

THE EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE OF MEDIA ON USER'S PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL NETWORK

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ABSTRACT

The key outcome of social communication network is the development of communication performance, and with the highly development of social communication technologies, the importance and potential influence of communication performance increased rapidly in recent years. Media have always been an influential factor affecting communication between users on social networks. The paper demonstrates the kind of media that can improve communication performance between the users and enhance the perception of users. This paper also takes a new generation of media used in social networks into account through investigation of its impact on social communication technologies. The problem statement of this study is that small vendors in social media networks are unable to overcome certain barriers that hinder the development of their social media applications due to high competition from well-known brands such as Facebook and Twitter. Therefore the development of high quality communication performance is social require large budget that can be provided by small vendors. In addition to that the perception of users to social media can be key factor that increase the rate of visits to the social portal. The study finds that communication performance of media affect the perception of users to social networks and have unique and multiple effects on users during communication process. The study recommends developing the media applications frequently in response to the rapid development of major social media vendors such as Facebook and Twitter, also analyses the current capability of social media and develop its main features according to latest development in information technology.

Key words: Social communication technologies, User's Perception, Social media, Communication Performance.

1. Introduction

The media landscape has dramatically changed over the past decade, with traditional media (e.g., newspapers, television) now supplemented by social media (e.g., blogs, discussion forums). It is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, twitter, MySpace, Skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication through special media. Social media have the potential to fundamentally change the character of our social lives, both on an interpersonal and a community level (Fu et al., 2012).

One of the most important advantages of the use of social media is the communication through online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people. The communication provide by social media websites promotes the increase in the communication skills among the people especially among the learners/students of educational institutions. Online tools and technology has not only mediated communication in countless ways, but that the very ways we communicate and even the ways we talk and think about communication are changing as a result (Trisha, 2012).

Network communication facilitates social relations between individuals, constructive social relationships can be a source of social capital in our media era, and perceptions about these social realities not only re-align concepts and precepts but also the social processes (Francis and Scaria, 2013).

Valenzuela & Park (2008) shows a positive relationship between Facebook usage and social confidence among college students because of the high performance of media tools provided by Facebook. Where Richard (2010) shows how to user perception is highly affected by online social technologies and media performance.

2. The purpose of this study

This paper aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. To demonstrate the media performance in social communication network and analyse.
2. To identify the perception of social media users.
3. To identify the key success factors that help small social media vendors to attract more visitors to their websites.

3. The problem statement

Media have always been an influential factor affecting communication between users on social networks. The development of social communication network are not always a smooth process and many developers in social media are facing challenges to convince visitors to use their social media tools (Motti et al., 2011). In addition to that there are certain barriers that hinder the development of social media of small web vendors due to high competition from well-known brands such as Facebook and Twitter (John and Jason, 2009). Therefore the development of high quality communication performance is social require large budget that can be provided by small vendors. In addition to that the perception of users to social media can be key factor that increase the rate of visits to the social portal. Perception allows us to take the sensory information in and make it into something meaningful (Richard and Mary, 2013).

4. Media of Social Networks

The term Social Media refers to the use of web - based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts , photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, twitter, myspace, skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication. This form of communication can be with a person or a group of persons (Trisha, 2012).

Social media are computer-mediated tools that allow people to create, share or exchange information, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks. Social media is defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, social media depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. They introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between businesses, organizations, communities, and individuals (Kietzmann and Kristopher, 2011).

Agichtein et al., (2008) states that Social media are different from traditional or industrial media in many ways, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy, and permanence. Social media operates in a dialogic transmission system (many sources to many receivers). This is in contrast to traditional media that operates under a monologic transmission model (one source to many receivers).

It is evident that social media are gaining popularity and are increasingly used in regular operations of many companies, including start-ups, small, medium - sized, and large organizations (Martin and Serban, 2012). Nowadays, social-media technologies take on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, social network service, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. Technologies include blogging, picture-sharing, blogs, wall-posting, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and voice over IP, to name a few. Social network aggregation can integrate many of the platforms in use (Motti et al., 2011).

According to Nielsen, internet users continue to spend more time with social media sites than any other type of site. At the same time, the total time spent on social media in the U.S. across PC and mobile devices increased by 99 percent to 121 billion minutes in July 2012 compared to 66 billion minutes in July 2011 (Pavlik and MacIntoch, 2015). For content contributors, the benefits of participating in social media have gone beyond simply social sharing to building reputation and bringing in career opportunities and monetary income, as discussed in (Tang et al., 2012).

One characteristic shared by both social and industrial media is the capability to reach small or large audiences; for example, either a blog post or a television show may reach no people or millions of people. Some of the properties that help describe the differences between social and industrial media are (Gentle, 2012):

- **Quality:** In industrial (traditional) publishing—mediated by a publisher—the typical range of quality is substantially narrower than in niche, unmediated markets. The main challenge posed by content in social media sites is the fact that the distribution of quality has high variance: from very high-quality items to low-quality, sometimes abusive content.
- **Reach:** Both industrial and social media technologies provide scale and are capable of reaching a global audience. Industrial media, however, typically use a centralized framework for organization, production, and dissemination, whereas social media are by their very nature more decentralized, less hierarchical, and distinguished by multiple points of production and utility.
- **Frequency:** The number of times an advertisement is displayed on social media platforms.
- **Accessibility:** The means of production for industrial media are typically government and/or corporate (privately owned); social media tools are generally available to the public at little or no cost.
- **Usability:** Industrial media production typically requires specialized skills and training. Conversely, most social media production requires only modest reinterpretation of existing skills; in theory, anyone with access can operate the means of social media production.
- **Immediacy:** The time lag between communications produced by industrial media can be long (days, weeks, or even months) compared to social media (which can be capable of virtually instantaneous responses).
- **Permanence:** Industrial media, once created, cannot be altered (once a magazine article is printed and distributed, changes cannot be made to that same article) whereas social media can be altered almost instantaneously by comments or editing.

Social media have also been recognized for the way they have changed how public relations professionals conduct their jobs. They have provided an open arena where people are free to exchange ideas on companies, brands, and products. Agozzino (2012) found that Social media provides an environment where users and PR professionals can converse, and where PR professionals can promote their brand and improve their company's image by listening and responding to what the public is saying about their product.

5. The Communication performance of Social Media

Social media communication tools are gaining popularity and are increasingly used in regular operations of many companies, ranging from start - ups and small and medium enterprises to large corporations (Lee et al, 2008; Bell and Loane, 2010) . Despite extensive use of social media, little is known on the specific impact that these tools and technologies have on business process performance and the perception of users (Denyer et al, 2011).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. Youtube), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook). Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms. An overview of social media has been shown below (Figure-1):



Figure 1: Overview of social media

Today most of the people specially the youngsters are depends on the communication tools of social media for keeping in contact with their peers. Social media is media for social interaction as a superset beyond social communication.

There are pros and cons to the use of communication tools of social media. One most important advantage is the online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people. This online sharing of information also promotes the increase in the communication skills among the people especially among the learners/students of educational institutions.

There is also a flip side to the use of social media tools. Sometimes, such tools are misused by people which leads to interference into one's privacy. Such instances can lead to dangerous proportions keeping in view the ethical aspect of the use of such media. The social media tools have virtually brought people close to one another specially those living in far off places (Trisha, 2012). Social media has morphed into one of the preferred methods of communication for many people; much has been written to proclaim its benefits including its usefulness as a tool to help students achieve success within the classroom.

The main communication features of media provided by social networks are:

- **Sharing of ideas:** Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events and interests within their individual networks. Web based social networking services make it possible to connect people who share interests and activities across political, economic and geographic borders (Acquisti, 2009).
- **Tool of communication:** Social networks are increasingly being used by teachers and learners as a communication tool. Teachers create chat rooms, forums and groups to extend classroom discussion to posting assignments, tests and quizzes, to assisting with homework outside of the classroom setting. Learners can also form groups over the social networking sites and engage in discussion over a variety of topics (Ahmed et al., 2010).
- **Bridges communication gap:** Social media bridges the distance among different people. It offers platforms for online users to find others who share the same interests and build virtual communities based on those shared interests. With the

availability of social media technologies and services, content sharing and user interaction has become relatively easy and efficient.

- **Source of information:** Content generating and sharing sites serve as sources of information for various topics. Users can search for content, download and use the content available on these sites free of cost.
- **Important marketing tool:** Social media is widely used by most of the firms/organizations to market their products/services in the society. The companies resort to social networking sites to generate opinions on the existing and future products that are available in the market. This is an excellent marketing strategy undertaken by most of the companies to draw consumers and elicit public opinion. Such comments or opinions help the organization to redesign their products. Such social networking and user appraisal sites are an important way of promoting products and generating opinions (Baker et al., 2008).
- **Important customer interaction tool:** Social Media Networking is perfect for customer interaction, customer feedback, and customer support. New business contacts can be obtained for networking purposes. Important crisis communication tool : When the major forms of public relations tool fail , social media can be used extensively to communicate with the general public regarding any crisis situation that might have gripped the nation or any organization. But it is important to remember that while social media can have a positive impact during natural disasters (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).
- **Less time consuming:** Social media is an effective time management medium of communication both for business as well as for academic purposes. One can post a message or browse for any information at the click of a button. This is an added advantage in comparison to print and other electronic media like television and radio, Though one can get the updates in television, yet social media channels provide impromptu information and connection with the people that matters most (Agozzino, 2012)

6. The perception of users on social media performance

Perception can be defined as our recognition and interpretation of sensory information. Perception also includes how we respond to the information. We can think of perception as a process where we take in sensory information from our environment and use that information in order to interact with our environment. Perception allows us to take the sensory information in and make it into something meaningful (Richard and Mary, 2013).

Positive perceptions obtained from users of social networking sites i.e. effective learning which has resulted in an easy learning climate among users (Mazer, et al., 2010). In another study conducted by (Keenan and Shirii, 2009) they explored how social media encourage friendliness through the use of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The study concluded that numerous approaches can be used to encourage amiability among users which leads to a positive effect from user's point of view.

Perceptions change over the time facts and realities remain. In order to understand social phenomenon, one needs both perceptions and facts. Social facts enable in carving out structural realities, while perceptions give evolving quality to the given phenomenon. Social network sites constitute both as a fact and as a perception. The present thrust in social network sites is to find out the evolving nature of the phenomenon to different sections of people (Peng & Zhu, 2010). New media can be a capital for users in social and educational fields. So long as inevitability to connect through virtual device persists, user's perception issues will prevail in many areas of life (Francis and Scaria, 2013).

In a study conducted by Mazer et al., (2007) concluded that Facebook networking site is used by students and young people more frequently. Recent data obtained from Facebook through their spokesperson, showed that approximately 297,000 users are university faculty members, although there are pros and cons in each case, and most of those user have positive perception towards the performance of media provide by Facebook.

Adam et al., (2012) argues that there are so many factors warranting young people and even some adults to be addicted and need to use the social network. Based on this study and after meeting few students, they presumed or assumed that for many reasons as stated below the user want to use the social networking sites available:

- To get technical and vocational skills which are very important for human development?
- Socializing with friends
- Doing a sort of collaborative study, research or academic work.
- Carrying out informal form of learning i.e. online degree
- Discovering and exploration of interests, both academic and future interest.
- Doing some kind of online marketing, business, seminar known as webinar etc.
- Having to be informed will make one not to be deformed hence most youth tends to visit this social
- networking sites daily to get daily news information about what is going on round the country, within his other vicinity, about friends, relatives.
- This is also an avenue of a citizen to bring the attention of the government to what is needed in their environment, or by suggesting to the government since it will not be possible for you sometimes to go to the office of whoever is in authority.

Richard and Mary (2013) state that if a technology provides features that are useful then it will have a positive impact on performance and bring more users because of high perception of communication tools.

In this context John and Jason (2009) addressing the degree to which a user currently used social networking systems for personal communication and activities related to academic course work, the survey items regarding the frequency of use and communication with various social groups were most relevant. The perception of the value of social networking technology was assessed using three items; survey items regarding student perceptions and preferences; survey items in which student rated the likelihood of participation in various activities; responses to open-ended items. The anticipated barriers, problems, and benefits of social networking in a course were primarily informed by the responses to the open-ended items. With regard to use of the Facebook social networking site, a large majority (95.5%) of respondents indicated that they used Facebook either daily, or multiple times each day. Only one participant reported not using Facebook at all.

As shown in Table-1, communication with friends was the most common type of communication activity, followed by communication with family. Most of the respondents (85.5%) indicated that they had never used Facebook to communicate with an instructor, though most (77.3%) has used Facebook to communicate with other students in their courses (John and Jason, 2009).

	N	Never	Very little	Sometimes	Frequently
Communicating with friends	110	.9%	0%	11.8%	87.3%
Communicating with family	110	5.5%	22.7%	52.7%	19.1%
Communicating with other students in your courses	110	5.5%	17.3%	53.6%	23.6%
Communicating with instructors	110	85.5%	11.8%	2.7%	0%

Table-1: Frequency of Types of Communication using Social Networking Technology

Data regarding the likelihood of participating in various academic uses of Facebook indicate that participants were most likely to use a media of social networking system to communicate with other students in the class. In general, a majority of students were likely to participate in most of the activities suggested. However, ratings of the likelihood of participation were lowest for using Facebook to “Communicate with Instructors” and “Using online discussions tools that included both instructor and students.” The highest ratings were in response to the “Access course notes and other materials,” “Viewing course schedule,” “Communicating with other students in my courses,” and “Joining a Facebook group for students in your courses.

7. Conclusion

This study shows that one of the most important advantages of the use of social media is the communication through online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people.

The study shows that the perceptions of user to social media change over the time due to changing the performance of media of social networks. Therefore, social networks that provide high performance communication tools such as Facebook and Twitter are able to register more users because of high perception. According to that small social media vendors should enhance their websites with added value to their service and quality of media in order to attract more visitors to their website.

The study also found that the importance of understanding the communication requirements of users and their perception on social media.

This study shows that there are pros and cons to the use of communication tools of social media. One most important advantage is the online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people.

8. Recommendations

- Based on the findings from this study, the researcher suggests the following recommendations:
- Develop the media applications frequently in response to the rapid development of major social media vendors such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Analyse the current capability of social media and develop its main features according to latest development in information technology
- Pay more attention to the development of quality of communication provided by social media through frequent enhancement to these media.

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