

Sharing academic and professional information through social media

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This class is primarily based on an excellent article by Soumitra Dutta – What’s Your Personal Social Media Strategy, Harvard Business Review, November 2010, pp. 127-130.

Goals for today

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

1. Recognize the value of social media for academic and professional information
 - a. Identify the role of social media for communicating who you are, engaging with others, and learning from others.
 - b. Evaluate the potential benefits and risks of social media.
2. (If you’re interested) Implement social media to share your academic and professional work
 - a. Identify a social media technology for sharing.
 - b. Consider ways of mitigating potential risks related to your professional image and your responsibilities for sharing information.
3. Consider the appropriate use of social media for academic and professional information
 - a. Use social media safely and effectively by developing personal guidelines and restrictions for the different spheres of your life (personal versus professional) and with your targeted audiences (private versus public).

Table 1. Social media technologies organized by purpose and type with examples (Source: Social Media in Wikipedia, 2010)

Communication	<p>Blogs: Blogger, ExpressionEngine, LiveJournal, Open Diary, TypePad, Vox, WordPress, Xanga</p> <p>Microblogging: FMyLife, Foursquare, Jaiku, Plurk, Posterous, Tumblr, Twitter, Qaiku, Yammer, Google Buzz</p> <p>Location-based social networks: Foursquare, Gowalla, Facebook places, The Hotlist</p> <p>Social networking: ASmallWorld,Cyworld, Facebook, Hi5, LinkedIn, MySpace, Orkut, Tagged, XING</p> <p>Events: Eventful, The Hotlist, Meetup.com, Upcoming</p> <p>Information Aggregators: Netvibes, Twine (website)</p> <p>Online Advocacy and Fundraising: Causes, Kickstarter</p>
Collaboration/ authority building	<p>Wikis: PBworks, Wetpaint, Wikia, Wikimedia</p> <p>Social bookmarking (or social tagging): CiteULike, Delicious, Diigo, Google Reader, StumbleUpon, folkd</p> <p>Social news: Digg, Mixx, NowPublic, Reddit, Newsvine, MyWeboo</p> <p>Social navigation: Trapster, Waze</p> <p>Content Management Systems: Wordpress</p> <p>Document Managing and Editing Tools: Google Docs, Syncplicity, Docs.com, Dropbox</p>
Multimedia sharing	<p>Photography and art sharing: deviantArt, Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa, SmugMug, Zoomr, BetweenCreation</p> <p>Video sharing: sevenload, Viddler, Vimeo, YouTube, Dailymotion, Metacafe, Nico Nico Douga, Openfilm, TubeMogul</p> <p>Livestreaming: Justin.tv, Livestream, OpenCU, Skype, Stickam, Ustream</p> <p>Music and audio sharing: ccMixter, Pandora Radio, Last.fm, MySpace Music, ReverbNation.com, ShareTheMusic, The Hype Machine</p> <p>Presentation sharing: scribd, SlideShare</p>
Reviews and opinions	<p>Product reviews: epinions.com, MouthShut.com</p> <p>Business reviews: Customer Lobby, Yelp, Inc.</p> <p>Community Q&A: Askville, EHow, Stack Exchange, WikiAnswers, Yahoo! Answers</p>
Entertainment	<p>Media and entertainment platforms: Cisco Eos</p> <p>Virtual worlds: Active Worlds, Forterra Systems, Second Life, The Sims Online</p> <p>Game sharing: Kongregate, Miniclip</p>
Brand monitoring	<p>Social media measurement: Attensity, Statsit, Sysomos, Vocus</p>

Table 2. Common social media technologies for sharing professional and academic information.

Social media technology	Definition**	Examples
Blogs	A type of website where authors post regular entries like commentary, description of events, multimedia, etc. Readers can leave comments. Blog entries can be delivered automatically to the reader via RSS reader. Example tool: Blogger, http://www.blogger.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake Forest News Center, http://newscenter.blogs.wfu.edu/ • ScienceBlogs, http://scienceblogs.com/ • Facebook Blog, http://blog.facebook.com/
Microblogs	Similar to a blog, but the entries are typically smaller in size. Typically consists of a short sentence, image, or video. Example tool: Twitter, http://twitter.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFULawSchool, http://twitter.com/WFULawSchool • deaconfootball, http://twitter.com/deaconfootball • pizzahut, http://twitter.com/pizzahut
Social networking	Online technology for maintaining social relationships. The classic example is Facebook. Example tool: LinkedIn, http://www.linkedin.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake Forest University, http://www.linkedin.com/companies/wake-forest-university • Wake Forest University Boston Area Alumni Network, http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=86871
Video sharing	Web sites where you can upload, share, and view videos. Example tool: YouTube, http://www.youtube.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake Forest University Channel, http://www.youtube.com/user/WFUniversity
Presentation and document sharing	Web sites where you can upload, share, and view presentation slides and other documents. Example tool: SlideShare, http://www.slideshare.net/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wake Forest University ITSM, http://www.slideshare.net/UniversityITSM

** definitions are paraphrased from Wikipedia (2010)

Recognize the value of social media for academic and professional information

Table 3. Potential benefits and risks of social media

The potential of social media for ...	Potential benefits of using social media	Potential risks of using social media
Communicating who you are	<p>A venue for showcasing your talent, work, ideas, etc.</p> <p>This may bring you recognition and help you forge collaborations with others.</p>	<p>Sharing personal information in a public venue may lead to misunderstandings, misuse of this information by others, and concerns about your professional image.</p>
Engaging with others	<p>A platform for discussion and forging connections and a sense of community with a range of audiences from personal to public and from local to international.</p> <p>You may cultivate a social network you can turn for assistance and feedback.</p>	<p>Your contacts may post information about you that you don't want shared.</p> <p>Spending too much time maintaining your social media may be a distraction from your professional and academic work.</p>
Learning from others	<p>Through quick and direct communication with large numbers of people, you can collect information, news, and recommendations in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Relying heavily on anecdotal information from your social network (e.g., others' personal opinions and perspectives) may introduce bias to the information you are exposed to.</p>

Considering the appropriate use of social media for academic and professional work

To maximize the potential of social media and minimize risks, Dutta (2010) suggests carefully planning your communication:

- between the different spheres of your life - personal versus professional
- between different target audiences - private versus public

	Personal sphere	Professional sphere
Private audience	<p>GROUP 1</p> <p>Sharing your <u>personal information</u> about hobbies, leisure activities, personal pursuits, etc.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sharing with <u>people you trust</u> like friends, family, close work colleagues, and the like.</p>	<p>GROUP 3</p> <p>Sharing your <u>professional information</u> like your work projects, your research, your writing, your work-related ideas, etc.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sharing with <u>people you trust</u> like friends, family, close work colleagues, and the like.</p>
Public audience	<p>GROUP 2</p> <p>Sharing your <u>personal information</u> about hobbies, leisure activities, personal pursuits, etc.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sharing with the <u>general public</u> like strangers, peers, casual colleagues, and the like.</p>	<p>GROUP 4</p> <p>Sharing your <u>professional information</u> like your work projects, your research, your writing, your work-related ideas, etc.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Sharing with the <u>general public</u> like strangers, peers, casual colleagues, and the like.</p>

For your assigned sphere and target audience, discuss:

- What are some types of information that people might want to share through social media?
- Are there certain topics to focus on?
- Are there certain topics to avoid sharing?

	Personal sphere	Professional sphere
Private audience	GROUP 1	GROUP 3
Public audience	GROUP 2	GROUP 4

Summary

1. Social media lets you communicate who you are, engage with others, and learn from others in an academic and professional capacity.
2. Take advantage of the potential benefits, but beware the risks.
3. If you choose to use social media technology for sharing your academic and professional work, address the potential risks related to your professional image and your responsibilities for sharing information.
4. Use social media safely and effectively by developing personal guidelines and restrictions for the different spheres of your life (personal versus professional) and with your targeted audiences (private versus public).

References

Dutta, Soumitra. 2010. What's Your Personal Social Media Strategy? Harvard Business Review. November 2010, pp.127-130.