

**SOCIAL NETWORKING: TRANSFORMATION, INNOVATION IN COMMUNICATION
TECHNOOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATION IN BUSINESS.**

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ABSTRACT

Social Networking is a way for individuals or businesses to interact via dedicated websites or applications with each other for either social or business purposes. Some of the famous social networks are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube etc. Marketers use social networking for increasing brand recognition and loyalty because it makes the company more accessible to new customers and more recognizable for existing customers. Social networking helps promote a brand's voice and content. When there were no social networks people used to interact with each other orally, or by writing letters, telegrams etc which evolved as the time passed and now it has made the world a "global village" by connecting everyone over the internet all around the world. Technology is disrupting the way we live, work and play like never before, creating tremendous opportunities for businesses.

Keyword: *social networking, social media, communication technology, business, consumers, advertisement, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Social networking is the use of internet-based social media programs to make connections with friends, family, classmates, customers and clients. Social networking can occur for social purposes, business purposes or both through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat and LinkedIn.

Communication can range from very subtle processes of exchange, to full conversations and mass communication. Human communication was revolutionized with the origin of speech approximately 500,000 years ago. Symbols were developed about 30,000 years ago. The imperfection of speech, which nonetheless allowed easier dissemination of ideas and stimulated inventions, eventually resulted in the creation of new forms of communications, improving both the range at which people could communicate and the longevity of the information. All of those inventions were based on the key concept of the symbol. The oldest known symbols created for the purpose of communication were cave paintings, a form of rock art, dating to the Upper Paleolithic age. The oldest known cave painting is located within Chauvet Cave, dated to around 30,000 BC. These paintings contained increasing amounts of information: people may have created the first calendar as far back as 15,000 years ago. [1] Later, came the heliographs, letters, telegrams, telegraph, typewriter, Facsimile Transmission machine, telephone, radio,

computer, television, telephones, mobiles, Personal computers, laptops, smartphones ,tablets etc. With the advancement of technology in the field of communication and information technology, it became very easy to connect to any and each and every person in the world who had an internet connection and a computer. This marked the revolution in communication technology.

2. HISTORY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MEDIA:

In the early days, there were no computers, mobiles, telephones etc. People used to come together and meet at a common place to exchange their thoughts, ideas and news with each other. The men at their workplace, the women at the wells or the vegetable markets, and children at gurukuls /schools / playgrounds. This was oral communication. If someone wanted to connect to some other person in a different village or town, they had only options, either go there by the means of walking or bullock /horse carts or send a letter with a person (or messenger) to that place. It took days or even weeks to the letter to reach that person and again the same time for the response to reach to the sender of the original message. This was very time consuming.

Later on, letter and telegrams were the most used and reliable methods to connect to the people who lived very far from the sender. Till the end of the 19th century we had Telex, Television, Radio and Computers.

At the start of the 20th century, by 1969 computer networking came into operation and by 1983, Internet was introduced to the world. Major contribution in the field of Information Technology was done by Apple.Inc. , Microsoft, IBM, Yahoo and Google. Also, mobile (1G network) came in the 1980's. Non-stop innovation by companies like Apple and Microsoft totally changed the world and their views towards computers, information technology and communication technology.

The first social media site that everyone can agree actually was social media was a website called Six Degrees. It was named after the 'six degrees of separation' theory and lasted from 1997 to 2001. Six Degrees allowed users to create a profile and then friend other users. Six Degrees even allowed those who didn't register as users to confirm friendships and connected quite a few people this way.

The following information shows how Social networking and social media evolved and transformed into what it was until 2017: [2]

- **1973-1979:** Talkomatic was created by Dave Woolley and Douglas Brown at the University of Illinois, as a multi-user chat room application. It was an instant sensation among users in the PLATO System's online community. TERM-Talk was created by the staff at the Computer-based Education Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois, as an instant-messaging application enabling any two users on the PLATO system to conduct a live, character-by-character typed conversation on the bottom of the screen of their PLATO terminals. Soon many features would be added to it including "Monitor Mode," enabling one user in the TERM-talk to share their own screen with the other user,

to ask questions or point out something that they're seeing. Years later this concept would be introduced as "Screen Sharing" or Remote Desktop Software. In 1976, Notes expanded to enable any user to create a "notesfile" on any subject. PLATO Notes would serve as the inspiration for Lotus Notes developed by former PLATO users Ray Ozzie, Len Kawell, and Tim Halvorsen.

- **1980-1990:** Bulletin Board System (BBS) emerged as one of the earliest known forms of social media, and remained popular and under development until the late 1990s. In 1984, FidoNet formed as BBSs start to exchange email in North America and later internationally. In 1988, IRC rose from the roots of BBS (and was initially intended to extend it), offering a similar service and experience. It has remained in use until this day. An example of a popular IRC client today is mIRC.
- **1991-2000:** In 1997, AOL Instant Messenger was released which was said to be the first ever social media website. And the following year ICQ was acquired by AOL, and the service was patented. In 1999, SixDegrees.com was purchased by YouthStream Media Networks for \$125 million. Yahoo Messenger, another popular instant messaging service was launched. MSN Messenger (also known as Windows Live Messenger), a popular messaging, video and voice calling service was also launched. Habbo, a game-based social networking site was launched.
- **2001-2005:** SixDegrees.com was shut down. Windows Messenger was released, and was shipped with Windows XP. This was an integrated version of MSN Messenger. Friendster launched (The service would be popular in Asia and the Pacific Islands). Business-oriented social networking service LinkedIn launched, which was and is a huge success. MySpace, one of the most popular social networking sites ever, launched. Skype, a very popular instant messaging and video/voice calling service (VoIP) was also launched. And in 2004, Facebook, the most popular social networking service to-date was launched. It now features a voice and video calling service, as well as a widely used instant messaging service. Flickr, an image and video hosting website was introduced {Many users use Flickr to keep personal photos, and it is also widely used as a platform for hosting images and videos that are later embedded in other websites and services (such as blogs)}. Orkut, a social networking website owned by Google was launched. Tagged, a social discovery website was also introduced at the same time. In 2005, MySpace was acquired by News Corporation for \$580 million. Renren, a Chinese social networking website, launches. YouTube, a video sharing service that allowed users to post virtually anything, from music, let's plays, and vlogs was introduced. Yahoo! acquired Flickr.

- **2006-2010:** Twitter, one of the most popular social networking sites worldwide was launched. This website was very popular in Brazil and India. YouTube was acquired by Google for \$1.65 billion. In 2007, Tumblr, a popular microblogging and social networking website was launched and the following year AOL bought Bebo for \$850 million. In 2010, Pinterest, a photo sharing website was launched.

- **2011-2016:** SnapChat, photo/video sharing social media service was launched. Microsoft acquired Skype Technologies for \$8.5 billion. In 2012, Facebook goes public, negotiating a share price of \$38 apiece, valuing the company at \$104 billion, the largest valuation to date for a newly listed public company. Tinder, a widely popular dating-oriented social networking service was launched. Facebook acquired Instagram for \$1 billion in cash and stock. In 2013, Twitter filed for its IPO, and began trading on the New York Stock Exchange. The share closed at US\$44.90, giving the company a valuation of around \$31 billion. Instagram launched video sharing. Instant messaging and video/voice calling service Google Hangouts was launched. In 2014, SnapChat launched collaborative timelines based on events. Orkut was shut down by Google. In 2015, Periscope, a live video sharing app, launches shortly after being acquired by Twitter. Yahoo discontinues its services for Windows, Mac, Linux, and Solaris clients in early August 2016.

3. SOCIAL NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY:

“Computers are inherently designed to make your lives easier. Theoretically there is no limit to what computers can do.”

With the advancement in technology, communication has grown. It is now easier and cheap to communicate and connect with people across the world. The issue of distance is no longer an excuse for lack of communication. Communication systems have grown from wired devices to wireless devices. The internet has also brought adverse changes in the forms of communications that are available and currently being used. It has led the rise of social networks. Here you can communicate and share your thoughts with many people at the same time. It is easy to share information like pictures, advertisements, videos and text messages. To many people, it is perceived as a form of entertainment. However, being in social sites enhances communication. There are many types of social sites and it is on oneself to choose the one that they are comfortable with. Sites and applications like Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube, and Twitter etc have become very popular. If Facebook were to be a country, it would be the world’s fourth largest country in terms of population. Social media and s\Social networking are growing rapidly on a daily basis. Many businessmen and entrepreneurs say that this is the “Golden era”.

“Mobile-only world”: The world is gradually becoming a mobile-only world. Everyone is using smartphones these days. We can observe the growth in sales of smartphones every year. Facebook’s mobile advertisement revenue accounted for 87% of the company’s total advertising revenue of \$9.6 Billion. 53% attention of each individual using a smartphone is spent on social networking applications and websites.

4. THE FUTURE:

Social media and social networking are there in the future, they are going nowhere. Many companies and startups have been investing in technology lately. Especially in AI, AR and VR. That's Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality, will make its presence in the future for a long time.

- **Artificial Intelligence:** AI is intelligence exhibited by machines. Colloquially, the term "artificial intelligence" is applied when a machine mimics "cognitive" functions that humans associate with other human minds, such as "learning" and "problem solving". Companies like Tesla, Facebook, Samsung, Panasonic, SONY, Apple, Google, and Microsoft are investing heavily in R and D related to AI. AI will not work without voice (voice input by humans) such examples of voice recognizing software are Siri(by Apple) Google Assistant(by Google) and Bixby(by Samsung). Another wonderful example is Amazon Alexa (by Amazon).Voice and AI could really be something revolutionary in the field of communication technology. "The dream is finally arriving" said Bill Gates. But like it's pros it has it's cons. Experts are scared that the machines will gain all the information and start developing something of their own which could result in a war between humans and machines. This is the reason why Facebook has shut down one of its AI systems after chatbots programmed to converse in English started speaking their own language. They had begun to deviate from the scripted norms and started speaking a new language created without human input. After that incident Facebook bought Ozlo to make a virtual assistant for its messenger platform. Tesla, SpaceX and OpenAI founder CEO Elon Musk called AI the "greatest risk we face as a civilization" "This shows how dangerous it can be, if controlled and monitored properly it can be a great revolution in communication technology.
- **Virtual Reality:** VR is a computer generated simulation or replacement by ones environment with a digital environment that basically fools your senses, from the point of view of your brain, you are someone else. It's a form of mental teleportation. Google, Microsoft and Samsung are some companies which have developed VR headsets and have made them available to consumers. Currently, VR is becoming extremely relevant to gamers, architects, 3D artists, Designers etc. With the help of VR 2 or more people can converse with each other in a virtual world, this will save time and money and get the work done efficiently. VR is also bringing the retail experience to the convenience of people's homes.
- **Augmented Reality:** Augmented reality, Also known as "Mixed Reality", in simple words in the experience (reality) between real reality and virtual reality. It's the enhancement of one's real world with a set of virtual objects in it. When a person's real environment is supplemented or augmented with computer generated images usually motion trapped,

that is called augmented reality. For example, SnapChat face filters are primitive forms of augmented reality. Microsoft's HoloLens is one of the best examples for AR.

As of now, the demand for these technologies is rising very slowly but the world takes time to accept new things, new changes and by 2030 this technology will be widely used in the home, school and at the workplace. These technologies are going to revolutionize people's digital interaction, media and experiences in the near future.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING IN BUSINESS:

Internet or the "web" was very different earlier and is very different today. Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 were very result-driven and automated. Practices like E-mail marketing, SEO, Banner retargeting etc worked very quickly and were the best back in the day. Web 1.0 transformed to Web 2.0 which is characterized especially by the change from static web pages to dynamic or user-generated content and the growth of social media, which results in change of consumer's behavior and simultaneously the need for organizations to change their traditional methods and learn and execute new methods. People used to check their mail regularly, but now a big percentage of them check their mail once or twice in a week or once or twice a month. So In this case, an organization today should not spend time and money on E-mail marketing or any such other practices. For example, we can see banks doing that, it has reason too. Today, Bank statements or account statements or any other bank related updates come on the mail so, banks can send promotions/advertisements via email because there will be people viewing it. It's all about "Attention", and they have got it.

All the traditional media are overpriced today and the social media platform is underpriced and implementation of innovative strategies will save more money and time which can be utilized or reinvested in the business. Yes, the TV industry in India is growing and people are watching TV shows regularly or on weekends. But trends are trends; they change as the time comes. Marketers need to change the way they look at the social media and social networking platform in order to achieve their goals. Web 1.0 marketing psychology cannot be applied in the Web 2.0 world.

"85% users surf the net while watching TV" – Twitter Business (Official Twitter Handle)

TV Industry in India is growing every day but as we have observed that trends change. Marketers need to focus more on online advertisement than on any other media as the mobile phone users are growing rapidly. People watch TV serials but when the advertisement break comes, they simply mute the TV (in some cases) and check their phone (mainly social media applications). A Company spends huge amounts of money on making TV commercials and people simply don't watch them, they pull out their phones, check messages, notifications and if it happens to be a long advertisement break, they go to the washroom, but they simply don't watch those TV commercials. Talking of avoiding commercials, Consumers also skip advertisements shown before the video (on YouTube). They wait for the "Skip Ad" tab to appear, as the advertisement can be skipped after 5 seconds. YouTube provides a feature for advertisers in which the company has to pay them extra

in order to play the advertisement completely and not allowing the consumers to skip it.

“Practice Marketing in the year that we actually live in” The market is doing its thing and its happening fast, each day is important , each hour is important and we need to cope with the speed of the market as it is not going to wait for us because it does not care for you for example, Uber (an online taxi booking service which provides you with car when you need it in the best possible time) changed the cab market completely, The people who might be owning some traditional taxi booking service and providing rentals were washed out of the market. Uber is the second most funded startup in the world with funding worth \$12 Billion. The first in Didi Chuxing (\$15 Billion).Marketers need to learn to survive every shift in technology because technology redefines everything. Internet has given us a new direction and today “social media” has become the term that is being used to describe the current state of the Internet.

6. APPLICATIONS OR WEBSITES THAT CAN BE USED FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES (FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE AND TWITTER):

A) Facebook:

Facebook is an American for-profit corporation and an online social media and social networking service. Facebook may be accessed by a large range of desktops, laptops, tablet computers, and smartphones over the Internet and mobile networks [3]. Facebook allows people using computers or mobile phones to continuously stay in touch with friends, relatives and other acquaintances wherever they are in the world, as long as there is access to the Internet. It has reunited lost family members and friends. It allows users to trade ideas, stay informed with local or global developments, and unite people with common interests and/or beliefs through open, closed and private groups and other pages. Facebook's social impact has also changed how people communicate. Rather than having to reply to others through email, Facebook allows users to broadcast or share content to others, and thereby to engage others or be engaged with others' posts.

Facebook added 1 million users in less than 9 months. Now, there are 155 Million Monthly Active Users (MAUs) in India, of which 147 Millions MAUs access Facebook via Mobile Phones and 73 Million users are active daily on Mobiles. Top 5 countries accessing Facebook are India, USA, Brazil, UK and Germany. In India, 76% of Facebook users are Men, and 24% users are women, which illustrates the barriers women face in India to access technology and information.[4] Facebook is the number 1 marketing tool for businesses at 83%.Facebook messenger has 1 Billion users.

After having a look at the statistics above, we can say that Facebook is a very very very big market and the most interesting thing is that it is underpriced right now and clearly it's the best place for putting up advertisements and promotions. With so many MAUs a company's advertisement will get the most views on Facebook than any other platform. Facebook shares had hit a record high after mobile advertising business grew by 50%.53% attention of each individual using a

smartphone is spent on social networking applications and websites. This makes Facebook the best platform for advertisement and promotion.

B) Instagram:

Instagram is a mobile, desktop, and Internet-based photo-sharing application and service that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly or privately. Instagram lets registered users upload photos or videos to the service. Users can apply various digital filters to their images, and add locations through geotags. They can add hashtags to their posts, linking the photos up to other content on Instagram featuring the same subject or overall topic. Users can connect their Instagram account to other social media profiles, enabling them to share photos to those profiles as well. [5]

Facebook paid an astounding \$1 Billion to acquire Instagram. This acquisition let investors know that Facebook understood where the market was headed and was prepared to pay money to stay relevant to its clientele.

Youngsters (under the age of 25) spend an average of 32 minutes on Instagram every day. The Instagram DM (direct message) is the best opportunity and tool to connect to people. The Instagram “story” feature is used by 250 million users daily which include everyone. Especially advertisers and marketers should grab this opportunity and roll out daily content on this platform. Not only them but even startups from every field can do this. Content is the king but without the right context it’s of no use. Great content with the right context at the right time is the key to be successful on Instagram. One needs to start from building content and content that brings value to the consumer. Search hashtags, geotags, look at the search results, look at the profiles (check their followers and following and likes on different uploads), bring them value, DM them until they revert. If they don’t, repeatedly keep messaging them, because it’s possible, many people might be messaging the same person and that person is fed up of it and he/she never checks the DMs. This helps in building contacts, grabbing attention of potential consumers and business development. Instagram live will help to directly connect to followers. Instagram stories are the place where meaningful content is required (even in the profile). There are high possibilities of word-of-mouth publicity if the content is great. Companies like Adidas and Nike regularly post something new. Daily video-logs provide transparency. It’s an incredibly important platform and one of the best place for business. Instagram also offers users to switch to business profiles with the users can get access to some amazing functions like “swipe up” and “Insights” and many other business tools. This helps us the users to provide direct links from their Instagram story, learn about followers and see how the posts are performing. It also enables the function to add phone numbers, email, location s customers can reach you directly from a button on your profile.

C) YouTube:

YouTube is an American video-sharing website. YouTube allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favorites, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users. Available content includes video clips, TV show clips, music videos, short and documentary films, audio

recordings, movie trailers and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, and educational videos. YouTube earns advertising revenue from Google AdSense, a program which targets ads according to site content and audience. The vast majority of its videos are free to view, but there are exceptions, including subscription-based premium channels, film rentals, as well as YouTube Red, a subscription service offering ad-free access to the website and access to exclusive content made in partnership with existing users. [6]

Being a YouTuber has become a trend now, everyone is shooting and editing videos and posting on YouTube but only a handful of them are becoming successful. In India, some of the top YouTube channels are:

1. BB ki Vines.
2. TheViralFeverVideos. (TVF)
3. AIB.
4. Vidya Vox.
5. Being Indian.

These channels have posted amazing and original content and have gained millions of followers over the years. Anyone can make channel on YouTube, it's free. One can share number of videos on YouTube. Content of the video and the theme is very important. Content is king but context is the queen. Without the right context, the content is of no use. A YouTuber must post relevant and attractive videos in order to build following and generate traffic. Since YouTube is acquired by Google, YouTube uses Google's AdSense advertising tool and puts advertisements before the video starts or small popup advertisements in between the video. To start earning, one has to sign an agreement with YouTube in which it is clearly stated that the income generated from the advertisements will be split between YouTube and the Owner of the channel (40% and 60% respectively). On an average, a channel receives \$1 for 1000 views. This might not be enough. Another way of earning via using YouTube is Affiliate Marketing. One needs to become an official affiliate partner with an e-commerce website and promote their products in their videos. For example, a person becomes an affiliate marketer for Amazon, he/she will get a code and a link which they have to promote in their video. If anyone buys that product using that code then that person will receive commission on that sale. Commission amount depends on the product and whether the purchase was done from the application or website. This percentage of commission varies from 2% to 20% depending on the product and its price. One more way is to get sponsorship for the videos and promote/review their products on the channel and earn money from them. Or, as a company, one can approach YouTubers, sponsor them and there are chances of increase in sales (depending on the product) but definitely the product will get a good amount of visibility. Transparency, content and context are very important to be successful on YouTube. Marketers should also make use of YouTube Analytics which will help them keep a track on their activity on YouTube, like number of subscribers, likes and comments per video, it provides with an overview of your activity for the past month, watch time, audience retention, demographics

autoplay locations, traffic sources, devices, translations engagement reports etc. All of this, makes YouTube one of the best places on the web to share video content, advertise, promote, implement different marketing strategies and expand business.

D) Twitter:

Twitter is an online news and social networking service where users post and interact with messages, "tweets", restricted to 140 characters. Registered users can post tweets, but those who are unregistered can only read them. Users access Twitter through its website interface, SMS or a mobile device app. As a social network, Twitter revolves around the principle of followers. When you choose to follow another Twitter user that user's tweets appear in reverse chronological order on your main Twitter page. For example, if you follow 15 people for a start, you'll see a mix of tweets scrolling down the page: news, updates from celebrities, brands, people, interesting new links, music recommendations etc. World leaders and their diplomats have taken note of Twitter's rapid expansion and have been increasingly utilizing Twitter diplomacy, the use of Twitter to engage with foreign publics and their own citizens. [7]

Twitter can be used to promote your business online and also for advertising of products and services on the website and application itself. Twitter marketers should make sure that their company's identity and voice has great branding. This means that you should have a bio that effectively tells other people about your business, who you are, and what you do. It should also include a link to the landing page or website of your company. It is important that the bio has a consistent tone so that other people can clearly understand what the company is about. Ask your employees, colleagues, friends and family to retweet your posts and promote the brand in their social circles. Find the like-minded customers, influencers, and prospects by searching the keywords related to your industry. Once you find them, then you should follow them and regularly interact with them. Tweet regularly, regular tweeting gives the impression of a healthy active profile. Keep a track of your mentions, hashtags, comments, likes, retweets so that you know how the people are reacting to you and this feedback will definitely help. Set up the Twitter searches for the terms that are relevant to your company or brand, so that when someone searches the hashtag or the term, he/she should be able to see your tweets. Marketers should also use images and videos. Relevant content should be posted. Those videos, images and other rich media gets more views and shares compared to tweets with plain special offer rates or discounts to Twitter followers. Ask followers to post pics of them with your product, organize contests, do giveaways and use some other marketing strategies like this, this will help to spread the word and also a high chance of gaining more followers, likes, retweets and visibility.

All the social networking sites and websites should carry the same/different promotions. Marketers should pay attention to all the social media networks used by the company and update them regularly. Apart from that, Marketers could really use "Twitter Analytics". One of the features "Quick Promote" allows user to share the best tweets with a relevant audience in just a few clicks

from the Analytics dashboards, Twitter timeline, or on mobile phones. Twitter ad campaigns help in advertising and promoting goods, services and offers to a large audience. It also helps to measure impressions, results, and cost-per-result across all your different campaign objectives. Twitter began to roll out the ability to attach poll questions to tweets.

As of June 8, 2017, the ten Twitter accounts with the most followers were: [8]

<u>NAME</u>	<u>NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS</u>
1. Katy Perry	101,582,087
2. Justin Bieber	98,764,554
3. Barack Obama	92,447,870
4. Taylor Swift	85,414,643
5. Rihanna	75,792,617
6. Ellen DeGeneres	71,081,209
7. YouTube	69,293,871
8. Lady Gaga	67,825,866
9. Justin Timberlake	61,662,953
10. Twitter	61,424,803

Twitter is gaining importance very quickly. Twitter is ranked the eleventh most visited website by Alexa's web traffic analysis. Every company should be on Twitter and use its tools and features to the fullest. All of this make Twitter one of the best platforms to do business.

CONCLUSION:

Social networking and social media has evolved and transformed lives and the perspectives of people who used to think that the internet is a fad back in the 80s and 90s. It has made the world into a "Global Village" by connecting everyone via the internet. This technology is disrupting the way we live, work and play like never before, creating tremendous opportunities for businesses.

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