Online Social Networking

Johanne Brochu

Definition

Online Social Networking is defined as web-based services that give individuals the possibility to create a public or semi-public profile and develop a list of other users with whom they share a connection and at the same time allow viewing other users within the system.

Explanation

In a desire to meet other people, to collect and share immediate information and experiences from various and rich topics and interests of day to day life, developing friendships or professional relations, looking for employment or business-to-business marketing, Online Social Networking websites have wisely developed to get together groups of users with similar interests. On most of them, users can

- view friends' lists and profiles of other users;

- leave comments or messages on friends' profiles;

- send private messages; and

- create content using diverse features (e.g., photo or video –sharing).

A diversity of online social networking sites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook) with different cultures roots (e.g., based on common language, nationality) have emerged on the Internet and have continued to gain in popularity. Some that carry different tools (e.g., mobile connectivity, blogging) are attracting a more diverse audience of people while others are captivating people based on simpler basic interest.

Development

The term 'social network' was first used by J. A. Barnes in 1954 to designate patterns of ties used by the community and some others used by social scientists. In 1997, SixDegrees.com, the first online social networking, was developed. It combined at first a few features, like creating profiles and list of friends, and later on it allowed people to seek friends' lists.

From 1997 to 2001, the face of computing and telecommunication has changed to add more personal interaction by developing the web-based social networking where individuals or organizations are connected with interdependency (e.g., Tribe.net, LinkedIn). The most significant ones have survived to this day while others, like Friendster, have decreased in popularity, or have disappeared. However, today, in 2010, the public display of connections is still an important component of this type of socialization.

Online Social Networking in Educational technology is indispensable for students as it is enforcing collaboration; it gives them more power to internalize knowledge. The sense of social presence is valuable in online learning; being able to interact with classmates and teachers is essential to students in this environment (e.g., discussion forum, chat room).

Interesting Facts

Online Social Networking has grown while traditional forms of online entertainment, like television, has declined. The visage of entertainment has changed; individuals now get entertained in connecting, developing content and communicating with one another in a non-traditional manner and can easily get caught up with this virtual world, forgetting life's privacy as the real world is watching.

See Also

Bibliography of Research on Social Network Sites

Online Social Networking - A MiniGuide Link Compilation

[What is Social Networking?](#)

Reference

Boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship.

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