International Inc. v. YouTube, Inc.
- Viral video
- YouTube Awards
- YouTube Live
- YouTube Instant

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.youtube.com>)

XING

 openBC	
Type	Public, Aktiengesellschaft (AG), ISIN: DE000XNG8888 ^[1] , Symbol:O1BC.DE
Founded	Hamburg, Germany (2003)
Headquarters	Hamburg, Germany
Key people	Dr. Stefan Gross-Selbeck, CEO
Revenue	€25.09 million (QI-QIII 2008)
Slogan	1
Website	Xing.com ^[2]
Alexa rank	▲ 217 (May 2010) ^[3]
Type of site	Professional network service
Registration	Required
Available in	Simplified Chinese, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish
Launched	November 2003

XING (named **openBC/Open Business Club** until November 17, 2006) is a social software platform for enabling a small-world network for professionals. The company claims that it is used by people from over 200 countries. Available languages include English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, Dutch, Simplified Chinese, Finnish, Swedish, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Polish, Turkish and Hungarian. By displaying how each member is connected to any other member, it visualizes the small-world phenomenon.

The platform offers personal profiles, groups, discussion forums, event coordination, and other common social community features. Basic membership is free. But many core functions, like searching for people with specific qualifications or messaging people to whom one is not already connected, can only be accessed by the premium members. Premium membership comes at a monthly fee of 5 € (around 9 USD).^[4] The platform uses https and has a rigid privacy and no-spam policy. Unlike many other networking websites, XING provides its paying members very easy email access to any members.

XING has a special Ambassador program for each city or region around the world with a substantial constituency. The Ambassadors hold local events that promote the use of social networking as a business tool, letting members introduce business ideas to one and other, and get to know each other on a personal level.

XING competes with the American platform LinkedIn and the European Viadeo^[5] for social networking among businesses.^[6]

XING also offers the system for closed communities, called Enterprise groups with their own access paths and interface designs. The platform serves as the infrastructure for corporate groups, including IBM, McKinsey, Accenture and others.^[7]

History

- OPEN Business Club AG was founded in August 2003 in Hamburg, Germany as a German limited liability company by Lars Hinrichs and co-founder Bill Liao. The platform was officially launched on November 1, 2003.^[8] It was renamed from OpenBC to XING on November 17, 2006.
- It gained much attention in German media and is widely used as a business network in German-speaking countries (DACH Region). Membership from other countries throughout Europe and the Far East helped the network platform grow to more than 1.5 million members in July 2006.^[9]
- In March 2007, XING purchased the Spanish social networking business eConozco and intends to merge its members into Xing over the next 12 months.^[10]
- In June 2007, XING purchased the Spanish social networking business Neurona.^[11] Neurona users were migrated to Xing on March 31, 2008.
- In January 2008, XING purchased the Turkish social networking business Cember.^[12] Cember.net users were migrated to Xing on July 26, 2008.
- In March 2009, XING opened offices in Italy.

IPO

The company went public (IPO) on December 7, 2006 with an issue price of 30 Euros. The Open Business Club Stock Ticker symbol is O1BC.DE and its ISIN number is: DE000XNG8888. XING became the first Web 2.0 company to go public in Europe.^[13]

XING Mobile

Xing.com Mobile allows users to access some of its functions using a mobile phone, PDA or smartphone. Standards supported: HTML 3.2, XHTML MP 1.0, WML 1.1.

XING Plug-Ins

Xing.com Plugins are available for free download that allow contact synchronization with Lotus Notes, Microsoft Outlook, Windows Address Book and Outlook Express. It also allows manual CSV File import-export and has a Firefox search plug-in.

XING Premium (paid) services

The Xing.com openBC Premium Groups were developed for major global communities, from university and corporate alumni groups to leading business magazines and multinational organizations. This social software offering enables effective management and growth of existing communities within the professional context of openBC.

See also

- Viadeo
- LinkedIn
- BoardEx
- Meettheboss
- Professional network
- Social software
- Social networking
- spoke_(website)
- List of social networking websites

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External links

- XING public entry site (<http://www.xing.com>)
- Company weblog (<http://blog.xing.com>)
- Company information and press releases (<http://corporate.openbc.com/>) (source of membership numbers, languages etc.)

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Chairlunchdinner, Chanlyn, Chantessy, Charismatic123, Chatfeeter, Chendy, Chengdi, Chensiyan, Cheong Kok Chun, Chesschampion, Chessphoon, Chester polarbear, Chldzy, Chinamanand, Chloeobrian, Chocolate Dandelions, Chrhardy, Chris is me, Chris the speller, Chris14679, Chrislk02, Christopher Parham, Christopherlin, ChronicallyUninspired, Chzz, Ciacciona, Cindamuse, Cinéma C, CMfusco53515, CMoney05x, CobraBK, Coburnpharr04, Cocoaguy, Coemgenus, CokeBear, Colfulus, Colpon, Collopin, Collopintheat, Colonies Chris, Columba lilia, CommonsDelinker, Cool1097, CoolGuy, Coolaesar, Coolmile88, Coop1128, Copana2002, Corbett3000, Cormacalian, Cornisle, CorpX, Corvus cornix, Corwinlw, Cowbellallen, Cprompt, Crackerjack, CrazyInSane, CrazyLegsKC, Crazycomputers, CredoFromStart, Crockspot, Crosby87, Crossmr, Crystallina, Crzrussian, Csremprt, CubiXcRaYIfsH, Cubbie1783, Cube b3, CurranH, Curtmolloy, Cutopy, Cutter, Cwolfsheep, Cybercobra, Cyfal, Cytsui, CypherXero, Czj, D, D-Day, D.montero.melis, D2lraXBIZGlh, D9qhds, DAMurphy, DC_DGuey, DHN, DJAlirk, DMcer, DMTayag, DMacks, DMurphy, DVD R W, DVot, DXBar, DaMenace123, Daa89563, Daftpunkboy93, Dakin700, Dale Arnett, Damiens_rf, Dancer, DandanxD, Danhw052289, Daniel, Daniel Christensen, Daniel15127, DanielCD, DanielNuyu, Danlev, Danno uk, DannyDaWriter, DannyMac, Dansiman, Danski14, Danta Alighieri, Darb02, DarkFalls, DarkPrincess128, Darkge7, Darp-a-parp, Darrenhusted, Darth Panda, Dasani, Dasium, Davedonohue, Daveeburke, Davemathis, Daverocks, Daveswagon, Davex1000, David, David Biddulph, David the Aspie, DavidFambrough, Davidlive, Davidlyjeong, Dbloom, Dcamp314, De Katten, DeadEyeArrow, Deamon138, DeathNomad, Debresser, Destr9, Delbank, Delivery435, Dem393, Dendodge, DennisDallas, DerHexer, DerekhE, Deskana, Dethme0w, Detruncate, Dexter Nextumber, Dextertitil, Dfrg.msc, Dhaluza, Dheppens, Dhimwit, DiRocco, Dianebobk, Dickreuter, Didiloriillard, Dilbert307, Dim386, Dina, Dipsy12, Disavian, Discospinster, Dismsas, Dispenser, DividedByNegativeZero, Diving2010, Djci wi, Djeli1, Djgreen101, Djlolby, Djnickeel, Djnicholson, Djottercreek, Djsasso, Dklizz, Dlavender45, DoC352, DocWatson42, Dodi.Blow, Dollarq, Dom Kaos, Don Vito Corleone, DonVincenzo, Donaldd23, Donama, Dondilly, Doradus, DoubleBlue, Dougbast, Douglastr007, Download, Dr_Blofeld, Dr_alf, Dr_finkelstein09, DrDisco, Dragoburaggo, Drappel, Dratman, DraxusD, Dread Specter, Dreaded Walrus, Dream our loud, Drinkadrink, Drmagnon, Drmaik, Drnies, Drur93, Dsemaya, Dstiling, Dt128, Dtremblay, Dubbya9, Dubtown11, Dudesleeper, Dunqn, Duoraven, DustinJunior, Dwight666, Dwilso, Dwo, Dyya, Dynesclan, Dyolf, Dysepson, DÉrahier, EALacey, ECWAGuru, EGorodetsky, EJF, ESKog, EVula, Eags, Earldelawarr, EarthPerson, Ebali, Ecopetition, Ed g2s, Eddron, Edison, Edmondmuroids, Edmundwoods, Edward655, EdwinHJ, Efe, Efeinberg, Eh1821, Ehikej, Eionna, Eivmeidwl, Ejk81, ElKevbo, ElSaxo, Elawen, Elcarmean, Elcobolla, Electricbassguy, Elementrocks, Eleuther, ElfWord, Elhector, Eli81993, EliasAlucard, Elmer Clark, Elpezmuerto, Emcee, Emeraldcityserendipity, Emx, EnderHegemony, Entoaggie09, Eprb123, Epeefleche, Eplack, Epson291, Erasoft24, Erencexor, EricWesBrown, Erric18996, Erik503, Erwamiki, Esperant, Esprit15d, Esrog, Estevoaie, Esthertaffet, Eternal Pink, Eternalsleeper, Euphrosyne, Eureka!ot, Ev149, EventHorizon, Everlast1910, EveryDayJoe45, Everyguy, Everything counts, Evil saline, Excirial, Exeunt, Expletivization, EyeRmonkey, FCYTravis, FDR, FF2010, Facebookghost, Falcon8765, Falseotto, Fancypants09, Farine, FatalError, Fbv65edel, Feasor, Felixboy, Fennec, FeralDruid, Ferdiaob, FetchcommsAWB, Fielding42, Filippowiki, FireBlizzard, FireFoxRocks, Firsfron, Fishman17, Fixer1234, FlamingFlamingo, FlamingSilmaril, Flamura, Flashflash, Flewis, Flibbert, Florentino floro, Flyguy649, Flyingember,

Fmecown, Fooladin, Foosh, Foregone conclusion, Former user 2, Fortdj33, Frank1470, Franz-kafka, Frap, Frecklefoot, FrenchIsAwesome, FreplySpang, Frexes, Fridae'sDoom, Friendocity, Froid, Fromgermany, Fstutzman, FullMetal Falcon, Funandtrvl, Fuzheado, FxckNelson, G7yunghi, GB fan, GBVrallyCI, GRRE, GRUBan, GSchjetne, Gabe1972, Gaia Octavia Agrippa, Gakusha, Galileo99, Garethhamilton, Garik, Gary King, Gatewaycat, Gavzey, Gcr 2007, Gdo01, GeZe, Geary, Geneffects, GeneralBelly, GeneralCheese, Genkizkhan2004, Geo19 4, Geoking66, Geometry guy, George Peltier, GeorgeBuchanan, Georgebrown92, Ger4lt, Geraldpringle, Gert7, Gianfranco, Giganotosaurus Fan12345, Gilliam, Gioto, Girlwithgreeneyes, Gizmoleeds, GlassCobra, Glassgokkiss, Glen, Glenn Magus Harvey, Glennh70, Glummons, Gogo Dodo, Gogomkd123, Golopo23, Gonzooin, Goob, Goodmanjaz, Goodnightmush, Gordi555, Goujas1979, Gphoto, Gracenotes, Graham87, GrahameS, Grampion76, Grant McKenna, Grapetonix, Green-eyed girl, Greeves, Greg Comlish, Gregfitzty, GregorB, Gregorydavid, Grendles modor, Grundig, Gsarwa, Gscshoyru, Gtstricky, Gttsly, Gugubane, Gunnmetal Angel, Gunnar Larsson, Gurch, Guroadrunner, Guu Polly, Guyinblack25, Guyjohnston, Gwernol, H2g2bob, HTIDPH, HYC, Ha us 70, Hacker2000, Hackstar18, Hadal, Haha169, Halstead, Hammer Raccoon, Hammer15, Hammer1980, Hamsterlophithecus, Hans3778, Haon, Happyme22, Hardeharhar, Harionlad, Harrydevoil, Hartewyu, HarveyHenkelmann, Haven40, Havocrazy, Hawkhlk11, Hbdragon88, Headit 3523, Hectorhector, HeinzzzderMannn, Hellostellar, Henrymxr, Hera1aphrodite, Hermione is a dude, HershlyDammit!, Hertz1888, Herwest, Hhi0901, Hhtfdomhki, HiLo84, Hildananna, Hinchu, Hippo43, Historylover9893, Hleder, Hmains, Hmwit, Hoary, Hobbsface2000, Holder, Homologeo, Hordaland, Hotpinkshoes, HowardRob, Hschmid1, Htang3085, Htnanna, Hunter95, Husond, Hv, Hyleslie, Hypnosadist, I lyk breathing, I'mDown, Isbala, I8ASHOE, IJA, Ianjdickson2, Iankap99, Icecradle, Icedog, Icetall, Icetea8, Ids Shaw, Idetik, Igorberger, Ihope127, IlSoge, Ilkeston1990, Illinois2011, Imcanadian69, InShaneee, Infinitum17, Ingenious14, Ingolfson, Instantnematode, Intelliot, Interchange88, Interscan, Iph, IpodfanZ, Iran.azadi, Iridescent, Irish Souffle, Irishguy, IronGargoyle, Irrypride, Isaac, Ishwasafish, Ismashed, Isnow, It's-is-not-a-genitive, Its time for IvanLain, Ixfd64, J Di, J-bedz, J Nguyen, J.delanoy, JARSInc, JC Denton2052, JForget, JGXene, JHP, JHunterJ, JJJust, JJaLatWiki, JaGa, Jackdyson, Jacobnut, Jacobolus, Jacomo, Jamescib, Jamescubits, JamesWatson, Jameshfisher, Jamestaylor121, JamminBen, Jammy Tan, Jampearls, Jandalhandler, JanusK, Jaranda, Jared Hunt, Jareha, Jarjarbarks10, Jarsta, Java13690, Jay Gatsby, JaysOnMyFeet190, Jbmurray, Jburge, Jdw4jesus, Jean-Marie Favre, Jeanenawhitney, Jedcore, Jeff G., Jeffwang16, Jek339, Jem76, Jengirl1988, Jennyfer b, Jeremy Banks, Jeremy Visser, JeremyMcCracken, Jerickson314, Jerrolet, Jersey Devil, Jersyko, Jethro 82, Jetong, Jezarnold, Jfade, Jgalt23, Jharris700, Jiffles1, Jim Douglas, Jim McKeith, Jimmy, Jimmy19, JimmyMac82, Jj137, Jjb52, Jjflex, Jjmanoman, Jmfavre, JoeSmack, JoeyJoShabbaduR, John, John Broughton, John Nevard, JohnKlax, Johnngardia, Johnjosephbachir, Johnnunq, Jojt fb, JonathonReinhart, Jonny-mt, Jonpin, Jonthon, Jopo s, Joschua, Joshy99666, Joshuagau, Joshuapaquin, Joshy, Jossi, Jpunzel, Jrgilmore, Jryfle, Jschwa1, Jsplegge, Jneill, JuJuBe, Jubileeclipman, Juledi, Julesd, Junhua Chang, Junkcops, Jusdafax, Justinboden86, Justimmittchel, Jvduddle, K, Takeda, K.O.T., KPH2293, KVDP, Kai svenson, Kakofonus, Kalyan3, Kamokazi, Kamoramakre T, Eyaeliteen, Kane5187, Kansan, Kanyelover2231312, Kapla2004, Karagounis, Karan9005, KarlDubost, Karthik Jagadeesh, Kate, Katerg, Katoh, Katydidit, Kbruse, Kea2, Keensdesign, Keeperoftheseal, Keepsleeping, Keilana, KeithD, Kencf0618, Kendrick7, Kenyon, Kernigh, Kerno, Kertof, Kevinmon, Kfeto, Khanhaijaan, Kidlittle, King kirk, Kingboschash, Kingboy, KirbyMaster14, Kiwi Ranger, Kiy765630, Kkm100, Kkrourn, Klingon83, Kmsiever, Knowledge Seeker, Koavf, Komitsuki, Koolgig, Kormin, Kozuch, Krylonblue83, Krt101, Kudely, Kukini, KunShaped Box, Kuru, Kuryky, Kushboy, Kusma, Kycowboynv, Kyle1278, Kyleoz, Kylevk, KyuuA4, LAX, LGagnon, LIVERPOOLFCCFLOORPREVIL, LOL, La Pianista, Laguna72, Lala887, Lambiani, Lambyuk, Lamperta, Larry laptop, Lasdt, Laserusjm, LastLived, Latics, Latish redone, Law, Lawg0alie, Lazerhawk, Lbh1402, Lcarscad, Leafyplant, LeeHunter, Leftydan6, LegitimateAndEvenCompelling, Leki, Lemjok, Lesley, wheeler, Leuquarte, Level plus, Levineps, Liface, Lightmouse, Lights, Ligulem, Lihaas, Likeitsmyjob, Lifelike, Lilac Soul, Lincolne, LindsayH, Lineface, Ling.Nut, Lither, Little Professor, Ljkitson, Lkprinceton, Lmdxx, Lmessenger, LmfaoManX2, Localbatman, Locos exrapix, Logan, Loganberry, Longshot222, LookingGlass, Lord Hawk, Lord Pista, Loren.wilton, Lost4eva, Los98789, LostLeviathan, Lostari, Lotje, Lowellian, LoyolaDude, Lradrama, Luboogers25, Luisztdt, Luk, Lukeconnell, Luna Santin, Lutzee, Lvivske, M412k, MASTERUser, MBK004, MC32, MER-C, MMSwa02, MOF, MUFC47JJ, MacTire02, Macman16a, Madchester, Madras fp, Magacid, Maggiecduda, Magister Mathematicae, MainBody, Majority, Makgraf, Malaka777, Malicckfan86, Malinaccier, Manderson198, Manop, MarXidat, Marcoboy, Mariomedici707, Mark, Mark0528, MarkHab, Marks, Markeilz, Markharding93, Markyan, Markmayhew, Marlova, MarmadukePercy, Marozols, MarritzN, MarsRover, Martarius, Martianslostinspace, Martin Hinks, Martinovic, MaryseHelene, Master of Puppets, Matrhrog777, Matt Gies, Matt107bhgs, Mattdealey1, Matthe, Matterson52, Matthew Komorowski, MatthewBurton, Maurice Carbonaro, Maury Markowitz, Max rspot, MaxVeers, Maxim, Maxi, Mazphd, Mcemce123, Mcmillin24, MdReisman, Mdavidson98, Mdawg728, Mdb20, Mdlawmba, Mdriver1981, Mdw, Meandyou22, MearsMan, Meco, Meeple, Megandiamond, MegastarLV, Melb113, Meme918, Mememe909, MementoVivere, Memoirofdarkness, Memorized, Mencey, MercolaOverMerck, Merrickb, Metallurgist, Mhrab12, Mhji, Michael Hardy, Michael Leap, Michael lambert84, MichaelsProgramming, Michaelvkim, MickMacNee, Mickleib, Micro101, Mido, Midway, Mieciu K, Mierdaan, Mike 7, Mike Halterman, Mike Schwartz, MikeAllen, MikeMorley, Mikeisheiman, Mikieimnnow, Mild Bill Hiccup, Mintchocicecream, Mipadi, Miranda, MississippiBeau, Mitch1981, Mjayers, Mjb1981, Mjbugue, Mjm46530690, Mkdw, Mm40, Modster, Mohammed2696, Mohnkern, Moncrief, Mongol, MoodyGroove, Moooon25, Mooseking0, Morgensternen, MorrisI, Morshem, Mostlyharmless, Moveoverlol660, Mr Beale, Mr Chuckles, Mr. 57, Mr. Absurd, Mr.whiskers, MrBoo, MrJaywod1, MrOllie, MrZeebo, Mreditguy, Mrestko, Mrmuk, Mrprasad, Mrrightguy10, Myroyocripz, Mswr074, Mukakaku, Mullahmatt, Mumble45, Mustycrust, Muzzamo, Xm3, Mypantsarefun, Mydsaa0, Mysekuruty, N Shar, N-edits, N.B Kitune, N9AH, NAHD, NBS25, NCSS, NRHS2010, Nadyes, Nakon, Namlefites, NameThatWorks, Nareshev, Nasht, Nastaju, Natalie Erin, Nathan Williams, Naturada37, Nauticashades, Navigation12, NawlinWiki, Ndickson, Nealmcb, Neo-Jay, NeoVampTrunks, NeonMerlin, Neorge, Netwhizkid, Neverquick, Neward Rylet, Newkai, Ngb, Nhprman, Nic Waller, Niceley, Nickb32, Nicolas1981, Nightdevil40, Nightstallion, Nihiltes, Nijay, Nima1024, Nippoo, Nishantman, Nishkid64, Nitelighter, Niteowlheis, Nitya Dharma, Nivix, Nixdorf, Ninegate, Nlsanand, Noeticsage, Nol888, Nomader, Nonetro, Northern, NorthernThunder, Not a dog, Noteremote, Nothlit, Nowa, Nslimak, NuclearWarfare, Numbo3, Nurg, NurseryRhyme, Nvm, Nyroska, Nytteend, O, OCNative, ONEder Boy, OSUKid7, Octahedron80, Octane, Oddtoddmn, Ohnoitsjamie, Oli Filth, Ombudswiki, Omicronperse18, Omphalosecone, Oneupthextramann, Onorem, Oni, Oore, Ophois, Opokoko22, Ordinater, OregonD00d, Ore Priest, Orfannky, OsFan, OsamaK, Oscarhecat, Oska Mayer Nguyener, Ott2, Overandover, OwenX, Owu07, Oxwil, Oxymoron83, Oyg, Ozzmosis, PGPirate, PRRfan, Pablothegreat85, Paddonm, Pais, Palashrijan, Palmiped, Pancakelizard, PandaSorn, Paridox, Parralax, Passingtramp, PassiontheDamon, Patriarch, Patstuart, Paul Magnusen, Pauswa, Paxse, Peanut4, Peatymaster, PedroPerez, Penarc, Pengo, Pentasyllabic, Pepsidrinka, Per Abrahamsen, Perfecto, Perlman10s, Perspicate, Peschomd, Peter Napkin Dance Party, PeterSymonds, Peterwhy, Petey05, Phansen, Phgao, Philip Trueman, PhilipO, Philippe, Philwelch, Phoenix2, Piano non troppo, Pilcrow, Pinas Central, Pinear, Pinkadelica, Piotorus, Pip2andahalf, Pipew, Piper108, Pitoutom, Pixgarden, Pizza1512, Pkninja, Plasticbadge, Plasticcup, Plazmatyk, Plm209, Plop, Poddarrishabh, Polarix, Pollo9087, Pomte, Pontillo, Pontus Lindgren, Poolboy8, Possum, Pradeepmallika, Pressforaction, PrezCRG, Proger, Protiek, Prowikipedians, Pruneau, Ps2avery, Psantor, Pscheimann, Ptotej, Purple Paint, Purpledigital, Pwnage8, Pwu2005, Pxma, Pyronpone, Pyrospirit, Quadratic, Quantumor, Quar, Quatloo, Quibik, Quinsareth, Quintin3265, Qviri, R2718218, RG2, RadioActive, Radon210, RainbowOLight, Raineybt, Rajington, Rafl25, Ramii83, RandomHumanoid, Raprules7942005, Raptroristor, RaseaC, Rat144, Rathfelder, Ravanacker, Raysonho, Razvanus, Rbarpar, Rdsc525, Rdsmit4, Red marquis, RedHouse18, RedRose333, Redeyed Treefrog, Redgecko20, Redgwan, Redfully, Redthoreau, Refsworlde, Reh303, ReidarM, Relly Komaruzaman, Remy B, Renosecond, Requestion, Ret.Prof, Retired username, RexNL, Reywas92, Rgb1110, Rgsupplies16, Rhetoricity, Riana, Ricebowl81, Rich Farmbridge, Richard001, Richard0612, RidinHood25, Rigid ember, Rimush, RjCan, Rjd0060, Rjwilm, Rlarue1, Rm999, Robbor, Robert9673, Roberta F., Robertson-Glasgow, RobinsonWM, Roboguy spacedude, Robor99, Robstoard, RockMFR, Rockapoc, RocketJohnson, Romit3, Romney wv, Ronline, Ronz, Ronzie, Rorschach, Rory96, RossPatterson, RoyBoy, Royalguard11, Rprpr, Rrjanbih, Rrlynch, Rsciaccio, Rspahn, Ru-G Corp., Ruckruck, Rusted AutoParts, Rusty8, Rwwww, Rxwxrxwx, Ryalesw, Ryhan135, RyannHassall, Ryn2me, Ryulong, S.dedalus, S.Örvarr.S, SE7, SF007, SFGiants, SQGibbon, ST47, STM86, SWAdair, Saeed Jahed, Sahasrala, Salacio, Sallysafety, Salpsyche, SaltyBoatr, Sam77g77, SamTheOptomist, Samuel Buca, Samueljeisen, Samvscat, Sanajes, SandManMattSH, Sandhi, Sander123, SandyDancer, Sanse, Santaduck, Sanxiyn, Sasha Callahan, SatansAngel231, Saulcruz, Saulesha, Savidan, Savir, Sbamkmdmdfmk, Sbressler, Scartol, Scopia, Sceptre, Schmancy47, Schmloof, Schultz5, SchuminWeb, Schutz, Sclarie, Sem83x, Scootnasty, Scottandrewthutchins, Sewlong, Scythe33, Scythe, Sean c griffin, Seanalld86, Seazzy, Sebcastle, SecretIdentityNumber26, Seprenee, Sepulveda, Seraphimblade, Seshomaru, Shadow1, Shagamaestro, ShambhalFestival, Shannonwulf, Shantavira, Shawnc, Shenme, Sheppa28, Shii, Shimgray, Shirik, Shoeecream, Shoeofdeath, ShootFrank, Showonma17, Sironet, Sidhekin, SilkTork, SilkySword, Simetrical, Simon Shek, Simon lock, SimonP, SimplySweet, Simulation90, Singularity, Sinn, Sir.xceres, Sirlibby, SixxA, Sizzlemctwizzle, Skaltpunktsax, Sketchmoose, Skier Dude, Skinnypez, Sko1221, Skysmith, Slavakion, Slavatru, SlimVirgin, Slowing Man, Slysplace, SmartGuy, Smartsce, Smeleindez, SmokeyTheCat, Smyth, Snail Doom, Solomonmainen, Solphusion, Somertime, Something9162, Somody, Souljamike, Soulmerge, Soundcomm, Sp35k3r, Spangineer, Sparkyngva, SparqMan, SparrowsWing, Spartacusprime, Spartanfox86, Spartas, Spectora, Spell4yr, Spiffy sperry, SpikeZoft, SportsBrain2009, Spud Gun, SpuriousQ, SqueakBox, SquidSK, Ssj5perfect cell, St tb, St.daniel, Staka, Stakelum, Starbuzz3d, Starrynite81, Startstop123, Steamroller Assault, Stepheng3, Stepho2224, StepsTogether, Stevage, Steven Walling, Stevenmansour, Stickee, Stbooe, Strawberryfire, Straxus, Student4, Stunett, Subdolous, Subsume, Suhel1992, Suhmeister, Sujet787, SujinYH, Sulinda11, SuperHamster, Superbeccat, Superbowlboud, Superfascist, Supersaryan474, Superstan999, Supersuzanne, Susan18, SusanLesch, Susanwell, Swechsle, Swerty, TAGosselin, TJRC, TKD, TPIRFanSteve, Tackyjulio, Tagus, Tajalam2, Tanvir Ahmmed, Taopman, Taras, Thaelcooxn, Tavix, Taylorthope, Tbhotch, Tcaight, Twiliwilliams, Tdl1060, Tea and crumpets, TeaDrinker, Teanywin123, Teapotgeorge, TeddyCarey, Telstar2, Templeteongore, Tenebrae, Tennisuser123, Terrett101, Tetobigetro, Tewifik, Tezero, Thadius856, Thatperson, Thbsp, The Evil Spartan, The Founders Intent, The GOAT, The Giant Puffin, The Horned Water, The Jacobin, The Nut, The Obento Musubi, The Person Who Is Strange, The Realms of Gold, The Rock and Roll Pirate, The Wednesday Island, The lorax, The undertow, TheAznSensation, TheBilly, TheCustomOfLife, TheGerm, TheNewPhobia, ThePedanticPrick, TheQuaker, TheTrueAPplus, Theanphibian, Thebrandonsbow, Thecurran91, Thelegendofovix, Themaludude101, Thepuse2007, Thesquire, Thessaysno, Thingg, Thirdeyeopen33, Thomassnee, Threeafterthreed, Thumperward, Tide rolls, Tigerghost, Timotharynold85, Timsdad, Timstown, Tinton5, Titoxd, Tj21, Tkessler, Tkgd2007, Tm1000, Toboro, TobdyDZ, Toddfast, Tolbert5, Tom, TomServo, Tomfisherman, Tommy2010, Tomroes, Tony1, Tony4346, Tony7444, Tooto, Topher8, Topperray, Tosenton, Tourettes1993, Tpbradbury, Tranix, TrbleClef, TreasuryTag, Tree Biting Conspiracy, Tremolo, Trevor Maclmnis, Treyip, Treyit021, Tri400, TriciaAustin, Trivialist, Troysteinbauer, Truth2008Exists, Trvsdrln, Tundern, TwilligToves, Twrdave, Tygar, Typhoonchaser, Typogr, TyrS, UCLARoden, URORIN, Utrobin, Utitanode, UnitedStatesian Universal Hero, Uogli, Userpd, Utcursh, UtserSG, Utbegangsters, VKokielov, Vagary, Valley2city, Vanis314, Varco, Veetrag, Vegaswikian, Ventusa, Verdlanco, Veritycowper, Versageek, Vgmddg, Vic93, Vicarvictor, Vikipediisto, Vilefile, Violacadenza, Violiszt, Viriditas, Virtual Particle, VirtualSteve, Vlad, Vn4m, Vsmith, Vvuser, WAS, WILLY ON WHEELzzz, WODUP, WTGDMan1986, Wabed, Wahabjiaz, Waled, Walloon, Walor, Waponaponda, WarpstarRider, Waterjuice, Wavelength, Wayne Olajuwon, WebHamster, Webfan29, Weedar, Weesna117, Weierstrass, WestJet, What'sFeelings?, Wherewithal, 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Dogman15, Dollabil3x, Dolphinn, Dominic, Domicinicri, Donarreisckoffer, Donne1, Donwilson, Doshindude, Dposse, DragonWR12LB, DragonflySixtyseven, Dralwak, Drcwright, Dreaded Walrus, Dreandream, Drewhamilton, Driftacar, DriveMySol, Drumexpert510, Drummcapn, Dtobias, Draill27, Dude1234777, Duncan, Dust Filter, Dwayne, Dwo, Dylang3893, ESkog, Eafremov, Eags, Eastlaw, Editornumber2, Edonovan, Edwy, Eemu, Egard89, EgyptianSushi, Ehn, Eiyuu Kou, El Slamer, ElSlamer, ElKevbo, Elcerulo, Electrified mocha chinchilla, Electronfox, Eliahjameeks, Eliz81, Elkrobbet, Eme2, Emilielaiendiay, Emngal8, Enchanteddrmzceo, Enigmaman, Entropor, EoGuy, Eraser Killer Alpha, Erebus555, Eriana, Eric outdoors, Erielewis91, ErikNY, Esanchez7587, Esperant, Exsemxutant, Estudiarne, EternitSoul 275, Eugenesomeone, Euphrosyne, Evan Robidoux, EvansCS, Evanruga, Evaunit666, Evercal, Everyguy, Everything, EvocativeIntrigue, EwokiWiki, Exeunt, Explicit, Extransit, Extremecircuitz, FF2010, FMB, Faerie Queen, Falcon9x5, 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Getaaron, Getcrunk, Giant89, Giggy, Gilbert427, Giler, Gilliam, Gimbo13, Ginfu, GiollaUdir, GlassCobra, GlassSandwich, Gladives, Gintaylor, Gnomoninwoki, GoDawgs, Goatasaar, Gobonobo, Gogo Dodo, Golbez, Gonzalez84, Google-Sheriff, Gorgan almighty, Goromike, Graemel, Graggle, Green caterpillar, Green meklar, Gregory Shantz, Grejlen, Groupneck, Grtvw4, Grundle2600, Gscshoyru, Gslide, Guanjon, Gubaguy, Guill07x, Gunblazin247, Gunblot, Gunmetal Angel, Gurch, Guy named chris, Gwernol, Gzkn, H2g2bob, HN45, Hack-Man, Hackerblaster, Hackmister, Hadal, HalJor, Halfpintemon, HaloXXXV, Halosean, Hans3778, Hanu007, Harro5, Harvey994, Hatemyspace, Haubdan, Hbdragon88, Hdt383, Heatgurl11, Hecatonchires, Hede2000, Hello4321, Hendrixski, Hengsheng120, HenkvD, Henry Flower, Henry W. 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