Facebook vs. Twitter

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare the usability and user experience of Facebook and Twitter, focusing on their ease of use, accessibility and overall user satisfaction. By examining how users interact with each platform's features, design and functionality, this research identifies strengths and areas for improvement for both platforms. The findings provide insights into which platform users find more intuitive and engaging, ultimately contributing to a better understanding of user needs and preferences in social media applications.

General Terms

Social media, communication, user experience, usability, accessibility, satisfaction, ease of use, content discoverability, engagement, design, evaluation, data collection, statistical analysis, performance, user perceptions, user-friendliness, complexity, interface, optimization, technical efficiency, user satisfaction, development.

Keywords

Facebook, Twitter, System Usability Scale (SUS), multimedia sharing, social networking, real-time updates, questionnaire, navigation, functionality, SUS Analysis, loading time, website size, user interface, user engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms play a crucial role in modern communication, influencing how individuals connect, share information and interact globally. Among these platforms, Facebook and Twitter have remained popular due to their distinct functionalities and user experiences [6]. Facebook focuses on detailed user profiles, multimedia sharing and complex social networking [1], whereas Twitter emphasizes real-time information sharing through concise updates and quick interactions [2].

The motivation behind this study is to understand how users perceive and interact with these platforms, particularly in terms of usability, accessibility, and satisfaction. The aim is to analyze and compare the user experience on Facebook and Twitter [3]. Key findings from the study reveal notable differences in ease of use, content discoverability, and overall satisfaction between the two. By examining these aspects, this research provides insights into the factors that contribute to effective user engagement and can guide future enhancements for social media design.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a comparative approach to evaluate the usability and user experience of Facebook and Twitter. Participants of a certain age group were asked to use each platform, allowing for a direct comparison [3]. A System Usability Scale (SUS) questionnaire was designed to capture user feedback on various aspects of each platform, including ease of navigation, functionality, and user satisfaction [4].

Data collection involved gathering participant responses to a set of standardized questions that measured usability on a linear scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Additionally, open-ended questions were included to gain qualitative insights into users' personal experiences and preferences [5].

Statistical analysis was then performed on the collected data to draw meaningful conclusions about the usability and overall user experience of Facebook versus Twitter.

3. RESULTS

3.1 SUS Per-Item Analysis

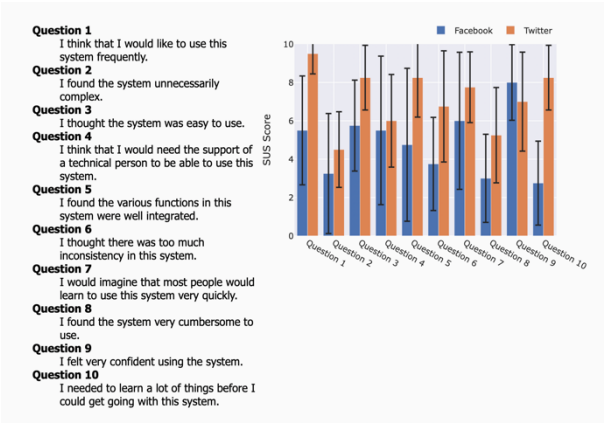


Fig 1: SUS Per-Item Analysis bar chart with questions

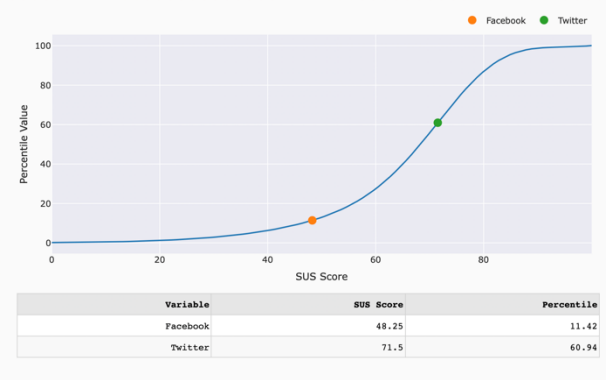
The analysis of the System Usability Scale (SUS) and performance metrics provides a comprehensive understanding of the usability and efficiency differences between Facebook and Twitter [7]. The SUS Per-Item Analysis bar chart illustrates the average scores for each question, showcasing the contrasting user perceptions between the two platforms. Facebook's scores, represented by blue bars, are consistently lower across several positively phrased questions, such as

Question 1, 3, and 5. This pattern indicates that users perceive Facebook as less user-friendly and more cumbersome compared to Twitter [8]. On the other hand, Twitter, represented by orange bars, exhibits higher scores for positive questions and lower scores for negative ones, suggesting a more favorable and intuitive user experience. Error bars on the chart display the standard deviation, emphasizing variations in user responses.

3.2 SUS Questionnaire and Observations

The SUS questionnaire design alternates between positively and negatively phrased questions to ensure a balanced assessment. Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 are positively phrased, where higher scores indicate better usability, while Questions 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 are negatively phrased, where lower scores imply better usability. Notable observations from the data include Twitter's performance on negatively worded questions, such as Question 2 and Question 8, where lower values point to reduced complexity and improved ease of use compared to Facebook.

3.3 SUS Score and Percentile Analysis



Variable	SUS Score	Percentile
Facebook	48.25	11.42
Twitter	71.5	60.94

Fig 2: SUS Score on Percentile-Curve

Further insights are derived from the SUS Score and Percentile Analysis. Facebook's overall SUS score is 48.25, placing it in the 11.42nd percentile. This result signifies a poor usability level, highlighting areas where Facebook's interface is perceived as difficult to use or learn, potentially necessitating external support for effective use. In contrast, Twitter achieves a SUS score of 71.5, corresponding to the 60.94th percentile. This score reflects a relatively high level of usability, indicating that most users find Twitter intuitive and easy to navigate. A score above 70 typically denotes acceptable usability, reinforcing Twitter's reputation for user-friendliness.

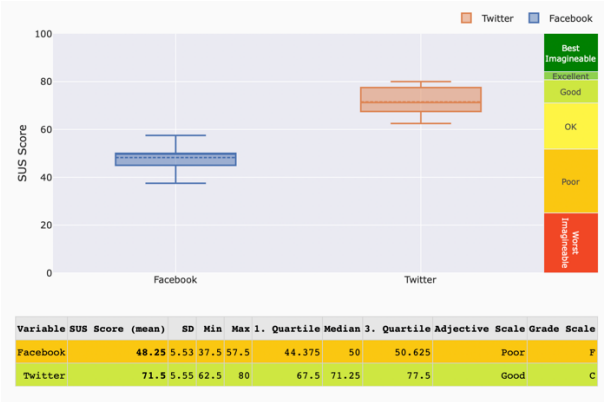
The findings from this analysis underscore the need for Facebook to address usability challenges, particularly in simplifying its interface and making it more approachable for users. Twitter's design strengths, reflected in higher SUS scores and better performance on negatively phrased questions, demonstrate its ability to deliver a seamless and efficient user experience.

When examining performance metrics such as loading time and website size, Twitter again shows an advantage. Faster loading times are known to enhance user interactions, and Twitter's efficient performance likely contributes to its higher usability scores. In comparison, Facebook's longer loading times and larger website size may exacerbate the challenges users face, reinforcing the need for technical optimizations [9].

4. CONCLUSION

The performance evaluation of Facebook and Twitter, based on both usability and key performance metrics, highlights crucial differences between the two platforms. The analysis, using the System Usability Scale (SUS), reveals that Twitter consistently outperforms Facebook in terms of user experience [10]. Twitter's higher SUS score of 71.5, which places it in the 60.94th percentile, indicates a strong level of usability. Most users find Twitter intuitive, with minimal barriers to learning and efficient integration of functions. This aligns with the observed performance metrics, such as faster loading times and a leaner website size, which further enhance user satisfaction.

In contrast, Facebook's SUS score of 48.25, landing in the 11.42nd percentile, points to significant usability challenges. Users perceive Facebook as complex, difficult to use, and in need of improvements to make it more accessible and less cumbersome. The lower usability scores are compounded by performance inefficiencies, such as longer loading times and a larger site structure, which likely contribute to a less favourable user experience. These findings highlight the need for Facebook to simplify its interface and optimize its performance to meet user expectations better.



Variable	SUS Score (mean)	SD	Min	Max	1. Quartile	Median	3. Quartile	Adjective Scale	Grade Scale
Facebook	48.25	5.53	37.5	57.5	44.375	50	50.625	Poor	F
Twitter	71.5	5.55	62.5	80	67.5	71.25	77.5	Good	C

Fig 3: SUS Score graph

In summary, the study underscores the direct relationship between technical efficiency and user satisfaction. While Twitter's design and performance contribute to a positive experience, Facebook must address its usability and performance limitations to enhance its overall effectiveness. This analysis provides valuable insights for improving user engagement and informs future development strategies aimed at optimizing both usability and performance.

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