



Social Networking And Its Swift Growth

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Chapter 1

Understanding Social Networking and Its swift Growth

1.1 The Brief history –

Some years back, staying in contact was not so easy but we had enough time for family and friends. As the world became more complex and the technology became more advanced, there came a need for a platform where people could connect easily, keep in contact, and know what friends are doing and tell them what we are up to.

In the early days of the internet, it all started with the arrival of BBS, which is the short for Bulletin Board System. These were specifically the online meeting places that allowed the users to connect and communicate with each other through a centralized system. They could even use this to download games or files. Its popularity and use was limited to businessmen only.

With the growing service of Internet, by the mid- 1990s, Yahoo had set up shop and Amazon was selling books. But, this was not enough; people now thought about “whom can I connect with?” They now wanted to connect with their friends, or rather classmates, and this was how the concept of Classmates.com came into. The success of this social networking site proved that the idea of a virtual reunion was indeed a very good one. It instantly became a hit and today has more than 40 million registered users.

1.2 The Sudden Growth -

Soon after the success of Classmates several other social networking sites came up with a similar concept. The makers of these sites studied the requirements of the users and soon came up with more social networking sites for businesses, dating and other requirements. With the increase of number of social networking sites, number of users was also increased. Here are a list of similar social networking sites and when they were founded in order.

- Classmates.com was founded in 1995
- Six Degrees of Separation was founded in 1997
- Circle of Friends was founded in 1999

- Friendster.com was founded in 2002
- MySpace.com was founded in 2003
- Orkut.com was founded in 2004
- Facebook.com was founded in 2004
- Yahoo!360 was founded in 2005

We all know that market moves according to the demand of customer. Similarly, as the requirement of the online users continues to grow, social networking sites will also continue to come up with new features, concepts and flourish.

By the end of 2007, the global active membership in the social networking sites grew up to more than 200 million users. The revenues collected from the use of these networking sites were also huge. It is expected that this sudden growth of the social networking media will continue to flourish and by 2012, this explosive growth would possibly plateau the whole world.

1.3 The Power –

Twenty years ago, the two main mediums available for people to connect and get their message delivered was either by phone or mail (what we now call “snail mail”). And since not everyone in the world had telephones, sending written communications was still widely used. Back then the delivery time for most mail was two to three days – longer if you were mailing out of your country.

With the development of the Internet and its availability to a wider audience, the entire situation has changed rapidly with time. With the advancement of the World Wide Web, and a vast array of social networking sites, the power of connectivity has increased by bounds. Now you can come from work, just sign into your account and you are connected with your friends and family living at different geographic locations, all at once.

Today we all are living in a world where things move much more quickly. We don't have time to write letter or call our friends to know more about them. Social networking provides a platform where we can stay connected with all our friends more frequently whenever we like. By spending an hour time or even half an hour time you can get to know everything about all of your friends.

These social networking sites have improved considerably over the years as per the requirement of users has grown.

Now you can know the updates of all your friends' who are connected to any social network on a single screen. By going to their profile you can get to know the changes in her/ his personal, professional, and social life. Communicating with public or private messages you can get to know everything you want to know about your friends. And the main advantage of social networking is that you can connect and communicate with all your friends at same time. This is the new generations' power of success.

With social networking making its swift growth in the world today, there are now more people using it to keep in touch through the networking sites and forums. Sometimes, this goes to the extreme where you find two people sitting next to each other at work and are forwarding jokes to each other!

Social networking has changed how today's generation stays in contact with their school, college friends, and ex-colleagues. Social networking sites not only allow you to exchange information but also lets you exchange music, videos, pictures, and files in seconds, such is the power of social networking media.

Just imagine, sitting in Italy and being able to play a game of slots with a citizen in Germany that is using an American laptop that is connected via English network. This is the power of digital media and connection.

You don't need to have any technical knowledge about it, and this is the best part of it all. The user interface is very user friendly and you just need to be online to get started and staying connected.

Chapter 2

Social Networking and Its Significance

As we have taken our step into the 21st century, we find that people are more than ever interacting with people for various reasons. While many use it as a way to keep in contact with their school friends and family members, many others use it for professional reasons, to promote business and gain brand popularity. More and more people increasingly utilize the internet to have access to a wealth of valuable information, opportunities, and resources.

A recent survey revealed that people who network are more likely to be recognized and get promotions quicker than those that do not. The larger significance of networking for business professionals and entrepreneurs includes maintaining of contacts, participating in professional activities in community groups, attending seminars, conferences, socializing, and increasing ones visibility to others.

That's in addition to what have become the more common online activities such as emailing

Increasingly though, a greater number of business owners and entrepreneurs today are starting to learn more about how to capitalize on the growing trend of internet marketing. Those with a good understanding of which social networking tools to use for online marketing, and how, can prove to be an asset for their company.

These days you can organize online conferences and seminars. You can send invitations to people through the internet. You can join communities in the social networking sites and increase your business network. Getting to know others in the same line of business and those who are actually looking for the services you offer can help you get clients and gain more visibility.

Chapter 3

Tips and Ideas For Better Social Networking

In the previous chapters we have covered how social networking has grown in day-to-day use for a wide segment of the population. If you are there just for fun and keeping in touch with friends then you may not worry much. However, if you are there for serious business and for making new contacts then there are a few important rules of online etiquette (netiquette) you will want to follow to ensure that you leave a good impression with others.

Because there is no direct face-to-face contact with social networking sites there is the potential for miscommunication to occur. Here are some tips and ideas that will help you better your social networking skills.

When you register in any social networking site, it usually allows you to create a profile. It is important that you make your profile interesting. If you are there to look for friends then it is important that you add your interests, hobbies, and passions. The more you tell about yourself the greater your chance of attracting like-minded people.

If you join a social networking site for professional reasons then it is highly important that you add a short description about your line of business and company. You will want to be sure to add a link to your website, so that people who are interested can find out more information about you, your business or company.

Always create profiles with pictures. If it is a personal account then add your own picture, or if it is strictly for professional use, then it is preferable that you add the logo of your company or a picture of yours if you like.

Always search for new friends or people who will be beneficial for your business. Send them an invitation or add them as your friend by sending a friend request or using other tools of different social networking sites.

Don't join too many communities in the network. Add only those that you have interest in or that relates to your line of business. Participate in the forum, ask

questions or give helpful answers. It is important that you share information and help your community grow.

Lastly, it is very important that you sign in regularly to your account to keep it lively and active.

You must be very clear about your networking and spend time daily to increase it. It will help you to get popular among other users, who are in the same line of business.

Chapter 4

The Effect of Networking in Daily Life

In the past few years, the popularity of social networking sites has exploded massively. Today there are a wide variety of social networking sites to choose from, depending upon your requirement. It started with the success of Classmates.com, created especially for re-connecting with old school and college friends. With the advent of more powerful and user-friendly tools such as Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace, Classmates.com has become less relevant today losing a huge portion of its user base due to poor customer service and questionable renewal tactics.

The life of the average person has been so deeply affected and influenced by the power of these social networking sites that today it is difficult to believe that they never existed in 2003. They have not only made communication easy for us, but they have also given us more scope for entertainment.

Today, there are more avenues for entertainment than there were some years back, and all the credit goes to the social networking sites. Can you imagine the online world today without the likes of Youtube, Vidler or Metacafe?

While social networking sites carry a lot of good points there are some problems as well. Some people become so addicted with these sites that they may not like to go out and socialize. There are others who like flirting online and misrepresenting who they are in order to gain friendship. Those are some of the more common misuses of social networking that can make it seem unsavory. However, if you follow your discretion and are wise with your judgment, you can just absorb the good things and leave out the rest.

Chapter 5

Why Twitter is known as the Breakthrough tool

Twitter.com [<http://twitter.com/>] is one of the fastest growing and more popular social networking site tools available on the Internet. It was first introduced to the World Wide Web in 2006, and since then it has been gaining in popularity. But, what are the reasons behind it becoming a breakthrough tool? In this chapter, we will discuss its importance and what makes Twitter so popular. If you are into Internet Marketing then you must be familiar with the concept of Twitter.

With online business growing fast in the market, and traditional brick and mortar businesses seeking to create a relevant online presence, it is now used as a powerful marketing tool by both small as well as big online businesses. It helps them draw traffic to their website and promote their business among others. Social networking site is a platform through which a person sitting in Japan can tell about his company's services to people in America and Germany.

For people who are not very familiar with Twitter, it is a micro-blogging site that offers social networking service to its users. It enables the members of the site to send and get updated feedback and information on their activities. This is done through short messages called "Tweets". Tweets are posts of 140 character or less that you make that will be displayed on another member's page.

5.1 Analysis of success factors of Twitter.com –

It is one of the latest and the most effective web marketing strategies that are widely used by the online marketers. It is recognized as a powerful and effective tool to establish the sales to the target audience. Though it is quite a new social networking site, it has now been dubbed as the new 'SMS' concept of the Internet industry. Now, Twitter is used not only by the regular web users, but also the online businessmen and the famous celebrities.

5.2 When do you need a network like Twitter –

For the success of any online business, it has to be transparent in the online community. Twitter is the best networking tool that you can use to promote your business and gain visibility. The interface is very user friendly and by just following few simple steps you can open your account.

Twitter has grown into a great promotional tool among entrepreneurs to create buzz for their product or service, announce special events, sales specials and so forth. I recently saw a segment on the Food Network in which a mobile food vendor sent tweets to his customers announcing which neighborhood locations he would be in and what his daily specials would be and what special promotions he was running that were exclusive to Twitter followers. Talk about a free and easy way to build a targeted customer list!

From artists, musicians, micro farmers, to coffee shops, bookstores and even more traditional media like radio, Twitter can be a great method of getting the word out about your business quickly and easily.

Chapter 6

Smart Ways To Use Social Networking For Business

Today more businesses around the world are making use of the Internet to get their work done, keep in touch with existing clients, and looking for potential clients. Whether it's your favorite auto mechanic, local coffee shop, financial institution or online bookstore, it has become widely understood that in order to succeed in business today, you need to have an online presence.

This is the place where people go these days to find information and get services. Most businesses and companies have already addressed to this requirement of the customers by putting up their website and going online.

However, if you just have a website and don't do any marketing for it, then most of the people visiting your site will be the ones who already know about it and those who either worked with it or were the previous clients. In order to gain visibility, more traffic, and get more clients, it is important that you let more people know about what you do.

Word of mouth of course helps but even its territories are defined, you cannot go beyond that. If you wish to reach a larger market, regionally or globally, and let the entire world know about what you do then the answer is Social Networking. With the power of the Internet becoming much more far reaching than ever, the use of these social networking sites have evolved from mere frivolous use to something that it more vital.

Some of the most popular networking sites that are used to promote business online are:

LinkedIn –

This social networking site is mainly used to present diverse work opportunities, build professional relationships, as well as supply information about your line of business. The people on LinkedIn usually list their educational as well as occupational history in their profiles, making it look like a bio.

Twitter –

The basic concept of Twitter lies in the fact that it is very straightforward. The

users of this social networking site can submit posts up to 140 characters in length - these are known as "tweets". Through this website you can tell the world what you are doing, and if you are a business owner then you can tell them what services or products you offer. Many businesses use Twitter to announce special promotions, product launches and more to get more traffic to their website.

The websites that run blogs or stores also use the networking by Twitter.com to keep their target market updated about what new posts or products they offer online.

Blogs –

Although Blogs (short for Web logs) have been around for more than a decade, more business owners are starting to use websites like Blogger and Wordpress to promote their business. Not only are Blogs a great platform for disseminating information to the general public, they also lend a human face to the business; people can read the posts on the blog, comment on it and stay updated. Blogs are one of the most popular tools of internet marketing.

To get real traffic and increase the number of users to your blog, you must have and keep regular presence by providing real updated information about your business, products or service to the customers who follow you.

Facebook –

This is a conventional social networking site that is mainly aimed at students and young professionals. It helps them to build connections with one another. While most Facebook users go there to reconnect with former classmates, friends and so forth, there are a growing number of business owners and entrepreneurs who have built profile pages on this networking site in order to promote their website, their company, and the products and services they offer.

Chapter 7

Social Networking Benefits for Work at Home Moms

Social networking is fast becoming popular with not only the youth and the business people, but also with the work from home moms (and dads). Even though women today have made tremendous gains socially and economically, those who are mothers still have just as many responsibilities in their life than ever before. For many, balancing work with parenting is still a challenge. It is tough for them to attend conferences, seminars and go for luncheons parties to develop relationship and get clients.

Social networking sites have become a boon for many moms who work outside the home, as well as those who are stay-at-home moms. Social networking sites allow them to stay connected with the whole world with just a click of their mouse. They can now fetch customers, get work and get paid, all over the Internet. If a woman loves writing but has problems working in a professional office environment because of her kid then she can easily set up a home based business and get clients through Internet. Home based businesses are fast gaining popularity as they are easy to set up, run and now can easily be marketed using Internet.

More and more work at home moms are turning to the professional networking services to get in touch with people and get clients. All they need is a computer at home and Internet connection. By having a profile on Facebook or LinkedIn, the work at home moms can tell people of their services and get more work at home. And with the advent of even more portable devices like smart phones, many moms have found even more creative ways to work outside of the traditional office space and home.

They can also join communities that are in the same business and socialize with people there and tell them about the services they cater. All they need to do is spend some time daily in these social networking sites and soon they can have people knowing about their work and gets work flowing in.

For serious work from home moms who run a full time business at home, this is beneficial too. They don't need to hire a marketing executive or go out of their houses to do marketing for their company and services. All of this can be easily done online by the use of the social networking sites and by utilizing some of the live online marketing training resources that are readily available.

Chapter 8

Analyzing The Pros and Cons of Social Networking Sites

These days the social networking sites have become extremely popular among the youth as well as the professional people. Keeping in mind the growing popularity of these sites, the effect they have and the benefits many benefits they provide, it can be easily predicted that their popularity is sure to continue to grow.

Some of these sites such as Facebook and Myspace are among the two most popular sites that aim to build special niches for people who share common interests and passions, whereas social networking sites such as Twitter and LinkedIn are more professionally related and help the business owner promote their businesses.

However, everything has a positive and negative side. Similarly, the social networking sites are also made up of their set of pros and cons.

8.1 Analyzing The Pros of social networking -

Social networking websites are more like virtual meeting places where people can meet and hang out with friends. They can discuss different topics, share information, and exchange files and pictures. There are some people who use these sites as a platform to find and reconnect with a long lost friend, whereas there are others for whom it becomes a way to meet their future mate.

You can either reconnect with your friends and family members or search a dating partner. Some people also use these websites to promote their blogs and services. The professional people uses this as a medium to raise their visibility, get noticed, tell about their company, service, and get more clients.

By joining different communities, people can easily know about the latest news related to that community. You can easily get an experts advice on any challenge you may face related to your field of interest. And the best part of this is that more often than not, the advice is free. Experts are always ready to give their advice and share information with you.

These are just some of the several positive things that have contributed to make

social networking really popular among people and spread smiles. It has made world a small place and everyone can stay connected.

8.2 Analyzing The Cons of social networking -

Social networking of course helps in a lot of ways but users need to be aware of certain security and safety issues. Security is one of the topmost concerns of social networking sites that you currently use. This is mainly because the social networking sites allow you to display your personal information such as name, location, and email address.

Just as with any other information medium, there are some people who look for ways to take advantage of social networking. One potential problem can be that of identity fraud wherein someone gets a hold of information about you online and uses your identity for different type of illegal activities, which may cause you problems in future. Therefore it is always advisable that you don't provide your entire identity and personal information online.

You may get many requests for adding as friends or joining different communities. Always try to know as much as possible before adding anyone as friend or joining any community. Because they may use a fake identity or may be involved in certain activities which may spoil your image and credibility.

Chapter 9

The Top Social Networking Sites Of Modern Times

Today, we have so many social networking sites for different interests. People join according to their interest and requirements of their social, professional, and personal life. Each and every social networking site has its importance and a set of users to promote it. There are few social networking sites which are not only the best in their sector but also appear in list of top social networking sites among all. The top five social networking sites of modern time are:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Myspace
- Flickr

9.1 Facebook: [<http://www.facebook.com/>]:

Facebook is a social site that people use to keep up with friends and family, upload photos, and share links and videos. It is currently the most popular social networking site, and is currently ranked 2nd for Internet traffic on Alexa.com.**

This site has been online since 1997, and the time spent in a typical visit to Facebook is roughly 32 minutes, with 33 seconds spent on each pageview.

Relative to the overall population of Internet users, this site's audience tends to be users who browse from school and home; they are also disproportionately women. It also has user-friendly interface with many modern features.

9.2 Twitter: [<http://www.Twitter.com>]

Twitter is a Social networking and micro-blogging service utilizing instant messaging.

It is currently the 2nd most popular social network and is ranked 9th for internet traffic on Alexa.com

Started as a side project in March of 2006, Twitter has grown into a real-time

short messaging service that works over multiple networks and devices. In countries all around the world, people follow the sources most relevant to them and access information via Twitter as it happens—from breaking world news to updates from friends.

9.3 LinkedIn: [<http://www.LinkelN.com>]

LinkedIn is the Social Networking site for business professionals used to find connections to recommended job candidates, industry experts and business partners. It allows registered users to maintain a list of contact details of people they know and trust in business.

It is currently the 3rd most popular social network and is ranked 26th for Internet traffic on Alexa.com

Linkedin.com has been online for more than seven years and has the highest favorability ranking among its users.

9.4 Myspace: [<http://www.myspace.com/>]:

Myspace continues to be a widely used and popular social networking site. It is currently the 4th most popular social network and is ranked 30th for Internet traffic on Alexa.com

The site has been online since 1996 and is based in the US. It is estimated that 46% of Myspace's visitors are in the US. Relative to the overall population of Internet users, the site's users join for friends and professional networking. They are predominately Caucasian, childless, moderately educated women under the age of 35 who browse from home.

9.5 Flickr: [<http://www.Flickr.com>]

Flickr is the most popular social networking site in the world for image hosting and sharing. It currently holds the 5th most popular social networking position in the world and is ranked 36th for Internet traffic on Alexa.com.

Compared with the overall Internet population, the site's users are predominately childless. They tend to be highly educated women under the age of 35 who have incomes between \$30,000 and \$100,000. Visitors to the

site view an average of 8.9 unique pages per day. Visitors to Flickr spend about five minutes per visit to the site and 27 seconds per pageview.

Conclusion:

The most common factor among the top five social networking sites is that they are mainly there because of friends and fun. Keeping in mind the pace of growth of social networking sites in recent times, and its growing popularity in personal and professional use, it is expected that this will continue to grow for many more years to come.

Social networking sites are no doubt the cheapest and the most popular place to promote your business. You just need to know the process to make the best use of it.

We anticipate that it will open more avenues for business growth and lead to greater prosperity for people as a whole.



To learn how to grow your business online using any of these FREE Social Networking resources visit <http://BetterMarketingOnline.com> TODAY!

****Site information Resource:**

http://www.alex.com/topsites/category/Top/Computers/Internet/On_the_Web/Online_Communities/Social_Networking

Notes