

Consumer-Oriented Social Media The Prospects

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Consumer-Oriented Social Media

Agenda

1. Social Media
2. Consumer-Oriented S.M.
 - Definition
 - Features
3. Prospects
 - Impediments
 - How to Overcome Them
4. Conclusions

Social Media

A Business-Oriented Classification

		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Motivation

- All contemporary Social Media adopt an exploitative business model

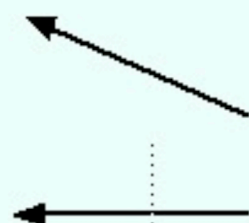
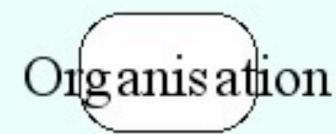
Social Media's Business Model

- 'There must be a way to monetise this somehow'
- 'You will find something interesting here' is a self-fulfilling prophecy, because people can be enticed to contribute 'something interesting'
- Contributors, and the people who come after them, can be enticed to click on targeted **advertisements**
- **Targeting** is based on:
 - profile-data that users supply about themselves
 - content that they have donated
 - their online behaviour while using the service
 - their online behaviour more generally
 - data that other people contribute about the user

Unit of Study



Perspective



Motivation

- All contemporary Social Media adopt an exploitative business model
- The designs of contemporary Social Media embody consumer-hostile features, which have been documented in prior research
- Alternative, consumer-oriented approaches would be a really good idea
- Critics need to make constructive proposals

Research Questions

How can consumer-oriented social media be achieved?

- What are the desirable features of consumer-oriented social media?
- What impediments exist to their emergence?
- What means exist to overcome those impediments?

Research Method

- Surveys of the **Refereed Literature**
 - The social science and business literature works within the industry's existing frame of reference, and seldom questions its assumptions
 - The technical literature is more useful
- Reviews of **Relevant Social Media Services**
- Reviews of **Media and Commercial Reports**
These are of very mixed quality, but are far more up-to-date than the refereed literature

A Consumer-Oriented Classification of Social Media

A Consumer-Oriented Classification of Social Media

Interaction (Closed)	<p>1 ↔ 1</p> <p>OR</p> <p>1 ↔ few</p>	
Broadcast (Open)	<p>1 → many</p>	
Collaboration or Sharing (Semi-Open or Open)	<p>1 ↔ many</p>	Content
		Indicator
		Gaming

A Consumer-Oriented Classification of Social Media

Interaction (Closed)	$1 \longleftrightarrow 1$ OR $1 \longleftrightarrow \text{few}$	
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		Indicator
		Gaming

Email / Chat-IM / Skype
Messaging

Web-Pages
'Walled-garden' 'wall-postings'
YouTube

Wikis

Dis/Approvals
'Like', '+1'

Second Life

A Consumer-Oriented Classification of Social Media

Interaction (Closed)	1 ↔ 1 OR 1 ↔ few	
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		Indicator
		Gaming

Email / Chat-IM / Skype
Messaging ... **Twitter?**

Web-Pages
'Walled-garden' 'wall-postings'
YouTube, ... **Twitter**

Wikis, ... **Twitter?**

Dis/Approval
'Like', '+1', ... **Twitter?**

Second Life

Currently-Available Social Media Genres

1-with-1/Few INTERACTION Tools

- networked text **email** (asynchronous)
- networked text **chat / IM** (synchronous)
- **SMS / texting** from mobile phones
- **email-attachments**, any format (asynch)
- **voice**:
 - over Internet (VoIP, **Skype**) (synch)
 - tele-conferencing (VoIP, Skype) (synch)
 - videophone (Skype Video) (synch)
 - video-conferencing (Skype Video) (synch)

1-to-Many BROADCAST Tools

- bulletin boards systems (**BBS**)
- Usenet / netnews
- **email lists**
- **web-pages**
- **indexes** (Lycos, Altavista, Google, Bing)
- **blogs** (WordPress, Blogspot)
- **micro-blogs** (**Twitter**, Tumblr)
- **glogs** – wearable wireless webcams, cyborg-logs, retro-nymed as 'graphical blogs'

- '**content communities**', e.g. for images (deviantArt, Flickr and Picasa), for videos (**YouTube**), for slide-sets (Slideshare)
- **closed / 'walled-garden' 'wall-postings'** within SNS (Plaxo, MySpace, LinkedIn, Xing, Reddit, Facebook, Google+)

1-with-Many SHARING Tools

- **Content Collaboration**
 - **wikis** (Wikipedia)
 - **social news sites** (Slashdot, Newsvine)
 - **online office apps** (Zoho, Google Docs, MS Live)
- **Indicator-Sharing**
 - '**social bookmarking**' (Delicious)
 - **dis/approvals** (Digg's dig & bury, Reddit's up & down, StumbleUpon's thumbs-up & thumbs-down, Facebook's **Like** button, Google+'s **+1** button)
- **Multi-Player Networked Gaming**
 - text-based MUDDs
 - **social gaming** sites (Friendster)
 - Massively Multiplayer Online Games (**MMOGs**), esp. Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs), e.g. World of Warcraft
 - **online virtual worlds** (Second Life)

Location – From Added-Extra to Intrinsic

- Physical Address / **Geo-Location**
 - knowledge of the cell that a mobile-phone is in is intrinsic to the service's operation
 - more precise geo-location is increasingly feasible
 - location is becoming readily available to the device
 - location is being acquired by service-providers
- Location-based services can be valuable to users
- A primary use is in consumer marketing
- For most current-round SMS, location is an extra
- **For the coming round, Geo-Location is intrinsic**
- **Privacy sensitivity about Social Media will leap**

Social Media

A Working Definition

And hence Scope Specification

An application or service
that is perceived by its users
to support them in relation to:

- Interaction with other people
- Broadcast to other people
- Sharing with other people

Features of Consumer-Oriented Social Media

- **Distributed Architecture**
Distribute the content, deny corporate control of it
- **Interoperability**
Provide content visibility and message-transfer beyond each 'walled garden'
- **Portability**
Enable export of content, to reduce 'switching costs'
- **Terms of Service**
Impose or negotiate conscionable Terms
- **Privacy**
Impose or negotiate conscionable Terms

Consumer-Oriented Social Media

Some Key Terms of Service Features

- Minimum Requirements / Conditions
- Informed and Freely-Given Consent
- No Unilateral, Auto-Accepted Changes
- Market Power, so needs a Consumer Code
- Unconscionable Terms:
 - Reactive Controls
 - Proactive Controls

Consumer-Oriented Social Media

Some Key Privacy Features

- Transparency re Data Handling
Collection, Retention, Use, Disclosure
(Overview, plus Drill-Down)
- Privacy of the Person / Human Security
 - Default Settings
 - Nymity / 'Real Names'
 - Geo-Location
- Rights for Third Parties, to
overcome the Privacy Limitation

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Instances of Consumer-Oriented Social Media Services

Appleseed	Defunct?
Crabgrass	"Social networking, group collaboration and network organizing ... tailored specifically to meet the needs of bottom up grassroots organizing"
cyn.in	"Open source collaboration software"
Diaspora*	"A distributed social network", "reengineering the way online socializing works"
Duuit	Dormant?
elgg	"A social networking engine, delivering the building blocks for fully-featured social networks and applications"
Friendica	"Think WordPress or Drupal, but for social"
GNU social	Merged into StatusNet in June 2013
identi.ca	Previously a front-end to StatusNet, now to pump.io
Kune	For collaborative management of a collective
Lorea/N-1	A fork of Elgg
OneSocialWeb	Dormant
OpenSocial	"Standards-based component model for cloud based social apps"
Personal Containers	"Federated data sources"
pump.io	"Social Server with an ActivityStreams API"
StatusNet	"Free and Open Source social software", whose commercial target is enterprise social networking
Tent	"A protocol for open, decentralized social networking"
Thimbl	"Distributed micro-blogging platform"

Research Findings

- Few have been mentioned in academic papers
- Even Diaspora* and StatusNet have attracted very little consideration
- And those papers have few citations
- COSM user-counts appear to be at most a few hundreds of thousands, whereas the largest commercial services have a few billion users
- COSM have o.t.o.o. 0.01% of the total social media services user-base

Impediments

- **Lack of Effective Demand Drivers**
Awareness, Perceived Usefulness, Ease-of-Use
Compelling, Hedonistic, Fashionable, Convenient
- **Dominance of the Exploitative Business Model**
Monopoly => Super-Profits => Market Power
High Switching Costs deny Network Effects
- **Lack of Service Quality**
Quick-and-dirty, poor fit, design and coding errors,
security vulnerabilities, instability in architecture
- **Lack of Scalability**
Opportunistic tool selection / permanent prototype,
success means growth, inefficient software can't cope

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How to Overcome the Impediments

- **Design**
Exclude exploitative features
Incorporate key consumer-oriented features
Interoperability, Portability; P2P or ...
- **Understanding**
Target relevant user categories, in their language
Leverage off exploitative SM's PR disasters
- **Alternative Business Models**
'Who pays? For what? To whom? and Why?'
Fairy godmother, cross-subsidies, versioning

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