

Social Media

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Social media is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and "building" of shared meaning among communities, as people share their stories, and understandings.

Description

Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, message boards, weblogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing, and voice over IP, to name a few. Examples of social media applications are Google Groups (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), MySpace (social networking), Facebook (social networking), Last.fm (personal music), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Second Life (virtual reality), Flickr (photo sharing), Twitter (social networking and microblogging) and other microblogs such as Jaiku and Pownce. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms like Mybloglog and Plaxo.

Distinction from traditional media

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Social media or social networking (one example of social media) has a number of characteristics that make it fundamentally different from traditional media such as newspapers, television, books, and radio. Primarily, social media depends on interactions between people as the discussion and integration of words builds shared-meaning, using technology as a conduit.

Social media utilities create opportunities for the use of both inductive and deductive logics by its users. Claims or warrants are quickly transitioned into generalizations due to the manner in which shared statements are posted and viewed by all. The speed of communication, breadth, and depth, and ability to see how the words build a case solicits the use of rhetoric. Induction is frequently used as a means to validate or authenticate different users' statements and words. Rhetoric is an important part of today's language in social media.

Social media is not finite: there are not a set number of pages or hours. The audience can participate in social media by adding comments or even editing the stories themselves. Content in social media can take the form of text, graphics, audio, or video. Several formats can be mixed. Social media is typically available via feeds, enabling users to subscribe via feed readers, and allowing other publishers to create mashups.

Social media signifies a broad spectrum of topics and has several different connotations. In the context of Internet marketing, Social Media refers to a collective group of web properties that are driven by users. For example, blogs, discussion boards, vlogs, video sharing sites and dating sites. Social Media Optimization (SMO) is the process of trying to get one's content more widely distributed across multiple Social Media networks.

Social Media has two important aspects. The first, SMO, refers to on-page tactics through which a webmaster can improve a website for the age of social media. Such optimization includes adding links to services such as Digg, Reddit and Del.icio.us so that their pages can be easily 'saved and submitted' to and for these services.

Social Media Marketing, on the other hand, is an off-page characteristic of Social Media. This includes writing content that is remarkable, unique, and newsworthy. This content can then be marketed by popularizing it or even by creating a "viral" video on YouTube and other video sites. Social Media is about being social so this off-page work can include getting involved in other similar blogs, forums, and niche communities. Search Engine Marketing or SEM involves

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utilization of all available Social Networking platforms to brand a product using Search Engine Optimization or SEO techniques of communication, to the end consumer.

Examples

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Examples of social media applications include:

Communication

- Microblogs / Presence apps: Twitter and Pownce
- Social networking: Facebook, LinkedIn and MySpace
- Events: Upcoming
- Niche: Eons.com

Collaboration

- Wikis: Wikipedia
- Social bookmarking: del.icio.us and StumbleUpon
- Social News Sites: Digg, Mixx and Reddit
- Opinion sites: epinions

Multimedia

- Photo sharing: Flickr and Zoomr
- Video sharing: YouTube and Vimeo
- Livecasting: Ustream and Justin.tv
- Audio and Music Sharing: imeem

Entertainment

- Virtual worlds: Second Life
- Online gaming: World of Warcraft
- Game sharing: Miniclip.com

Other/Specialty

- social ads

Social media Optimization

Social media optimization (SMO) is a set of methods for generating publicity through social media, online communities and community websites. Methods of SMO include adding RSS feeds, adding a "Digg This" button, blogging and incorporating third party community functionalities like Flickr photo slides and galleries or YouTube videos. Social media optimization is related to search engine marketing, but differs in several ways, primarily the focus on driving traffic from sources other than search engines, though improved search ranking is also a benefit of successful SMO.

Social media optimization is in many ways connected as a technique to viral marketing where word of mouth is created not through friends or family but through the use of networking in social bookmarking, video and photo sharing websites. In a similar way the engagement with blogs achieves the same by sharing content through the use of RSS in the blogosphere and special blog search engines such as Technorati.

Origins

Rohit Bhargava was credited with inventing the term SMO. His original five rules for conducting Social Media Optimization are:

- Increase your linkability
- Make tagging and bookmarking easy

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- Reward inbound links
- Help your content travel

Encourage the mashup