**ITIS 6400/8400 Human Computer Interaction**

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**Class Activity – Social Computing**

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This activity involves exploring and comparing the design decisions of different socially oriented applications. Consider 2 different social media or social community sites or applications you are somewhat familiar with. Some examples: Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat, Reddit, StackOverflow. Compare and contrast the affordances and design decisions regarding the following social issues.

**Two sites or apps chosen: Instagram & Facebook**

1. **Identity: How is the identity of people indicated? How can users express who they are to other people?**

Instagram :

In the home screen at the top left corner there will be a circle indicating our profile picture which identifies us. Instagram has the profile picture and username in the profile section that is how people are identified.The BIO is a way where they can express who they are to other people

Facebook:

-Identity:Name and Profile picture

-About Us sections has relatives, birthdays, education, employment, relationship status has spouses/partners, interests and likes

1. **Awareness: How do users get a sense of who is around, who they can interact with, and what those other people are doing within the site?**

Facebook: you can see all of active users in your friendships except people deactivated contact status. they can interact with chat manu on the right side of page, in home page you can see what other users share with.

Instagram: You can see people activity when you open the chats, it indicates the last active status and the name of the person. The can view any shared images in the home page and any images or posts liked by other people will appear as notifications

1. **Communication: What are the ways in which people can interact and communicate with each other? What kinds of communications are supported?**

Instagram:

Sending messages

Commenting on photos

Share photo or send them to friends

Share stories with all your followers

Facebook:

Sending messages

Commenting on photos

Share photo or send them to friends

Audio and video calls to friends

Sending voice messages to friends

1. **Community: Does the site explicitly support communities of users? How does the site provide users with a sense of community with other users or subsets of other users?**

Instagram:

-Pages(Community pages): These are ‘likeable’ web pages belonging to a group/community. Relevant posts, videos and pictures are posted in these web pages.

Facebook:

-Groups/Communities -Supports Communities. New group members with shared interests or belonging to the same community are added as per ‘Join’ requests. The Groups are privately help by one or members of the community/group. They may have administrative privileges in the Group.

- Sense of community: posts including articles/texts, information, pictures and events relevant to the community/group can be published in these groups.

1. **Privacy: How does the site allow people to control the information that is released about themselves? How does the site allow people to control the kinds and amounts of interaction they have with other people?**

Facebook:

Download all of the information collected by Facebook

Post to only friends, only me, public, or friends of friends

Limit what information is public to everyone, or friends (email, number, relationship status, hometown, education, employer/employment)

Enabling privacy settings that prohibits new user messages from entering to the inbox

Tracking phone calls, text messages, and photos from cell phones

Instagram:

It provides settings for the user to manage their accounts if anyone could follow them or they can set it to ask permission for anyone to follow.

If the permission is set up instagram doesn’t allow anyone to view the pictures or posts unless they follow the user.

They can hide their stories from few people

Hide any photos from few people.

**How do the design decisions you discussed above support traditional social conventions? How have they changed such conventions?**

Support to traditional Social Conventions:

Technology has expanded so much that we are able to search or google someones name in a search bar/engine and get photos of that person instantly. In the earlier days photos of people did not exist on the internet. Maybe a few photos of famous people but not normal everyday people until now. Social media and social networking has changed how we protect our information and connect to friends or family. Today all of our information is on the internet for anyone to grab it and use it. Most of the world uses some social media platform, making it possible to message or find anyone.

Changes in Social Convention:

The above design decisions has created a complete facelift of the Social convention.

Some essential points:

1. Privacy is no longer a Social Conventions: The profile is there on display and published publicly. Access to pictures, information about them, their occupation, relationships and much more are on display for the public to see.
2. Freedom of expression even for the ones in bad taste: posts in bad taste are posted. People can be under the influence of alcohol and post bad material online, that may hurt social sentiments. Many such posts related to racism and inappropriate comments are floating online freely on the Social platforms.
3. Social events can be broadcasted in real time: Community events and social gathering information are roadcasted with just a button click. This helps instill a sense of community. Instagram for instance has good medium to tell stories and highlight aspects of the Event.
4. Live feeds: People may tell their stories dynamically in real time while events are happening. One is present in the situation and on the social platform simultaneously.

**How have the design decisions you discussed above led to differences in what each application is used for, and the interactions between people through the application?**

Instagram is a typical photo sharing and messaging application. While Facebook is a application like none other it started similar to Instagram but then became different and has growth over the years. Facebook is a combination of a marketing, communication, advertising, messaging, blogging, and much more. This is the reason why Facebook has more users than any other applications because the target audience is so huge. Facebook has so many products and services to reach a variety of consumers.

Social interactions has gone through a complete overall in presence of such platforms. Facebook shows a sophisticated view of a person with the profile pictures, information and fancy profiling. Its similar to a new software avatar interacting to another in various ways. A user can tag people they are going out with, and report/publish the status of the event/gathering. People interact through the application to like and react to other people’s posts and pictures. This is a technological way of showing love and affection in today’s fast advancing IT world.