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MEDST 255 New Technology

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Profile of Instant Messaging

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A Technology that permits a set of real-time communication between two or more internet users, and allows the internet users to reply or send messages to each other instantly is referred to as instant messaging. This application is based on the fact that it will take a short period for the signal to be transmitted and reach the other person, and it does not matter the location of the users as long as there is good network coverage. With the advancements in technology, the instant messaging has been improved to the extent of supporting services of instant file transfer (Nardi et al). It means that an individual can be able to share files with whomever they wish to share instantly by a click of the button on their computers, phones or any other gadgets which can support the internet and possess the properties of instant messaging. More so, other feature which has been added to the instant messaging technology, where users can directly communicate with each other over the internet with the aid of microphones devices and the instant messaging will be able to save the conversation so that the users can have the later reference, as well as seeing each other live via the webcams (Nardi et al).

There are various instant messaging systems available on the market today, they include but not limited to Yahoo, Facebook, Viber, WhatsApp, Instagram, G-chat, Telegram and Messenger among others (Sutikno et al).

Instagram is a desktop, mobile internet-based photo sharing service, and application which allows its users to share videos and pictures either privately or publicly to pre-approved followers. The application was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, and it was officially launched in October 2010 (Heffernan). Initially, it was an application meant for the iOS operating system, but two years later an Android version was developed. Instagram adopted its name from the combination of “telegram” and “instant camera.” The technology initially started with one million users in the first month of operation, but the numbers gradually grew to 10 million users by September in the same year, and it went over 100 million uploaded photos according to the statistics of July 2012. In April 2012, it had experienced tremendous growth and registered more than 30 million members. Due to this enormous success, the company was bought by Facebook at the cost of \$1 billion. From that time onwards, Instagram users have skyrocketed reaching 80 million monthly users and nearly doubling to 150 million monthly

subscribers by the end of 2013. In September 2017, The Instagram Company was able to announce tremendous growth regarding monthly users. It posted that up to that period, it had 800 million active monthly users and about 500 million users who are active daily (Statista).

The official Instagram website gives a summary of what the internet platform is all about. The caption by the words “ Instagram is a fast, beautiful and fun way to share life with family and friends”. In simple terms, it demonstrates that it is a social media platform that allows its users to give and present a glimpse of their day to day life through videos and photos. It is made possible since the Instagrammers can create personal profiles where they can upload and share their contents with others. Likewise, they can follow a family member, friends and whoever they wish across the globe in order to view their videos and photos with these individuals (Golbeck and Golbeck). For Example, if a user uploads a picture of a beach, Instagrammer may add it as (hashtag) # Palm Beach in its description. This feature ensures that the photo is uploaded to the profile of Palm Beach along with other images. So if anyone wants to explore Palm Beach may look on Instagram to see the thousands of pictures related to it.

The Instagram application has been used on the internet to boost business. A good example is the Starbucks Company which has approximately 30 million posts at #starbucks with almost 16 million followers. The photos of Starbucks are basically about Starbucks special offers or people having coffee drinks from star bucks. The picture on their profile speaks volumes, and it portrays the warm feeling of a sip of creamy mocha latte which without a doubt fires off a craving for their product. Hence if clever photographs are used to advertise services and products on Instagram to ignite the admiration and curiosity in the followers, then it is possible that the business will reap big through the platform.

Instagram can also be utilized as crowd source such that the hashtag campaigns may be used to generate conversation around a brand or a product (Golbeck). Various intelligent campaigns for instance introduction of a photo contest with a hashtag like # Beauty pair photo contest can be used to generate user debated and hence getting a brand established.

Instagram is an efficient application form marketing because it is dependent on visual media such as images and videos which are more appealing than texts which are plain hence they can easily stroke emotions of the targeted clients thus triggering actions. Instagram is also easy

to use because it has provisions for user engagement in addition to being user-friendly since most of the followers and users do not include extended texts. The platform is also easy to use since it only requires a user to upload a photo or a video by a click of a button which can also be uploaded in other platforms such as Facebook if they are integrated.

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