## **FMB Report**

# Mainstream social media and how to set up your own social media network

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Social networking is defined as the grouping of individuals together into to specific groups, often like a small community or a neighborhood. Although social networking is possible in person, especially in schools or in the workplace, it is most popular online. This is because unlike most high schools, colleges, or workplaces, the Internet is filled with millions, if not more, of individuals who are looking to meet other Internet users and develop friendships.

Social networking websites are, in a way, like an online community of Internet users. Depending on the social networking website in question, many of these online community members share a common bond, whether that bond be hobbies, religion, or politics. Once you are granted access to a social networking website you can begin to socialize. This socialization may include reading the profiles or profile pages of other members or even contacting them.

The friends that you can make are just one of the many benefits to social networking online. Another one of those benefits includes diversity. Unlike in most schools or workplaces, the Internet gives individuals, from all around the world, access to social networking sties. This means that although you are in the United States, you could develop an online friendship with someone in Japan. Not only will you make a new friend, you but may also learn a thing or two about a new culture.

Since our earliest days of being able to use our computers to access bulletin board systems and chat, users have tended to cluster into communities of others who shared similar interests.

In November of 1994, David Bohnett founded GeoCities. David believed that by establishing a virtual community with neighborhood communities named after "high-profile destinations" the new community "could play host to Web users who were looking for a comfortable place to contribute their talents, meet others with similar interests, and create the electronic community

of the future. The first six communities were introduced in July 1995". By 1998, Geo Cities boasted 1.7 million members who had staked out virtual "homesteads" in 40 separate virtual neighborhoods.

Since those pioneering days of digital social networking communities, we have seen an explosion of a wide assortment of social communities that target virtually every conceivable area of interest or niche.

Data presented on the following page is from comSource World Metrix comparing the growth of selected Social Networking Communities from June of 2006 to June of 2007:

Worldwide Daily Visitation of Selected\* Social Networking Sites June 2007 vs. June 2006

Total Worldwide Home/Work Locations Among Internet Users Age 15+

Source: comScore World Metrix

|                        | Average Daily Visitors (000) |        |          |  |  |
|------------------------|------------------------------|--------|----------|--|--|
| Social Networking Site | Jun-06                       | Jun-07 | % Change |  |  |
| MySpace                | 16,764                       | 28,786 | 72       |  |  |
| Facebook               | 3,742                        | 14,917 | 299      |  |  |
| Hi5                    | 2,873                        | 4,727  | 65       |  |  |
| Friendster             | 3,037                        | 5,966  | 96       |  |  |
| Orkut                  | 5,488                        | 9,628  | 75       |  |  |
| Bebo                   | 1,188                        | 4,833  | 307      |  |  |
| Tagged                 | 202                          | 983    | 386      |  |  |

<sup>\*</sup>Sites selected from among those with at least 10 million visitors worldwide, 50% growth during the past year, and of particular significance to the North American region; future studies will focus on sites that are popular in other worldwide regions; the sites included do not constitute a ranking of the top social networking sites.

Even more revealing, is the data on the following comScore chart which displaying the average number of "Daily" visits that each of the selected Social Networking Sites experience: Worldwide Daily Visitation of Selected\* Social Networking Sites June 2007 vs. June 2006

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Depending upon your target audience, you will need to consider that different social networking communities seem to attract different community members from the global population pool.

The following chart of "unique visitors" to the selected Social Networking Sites is displayed with a breakdown into five "Worldwide Regions". The regions are: North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East-Africa and Asia Pacific:

Visitation to Selected\* Social Networking Sites by Worldwide Region June 2007

Total Worldwide Home/Work Locations Among Internet Users Age 15+

Source: comScore World Metrix

|                        | Share (%) of Unique Visitors |                  |                  |        |                           |                 |  |  |  |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--|--|
| Social Networking Site | Worldwide                    | North<br>America | Latin<br>America | Europe | Middle<br>East-<br>Africa | Asia<br>Pacific |  |  |  |
| MySpace                | 100.0%                       | 62.1%            | 3.8%             | 24.7%  | 1.3%                      | 8.1%            |  |  |  |
| Facebook               | 100.0%                       | 68.4%            | 2.0%             | 16.8%  | 5.7%                      | 7.1%            |  |  |  |
| Hi5                    | 100.0%                       | 15.3%            | 24.1%            | 31.0%  | 8.7%                      | 20.8%           |  |  |  |
| Friendster             | 100.0%                       | 7.7%             | 0.4%             | 2.5%   | 0.8%                      | 88.7%           |  |  |  |
| Orkut                  | 100.0%                       | 2.9%             | 48.9%            | 4.6%   | 0.6%                      | 43.0%           |  |  |  |
| Bebo                   | 100.0%                       | 21.8%            | 0.5%             | 62.5%  | 1.3%                      | 13.9%           |  |  |  |
| Tagged                 | 100.0%                       | 22.7%            | 14.6%            | 23.4%  | 10.0%                     | 29.2%           |  |  |  |

<sup>\*</sup>Sites selected from among those with at least 10 million visitors worldwide, 50% growth during the past year, and of particular significance to the North American region; future studies will focus on sites that are popular in other worldwide regions; the sites included do not constitute a ranking of the top social networking sites.

The A.C. Neilsen "NetRatings" have identified these 10 Social Networking sites to be the "Top 10" Social Networking Sites for August, 2007:

Table 1: Top 10 Social Networking Sites for August 2007 (U.S., Home and Work)

| 1  | Site                  | 1 | Aug-06<br>UA (000) | 1   | Aug-07<br>UA (000) | 1   | % Change | 1 |
|----|-----------------------|---|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|----------|---|
| i  | Myspace.com           | ì | 49,178             | î   | 60,327             | i   | 23%      | i |
| 1  | Facebook              | 1 | 8,852              | 1   | 19,173             | 1   | 117%     | 1 |
| 1  | Classmates Online     | 1 | 14,137             | 1   | 15,364             | 1   | 98       | 1 |
| 1  | Windows Live Spaces   | Ĩ | 8,203              | Ť   | 8,816              | Ť   | 7 %      | Ĭ |
| 1  | AOL Hometown          | Î | 9,077              | Ī   | 6,956              | Ī   | -23%     | Ī |
| Ĩ. | Reunion.com           | Î | 4,292              | Ĩ   | 4,469              | 1   | 4 %      | Ï |
| Ì  | LinkedIn              | Ĩ | 1,678              | Ĩ   | 4,410              | Ī   | 163%     | Ì |
| Ì  | Club Penguin          | I | 1,125              | 1   | 3,934              | 1   | 250%     | Ī |
| Ĭ. | Buzznet.com           | Ï | 766                | Ĩ   | 3,872              | Ĩ   | 405%     | Ì |
| ĺ  | AOL People Connection | Î | 6,025              | Ì   | 3,858              | Ì   | -36%     | ĺ |
| +  |                       | + |                    | -+- |                    | - + |          | + |

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

<u>eMedia</u> conducted a survey exploring current and potential future uses of Social Networking Sites and the results provide some interesting and potentially profitable insights:

| Friends            | 46% |
|--------------------|-----|
| Colleagues         | 24% |
| Anybody            | 11% |
| Other              | 8%  |
| Clients            | 4%  |
| Potential clients  | 4%  |
| Potential partners | 3%  |

| Q6. What is your main purpose for using social networking<br>Contacting old friends | 42% |
|---|-----|
| Reinforce existing friendships  | 25% |
| Other   | 16% |
| Business purposes   | 11% |
| Making new friends  | 5%  |

| Networking       | 65% |
|------------------|-----|
| Exchanging ideas | 58% |
| Getting Advice   | 44% |
| Recruitment      | 43% |
| Research         | 35% |
| Selling          | 31% |
| None             | 13% |
| Other            | 1%  |

#### **TOP 4 MAINSTREAM SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

#### 1. MySpace

There is a new way to increase your marketing and website traffic, MySpace has been around for a few years now and is a great way to advertise your website and business since it gets thousands of hits a day. MySpace has the potential to bring in hundreds of hits a day by running a simple ad.



When starting out on MySpace, you need to create a free account or MySpace page. To start, go to MySpace and click signup, fill out your information, then you will be prompted to log into MySpace. Once logged in, you will find out that you have a message from Tom who is the creator of MySpace. After reading his message go to edit profile and create a headline, you will then tell some about yourself or company, you can also talk about who

you want to meet, what Interest you have, such as what you like in music, movies, TV, books and who your heroes are.

Once this is done you can then preview your profile and if you like it hit Save or Edit to make any changes as needed. Once this is done you can add a photo of you, your company logo or a picture that represents you. You can also add videos, maintain a personal MySpace Calendar, start your own blog, and even create a MySpace address book. This is also a good time to join any groups or create one that is tailored around your company. As you find people that have the same interest as you, add them as friends, this will send out an invite to them and they can either deny or approve you. The more MySpace friends you have, the more hits you will generate.

If you want to make your MySpace page even more personal, you can go back into your profile and add html codes in them along with your information to create graphics for the page. There are hundreds of free MySpace templates and pictures you can add, and if you are involved in the media you can even pick songs to play when people view your page.

Now that you know how to tailor your MySpace page around your needs you can utilize the Marketing value hidden inside this huge network. The marketing advertisement in MySpace is a very real way to generate more traffic to your site as you can put a link to your in each part of your profile. You can also buy some advertisement on MySpace as well, and since the site is geared towards younger generations you have an unlimited supply of potential consumers. Teenagers who are some of the hardest consumers to reach seem to flock by the hundreds to MySpace. This is a very real necessity to getting the word out, as we all know Teenagers are tenacious when it comes to getting what they want.

When it comes to the marketing value of MySpace and those who are already using it, think of the now hundreds of Bands and high profile authors who use it to publish blogs about them and their products. The bands have realize that having even one of the songs on there can mean great things for their music career and the same can apply to anyone else as well.

Even if you do not think that your business would work out in MySpace, why not try it out and see. The set up is done in a matter

of minutes and then networking only involves a few clicks and a short blurb about you. This is relatively one of the easiest forms of marketing around, and unless you purchase ad space, it is free. The blogging on MySpace is worth the trouble to go through the process, and remember for every friend you get, each of their friends are your potential friends and then consumers or hits as well.

When it comes to any successful business great marketing strategies are a key factor and it doesn't matter if you are a Webmaster or in Internet Marketing using MySpace is a great free way to get some real hits. While the paid advertisement is decently priced as well.

#### 2. Facebook.com

Facebook is the most popular social media site on the planet with 40billion page views and over 50% of users returning every day. It recently passed Ebay as the most trafficked and CEO Mark Zuckerberg stated Google was their next target at his f8 keynote speech recently.

If you have any interest in maintaining an online presence at all, one of the places you should be spending some time is Facebook! At its most basic, this powerful website is a networking system. When you put your profile up, you encourage other people to browse it and see what you are about. Whether you're a musician or a writer or a freelancer coder, the benefits that Facebook can bring to you are limitless. Even better, this service is free, customizable, and simple to start- all you need is a connection to the Internet.



To get started on Facebook, all you need to do is go to the site itself and press the sign-up button. From there, you will be taken through a series of short questions that will create your page and after that, all you need to do is customize it. Don't worry if you don't have any experience with webpages; many of the changes that you might want to make with regards to background, pictures and layout are well-documented on the site itself.

Make sure that your page has a lot of content on it. A simple summary of what you do and a few pictures isn't going to attract someone who is used to the content-rich pages that can be found on Facebook. A lot of pictures on your page is a plus; not only do they give people browsing your profile something to look at, they'll also establish a connection between you and the viewer. Facebook is a good way to share things that interest you, so post videos, news stories, anything that might get other people's attention.

After your page has been set up, your next goal should be concentrated on getting traffic to it. Facebook, with its primary basis on social networking, is ideal for this sort of exposure. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the sheer scale of Facebook, start

small. Take a look around at some of the other profiles that have interests that match yours. Facebook is often called a viral network, where people pass things that interest them onto their friends and then their friends do the same thing. While this is one way to get started, it certainly isn't the end of it!

After you've established a small network, you will find that one of your strongest tools is the newsfeed. Unlike a newsfeed that presents you with national news, the Facebook newsfeed updates you on your friends' recent posts and activities. Whenever you take an action like write a post in the journaling area, or post a new picture, an item will pop up in the newsfeed to tell your friends. This will help keep people returning to your page as well as encourage people browsing your friends' page to browse yours as well.

To seriously promote a business on Facebook, you will want to consider services like fbExchange and Lookery, both of which promise traffic to their subscribers. In fbExchange, you get ads placed on your page and your ad will placed on other people's pages. This brings more traffic to your page and you are paid depending on how many people click on ads that are found on your own page. With Lookery, you can either make your page a place where they place ads or you can place ads with them. Unlike fbExchange, Lookery allows you to do one or the other. Lookery offers targeted marketing, that is, the ads that end up on your site will be relevant to the content of your site and the ads you create will be placed on similarly relevant sites. Videoegg deliver unique ads into any videoplayer or flash widget.

One utility that you might want to make use of is the Facebook Marketspace. Started in 2007, the Marketplace is essentially a series of classified ads. Post your own ad and see what comes up.

With Facebook Applications, a suite offered by Facebook, you can customize your page even more and take advantage of valuable tools to make this site work for you. Some applications will allow you to store and share files, while others encourage you to create your own channel, where people can come and listen, read or view the content your produce. Some of the applications available let you keep up with your favorite stars and political movements, while others will track your Netflix queue.

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