An Overview of Social Media

Ela Ozkan-Canbolat
Cankiri Karatekin University, Turkey

Aydin Beraha
Cankiri Karatekin University, Turkey

Social media develops a comprehensive framework of e-business by taking a multidisciplinary approach to understanding e-business and its implications for businesses, economies and the social environment. Social commerce is emerging as an important platform in e-commerce, primarily due to the increased popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. This part offers a systematic method to understand and conceptualize online social media as an ecosystem of related elements. The information on-line is based upon a fundamental network structure. Links among Web pages can help us to understand how these pages are related, how they are grouped into different communities, and which pages are the most prominent or important.

A social network is a map of specified ties, such as friendship, between the nodes being studied. The nodes to which an individual is connected are that individual's social contacts. Network theories work by using organizational relations in all organizational fields. Social media is defined with respect to different types of networks in which the basic units being connected are pieces of information and links join pieces of information that are related to each other in some fashion. This type of a network is called an information network. The World Wide Web is the most prominent current example of such a network, and although the use of information networks has a long history, the growth of the Web truly brought such networks to widespread public awareness.

Some basic ideas from graph theory are used, including short paths and giant components, formulating notions of power in terms of the underlying graph structure and even drawing connections to matching markets when we consider some of the ways in which search companies on the Web have designed their businesses. Because the Web plays such a central role in the modern version of this topic, we begin with some context about the Web, and social media in particular, and then look further back into the history of information networks that led up to the Web.

1. SOCIAL MEDIA AND HISTORICAL ROOTS

Social media is currently a central concern for many business executives. Consumers who are using the Internet simply expend its usage content. They not only read and learn from it, but they also watch it and use it to buy products and services. Furthermore, consumers who utilize these platforms—such as content sharing sites, blogs, social networking, and wikis– also create, modify, share, and discuss Internet content progressively. As a consequence, social media becomes a phenomenon that impacts a firm's reputation, sales, and even survival markedly (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvestre, 2011). Business managers, decision makers, and especially consultants endeavor to find ways in which companies can be more profitable by using web applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,

YouTube and others. Although there seems to be much effort to distinguish the borders of social media, crucial or even limited understanding of the term is lacking (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social media consists of computer-mediated tools that people make to create, share or exchange information, ideas, and pictures and videos easily and quickly. People not only reach these virtual communities and networks without difficulty and effort, but they can also reach them whenever they want. Social media enables companies to talk to their customers and enables customers to talk directly to one another. Although social media is accepted as a hybrid element of the promotion mix, the content, timing, and frequency of the social media-based conversations between consumers are beyond managers' direct control. Thus, managers should use methods such as providing consumers with networking platforms and using blogs, social media tools, and promotional tools to engage customers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

Correspondingly, 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 & Hainlein, 2010). There seems to be confusion among managers and academicians regarding how social media differ from the related concept of Web 2.0. Whereas Web 2.0 represents the ideological and technological foundation, social media differ in the degree of "social presence". Social presence theory (Short, Williams & Christie, 1976) defined the concept as audial, visual and physical contact between two related and communicated actors through which they can mutually influence and impact. In other words, social media depends on a group of internet-based applications such as Web 2.0, but it should be developed and managed with respect to its social dimensions.

Furthermore, social media is related to mobile and web-based technologies that individuals and communities use to share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. They introduce common, substantial and widespread changes to communication between groups of organizations as well as organizations and individuals (Kietzmann & Hermkens, 2011). Social media activities occur in a dialogic transmission system (i.e., many sources to many receivers). This is in contrast to traditional media that operates under a monologic transmission model (one source for many receivers) (Pavlik & MacIntoch, 2015).

The increased popularity of social networking sites, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, has opened opportunities for new business models for electronic commerce, often referred to as social commerce. Social commerce involves using Web 2.0 social media technologies and infrastructure to support online interactions and user contributions to assist in the acquisition of products and services. Social media technologies not only provide a new platform for entrepreneurs to innovate but also raise a variety of new issues for e-commerce researchers that require the development of new theories. This could become one of the most challenging research arenas in the coming decade.

2. TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Current Web search engines such as Google make extensive use of network structure in evaluating the quality and relevance of Web pages. To produce search results, these sites evaluate the prominence of a Web page based not simply on the number of links it receives but also on more subtle aspects of its position in the network. For example, a page can be viewed as more prominent if it receives links from pages that are themselves prominent; this is a circular type of notion in which prominence is defined in terms of itself, but we will see that this circularity can be resolved through careful definitions that are based on a type of equilibrium in the link structure.

Related Content

The Technological Foundations of Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs)
Azadeh Eskandarzadeh (2024). *Exploring Central Bank Digital Currencies: Concepts, Frameworks, Models, and Challenges (pp. 76-90).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-technological-foundations-of-central-bank-digital-currencies-cbdcs/341665

Electronic Invoice Presentment and Payment: Decision Whether to Offer an EIPP Service
David Wright (2007). *International Journal of Cases on Electronic Commerce (pp. 39-55).*
www.irma-international.org/article/electronic-invoice-presentment-payment/1523

The Moderating Effect of Individual Differences on the Acceptance and Use of Internet Banking: A Developing Country Perspective
Mazen El-Masri (2020). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations (pp. 95-116).*
www.irma-international.org/article/the-moderating-effect-of-individual-differences-on-the-acceptance-and-use-of-internet-banking/257197

Modified Importance-Performance Analysis of E-service Quality
Chu Luo, Lei Shenand Han Gao (2017). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations (pp. 84-95).*
www.irma-international.org/article/modified-importance-performance-analysis-of-e-service-quality/172806

Personalized Recommendation Based on Contextual Awareness and Tensor Decomposition
Zhenjiao Liu, Xinhua Wang, Tianlai Liand Lei Guo (2018). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations (pp. 39-51).*
www.irma-international.org/article/personalized-recommendation-based-on-contextual-awareness-and-tensor-decomposition/207298