

**Online Communication in the Digital Age**  
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**Lecture – 33**  
**Social Networking Sites**

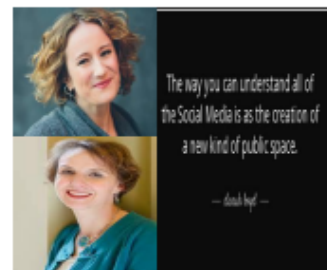
Good morning friends and welcome to this module. In the previous module, we had explored the definition of social media, its communicative attributes and its capacity to influence people globally. Social networking sites often abbreviated as SNS revolve around connecting individuals and fostering different forms of relationships within the realm of social media platforms. Today, we will discuss some of the widely recognized social media tools, also known as social networking sites. It is essential to recognize that while we often use social networking sites and social media interchangeably, there are certain distinctions. Social media platforms serve various purposes including content sharing, news dissemination, entertainment and more, whereas social networking sites are primarily intended for creating and nurturing social connections which can be utilized both personal and also perhaps occasionally professional networking.

### Social Network Sites (SNS)

- Danah Boyd and Nicole Ellison (2007), in their introduction to the special issue of a journal on social networks, define SNSs as: **Web-based services that allow individuals to-**

- (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system
- (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection
- (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

- Therefore, social networking sites enable individuals to establish new connections that serve as a space called 'networked public'.



Source: <https://www.cnet.com/news/privacy/author-danah-boyd-on-why-teens-and-social-media-are-complicated-podcast/>

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of computer-mediated Communication*, 13(1), 210-230.



Donna Boyd and Nicole Ellison have defined the social networking sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or a semi-public profile within a bounded system to articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and to view in transfers their list of connections and those made by others within the system. Therefore, social networking sites enable us to establish new connections that serve as a space called 'networked public'. Boyd had used the term networked public in her book on

network self where she connects the term in the context of social networking sites.

She says that networked public is similar to traditional public, but it is different in structure, which facilitates different ways of connecting, sharing, archiving and creating information and knowledge and therefore, our networks essence lies in discovering innovative avenues for connection and collaboration as individuals technology and practices intersect to form a collective bond. For example, authors can effortlessly form a collective connection by utilizing social networking sites to promote their books. It grants them full control over the message, its content and the platform for delivery all while reducing marketing expenses of their books.

• In his podcast "How to Promote Your Book on Twitter," author **Alexander Pennington** emphasizes that achieving effective connections with your target audience -- comprising writers, editors, and readers - can be best accomplished through two essential strategies: consistent tweeting and actively following relevant individuals.

• For example, A. L. Breggren, the author of psychological thriller series, *The Crying Minds*, uses voting strategy.

- It involves engaging her audience through polls.
- Also, she leverages the power of visual content by releasing promo videos of her books.

Source:  
[https://twitter.com/albreggren\\_/status/1658367548713230336](https://twitter.com/albreggren_/status/1658367548713230336)

Alexander Pennington in his podcast 'How to Promote Your Book on Twitter' emphasizes that achieving effective connections with your target audience that may comprise writers, editors and readers etcetera can be best accomplished through two essential strategies., consistent tweeting and actively following relevant individuals.

The example which is illustrated here is of A.L. Breggren, the author of the psychological thriller series *The Crying Minds*, who had also used a voting strategy to actively engage her audience through polls. She also leveraged the power of visual content by releasing promo videos of her book. Promotional videos capture the attention of potential readers and ignite curiosity.

By combining these strategies, interactive voting and compelling promo videos, Breggren maximized her chances of reaching a wider audience, engaging the existing ones and also creating a buzz around the psychological thriller series.

- **Social-networking sites (SNS)** can be classified into **three** primary categories. Examples of each type of social-networking site are provided in the figure.
- General social-networking sites, like **MySpace**, have social networking among friends as the primary focus. There are also several social network sites that are affiliated with major portals like **Yahoo! 360**.
- Because of their **portal affiliation**, they are typically separated from **general sites** for classification purposes. Lastly, there are **vertical social networks**.
- **Vertical social networks** differentiate themselves by emphasizing some common hobby, interest, or characteristic that draws members to the site.

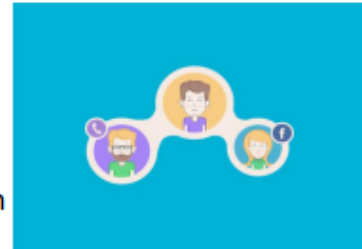
General	Portal affiliation	Vertical
MySpace	MSN Spaces	Dogster
Facebook	Yahoo! 360	Gather
Friendster	Orkut	Xanga

Source: Advertisement 2.0

Social networking sites can be classified into three primary categories. Examples of each type of social networking site are provided in the figure which is given on the right-hand side of the slide. General social networking sites like MySpace have social networking among friends as the primary focus. There are also several social network sites that are affiliated with major portals like Yahoo! 360. Because of their portal affiliation, they are typically separated from general sites for classification purposes. And we also have vertical social networks which differentiate themselves by emphasizing some common hobby or interest or characteristic that draws members to the site.

These vertical networks do not attract the traffic typical of general sites, but one might argue that members are more involved because of the common interest that had brought them initially to the site. Within this realm of vertical networks, sites exist for pet lovers or photography or soccer fans etc.

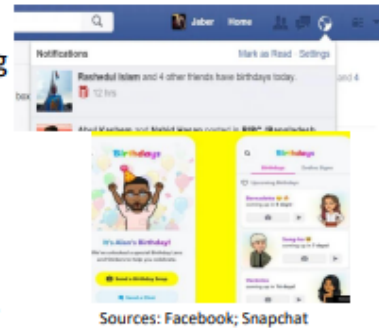
- Social network sites offer many forms of **dyadic interaction**, depending on the specific tool.
  - Many allow direct messages that can be sent privately from source to receiver.
  - Some allow a user to be personally acknowledged in an otherwise public post (i.e., **mass-personally**) to bring the otherwise broad message to the individual's attention (e.g., "**Happy birthday, @Willow!**").
  - Others allow private channels for users to communicate **synchronously**, either via text or audio-visually.



Source:  
<https://in.pinterest.com/pin/9499849194894140/>

Social networking sites offer many forms of dyadic interaction depending on the specific tool. Some allow direct message that can be sent privately from source to receiver. Some allow a user to be personally acknowledged in an otherwise public post to bring the otherwise broad message to the individual's attention. Others allow private channels for users to communicate synchronously either via text or audio visually. Although SNSs may be most visibly known for their more mass or mass personal interactions, the dyadic communication SNSs facilitate still serves important communicative functions.

- **Lightweight interaction** is one of the foremost communicative uses of social network sites, accounting for both a large portion of the messages sent and the value users experience from engaging in the sites.
- Tools like SNSs can help us cognitively offload some of that relational information:
  - For instance, we rely on a notification to remind us when it's someone's birthday or search someone's profile to remember their favorite restaurant when suggesting dinner later in the month.
- Several SNSs, from **Facebook** to **Snapchat**, allow to seek out new connections based on shared interests, from movies to music to hobbies.



One of the foremost communicative uses of social networking sites can be defined as lightweight interaction which accounts for both a larger portion of the messages sent and the value users experience from engaging in the site. Tools like SNSs can help us cognitively offload some of the relational information. For instance, we may rely on a notification to remind us of when it is somebody's birthday etc. Several SNSs from Facebook to Snapchat allow to seek out new connection based on shared interests from movies to music to any other type of hobbies. For last.fm users to truly develop friendships on the SNSs, they have to also simultaneously engage in communication across multiple channels.

Baym and Ledbetter (2009) in their 2009 study of last.fm users have found that simply sharing a common musical taste is not sufficient to foster sustained relational contact. There are many web services we use today which are SNSs including Instagram, Twitter and YouTube which utilize these guidelines and allow users to create a profile and make connections with others either through friending, following, subscribing etc. and also view other people's connections. Although Instagram, Twitter and YouTube may be the more top of mind SNSs, hundreds of others also exist.

The very concept of networking to create a collective bond is perhaps as old as humanity. Successful professionals, entrepreneurs and leaders have always nurtured suitable networks. What has changed now is the methodology of networking. Digital technology has molded people's expectations. The history of the social network dates back to the stone age when humans gathered around campfires, and it would be appropriate in this context to refer to Harold Innis here.

- Harold Innis was a prominent Canadian economist and communication theorist who made significant contributions to the understanding of communication and its impact on human civilizations.
- Innis introduced the concept of “media bias”, in his book *The Bias of Communication* (1999) highlighting that different forms of communication have varying abilities to preserve and transmit knowledge over time.
- He identified two primary types of media: **time-biased and space-biased.**
  - Time-biased media are those that emphasize and extend human perception across time. They encourage a slower, more reflective, and contemplative mode of engagement.



Source: Wikipedia



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The concepts of Harold Innis on the evolution of media and communication help us to understand their integration with socio-cultural developments. In the context of digital media, perhaps the most significant concept of Innis which is still highly relevant is this concept of media bias propounded in 1999 book, *The Bias of Communication*. It had highlighted different forms of communication having varying ability to preserve and transmit knowledge over time. He had identified two primary types of media, time biased and space biased. Time biased media are those that emphasize and extend human perception across time.

They encourage a slower, more reflective and a contemplative mode of engagement. Space biased media on the other hand emphasize and extend human perception across space.

- **Time-biased media**, such as stone carvings and hieroglyphics, are durable and long-lasting, but they have limited reach and accessibility.
- With their emphasis on tradition, they serve long-term memory, and cultural stability, and contribute to a sense of continuity and conservatism.
- **Space-biased media**, such as paper and electronic communication, have greater reach but are more prone to decay and obsolescence.
- However, with their emphasis on rapid dissemination of information, geographic expansion, and cultural change, they can promote a sense of innovation and progress.



Time biased media such as stone carvings etcetera are durable and long lasting, but they have limited reach and accessibility. But with their emphasis on tradition, they serve long term memory as well as cultural stability and contribute to a sense of a society's or a culture's continuity and conservatism. In comparison, space biased media such as paper and electronic and now digital communication have greater reach but are more prone to decay and obsolescence.

However, with their emphasis on rapid dissemination of information, geographic expansion and cultural change, they can promote a sense of innovation and progress. Innis provides a unique historical perspective. He linked different media with the rise, sustenance and decline of different cultures. His exploration of media biases highlights the intricate interplay between knowledge, power and the complex interrelationships which are crucial not only for the development, but also the survival of cultures. He analyzed how different forms of communication and connectivity always necessarily influence and shape human perceptions.

- The major set of milestones from 1978 to 1994 includes **CompuServe, AOL and Prodigy** network for creating groups.
- These three online services, each group discussions, played a critical role in originally affordable Internet services, and brought online conversations to the main-stream.
- Thus, history of social network can be linked to **chat rooms**.
- The online network in its primitive form appeared in 1995 with the site **classmate.com** to keep in touch with schoolmate and modern form took off with Friendster in 2002.
- The popularity of **Friendster.com** was that its users both grew to 3 million users. In 2003, Myspace.com and Friendster clone was launched.



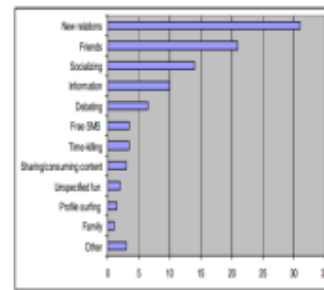
Source: Wikipedia



His ideas are highly relevant today also when we can reach people around the globe with a single click. In the context of digital communication, the major set of milestones between 1978 and 1994 include CompuServe, AOL and Prodigy network for creating groups. These three online services, each group discussions played a critical role in originally affordable internet services and brought online conversations to the mainstream media understanding of the people. So, we can say that the history of social networks can be linked to these chat rooms. The online network in its primitive form appeared in 1995 with the site Classmate.com to keep in touch with schoolmates and modern form took off with Friendster in 2002. The popularity of Friendster.com was that its users grew to 3 million users and in 2003 Myspace.com and Friendster clone were launched. To understand the motivations behind people's use of social networking sites, several studies have also been conducted and we would refer to one at this point.



- Petter Bae Brandtzæg and Jan Heim conducted a study on why people use social networking sites.
  - The study combined a large-scale quantitative and qualitative research design and involved asking 1,200 SNS users to have an open question about their reasons for using SNSs.
  - An important conclusion drawn from a preliminary content analysis is that people often report many motivational reasons for using SNSs.
    - The most important reason is to get in contact with new people (31%).
    - The second most valued was to keep in touch with their friends (21%), whereas the third was general socializing (14%).
- As shown in Figure, a total of 12 categories were identified, reflecting the most important reasons for using an SNS.



Source: Online Communities and Social Computing

This study is by Peter Bae Brandtzaeg and Jan Heim. Their study combined a large scale quantitative and qualitative design and involved asking 1200 SNS users to have an open question about their reasons for using this facility. The study was on -why people use social networking sites. One of the important conclusions they drew from a preliminary content analysis was that people often report many motivational reasons simultaneously for using a particular SNS service. The most important reason which was cited by 31 percent of the respondents was to get in contact with new people.

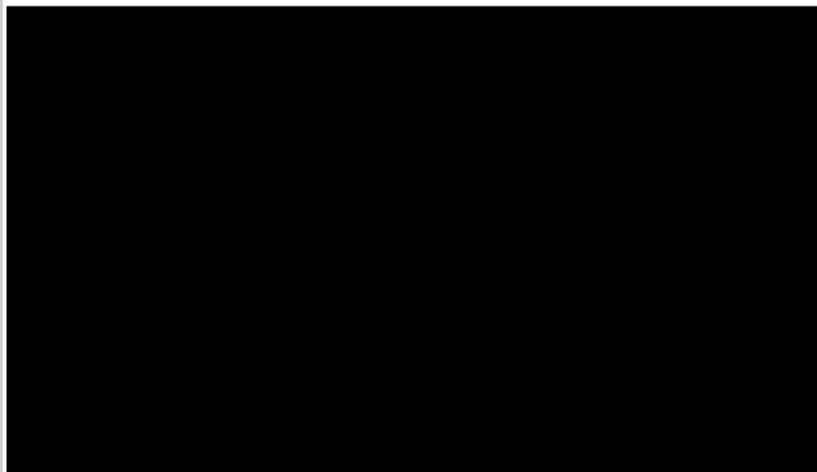
21 percent of the people said that they wanted to keep in touch with their friends whereas 14 percent said that it was meant for general socializing. As shown in this figure, a total of 12 categories were also identified reflecting the most important reasons for using a particular SNS. Though the number of participants was 1200, it was found that these 1200 participants reported more than 1500 reasons indicating that several participants had more than one single reason to start a conversation. In the context of social networks and human behavior, we should perhaps also refer to Nicholas A. Christakis, the man who has extensive knowledge on genetic evolution and the nature of networking.

- Nicholas A. Christakis is a Greek-American sociologist and physician known for his research on social networks and on the socioeconomic, biosocial, and evolutionary determinants of human welfare.
- His current work focuses on how human biology and health are affected by social interactions and social networks.
- Christakis has been elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and has been named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by **Time magazine**.
- In 2009, Christakis' group began to study the evolutionary biology and genetics of social networks, publishing in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* a finding that social network position may be partially heritable, and specifically that an increase in twins' shared genetic material corresponds to differences in their social networks.



Sources:  
<https://magazine.hms.harvard.edu/articles/isolation-social-media>; AZ Quotes

Christakis' current work focuses on how human biology and health affect and are affected by social interactions and social networks, and he has studied them in the context of digital communication. Let us look at a small section of a TED talk lecture by Nicholas Christakis where he has talked about networking as a social capital meant for adding value to one's social life.



Source: TEDTalk. (2010, May 10). Nicholas Christakis: The Hidden Influence of Social Networking. [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U-10gh>

Maybe the fundamental causes of human social networks are somehow encoded in our genes, because human social networks whenever they are mapped always kind of look like this, the picture of the network, but they never look like this. Why do they not look like this?

Why don't we form human social networks that look like a regular lattice? Well, the striking patterns of human social networks, their ubiquity and their apparent purpose beg questions about whether we evolved to have human social networks in the first place and whether we evolved to form networks with a particular structure. And so notice first of all, so to understand this though we need to dissect network structure a little bit first and notice that every person in this network has exactly the same structural location as every other person, but that's not the case with real networks.

So for example, here is a real network of college students at an elite northeastern university and now I'm highlighting a few dots and if you look here at the dots compare node B in the upper left to node D in the far right and B has four friends coming out from him and D has six friends coming out from him and so those two individuals have different numbers of friends, that's very obvious, we all know that. But certain other aspects of social network structure are not so obvious, compare node B in the upper left to node A in the lower left and now those people both have four friends, but A's friends all know each other, and B's friends do not. So, the friend of a friend of A's is back again a friend of A's, whereas the friend of a friend of B's is not a friend of B's is farther away in the network. This is known as transitivity in networks. And finally compare nodes C and D.

C and D both have six friends. If you talk to them, they would say, and you said, what is your social life like? They would say, I've got six friends, that's my social experience. But now we with a bird's eye view looking at this network can see that they occupy very different social worlds, and I can cultivate that intuition in you by just asking you, who would you rather be if a deadly germ was spreading through the network? Would you rather be C or D? You'd rather be D on the edge of the network. And now who would you rather be if a juicy piece of gossip, not about you, was spreading through the network? Now you would rather be C. So different structural locations have different implications for your life. And in fact, when we did some experiments looking at this what we found is that 46% of the variation in how many friends you have is explained by your genes.

And this is not surprising. We know some people are born shy and some are born gregarious. That's obvious. But we also found some non-obvious things. For instance, 47% in the variation in whether your friends know each other is attributable to your genes. Whether your friends know each other has not just to do with their genes but with yours.

And we think this is the reason for this is that some people like to introduce their friends to each other, you know who you are, and others of you keep them apart and don't introduce your friends to each other. And so, some people knit together the networks around them creating a kind of dense web of ties in which they're comfortably embedded. And finally, we even found that 30% of the variation in whether or not people are in the middle or on the edge of the network can also be attributed to their genes. So, whether you find yourself in the middle or on the edge is also partially heritable. Now what is the point of this? How does this help us understand? How does this help us figure out some of the problems that are

affecting us these days? Well, the argument I'd like to make is that networks have value.

They are a kind of social capital. New properties emerge because of our embeddedness in social networks and these properties in here in the structure of the networks, not just in the individuals within them. So, think about these two common objects. They're both made of carbon. And yet one of them has carbon atoms in it that are arranged in one particular way on the left and you get graphite which is soft and dark. But if you take the same carbon atoms and interconnect them a different way you get diamond which is clear and hard.

And those properties of softness and hardness and darkness and clearness do not reside in the carbon atoms. They reside in the interconnections between the carbon atoms or at least arise because of the interconnections between the carbon atoms. So similarly, the pattern of connections among people confers upon people, the groups of people different properties. It is the ties between people that make the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

He thinks that our genetic evolution has shaped patterns of networking among humans particularly in the realm of human relationships which exhibit transitivity networks. These networks reflect our innate tendencies to form connections and relationships with one another. The structure of the social network is also essential. It is through the interconnectedness amongst people that valuable relationships can be sustained. Let us discuss some of the most used SNSs which are important for building and sustaining new connections for our personal as well as professional networking. The very first platform Facebook is best known for building personal connections.

Facebook exhibits characteristics of a transitivity network. The presence of transitivity in Facebook relationships contributes to its dynamics and the ways information and influence propagates through its platform. Facebook is basically an American online social networking service having its headquarters in California. Access to it is free of charge and the company earns most of its money from the advertisements on its website.

## Facebook



Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites in the world, with over 2.8 billion monthly active users by 2021.



Founded on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Facebook is primarily owned by its author Mark Zuckerberg with Microsoft owning a 1.6% stake after it paid \$240 million.



In October 2021, at the annual Connect conference, Zuckerberg announced the changing of the company's name from Facebook to Meta to reflect its growing focus on the metaverse.



Other services that are part of Meta Platforms are Instagram, a photo- and video-sharing social network; Messenger, an instant-messaging application; and WhatsApp, a text-message and VoIP service.



Source: Inquirer.com

By 2021 Facebook had over 2.8 billion monthly active users. Founded on 4th February 2004, it is primarily owned by its author Mark Zuckerberg with Microsoft owning a 1.6 percent stake after it paid 240 million dollars. At the annual connect conference in 2021, Zuckerberg announced the changing of the company's name from Facebook to meta to reflect its growing focus on the metaverse. Other services that are part of meta platforms are Instagram, a photo and video sharing social network, Messenger, an instant messaging application and WhatsApp, a text message and VoIP service.

- Recently, Mark Zuckerberg announced **Threads**, a new app built by the Instagram team, focused on sharing text-based content.
- Threads offers a separate space for real-time updates and public conversations, catering to both creators and casual posters.
- Meta is promoting its new social networking platform, “say more” with Threads, as a compelling pitch for users to express themselves in greater detail.
- Additionally, Forbes, a renowned business magazine, has referred to this platform as the potential "**Twitter Killer**" from Facebook's portfolio.



Source:  
<https://about.fb.com/news/2023/07/introducing-threads-new-app-text-sharing/>

Only recently Zuckerberg has announced Threads, a new app built by the Instagram team, and it is focused on sharing text-based content. Threads offers a separate space for real time updates in public conversations catering to both creators and casual posters. Meta is promoting its new social networking platform ‘Say More’ with Threads as a compelling page for users to express themselves in greater detail. Additionally, Forbes, a renowned business magazine has referred to this platform as a potential Twitter killer from Facebook's portfolio. Its diverse features cater to different needs and interests making it a versatile social media platform with a vast user's base.

## ▪ Facebook features include:

- ✓ “The Wall” – a space where messages can be posted on each other’s profile page.
- ✓ “Status” – Information can be given to friends on the current actions or whereabouts of the user
- ✓ “News Feeds” – where Facebook can announce changes to its site like upcoming events, profile changes, and birthdays related to friends
- ✓ “Photo” application – users can load photos for their friends to see, share, and like.



Source: Wikipedia

- Through creating personal profiles, Facebook approves users to connect with friends and family while sharing various types of content such as text posts, photos, videos and links.
- Users can engage with content through likes, comments, and shares, **fostering interaction, and communication** within their network.



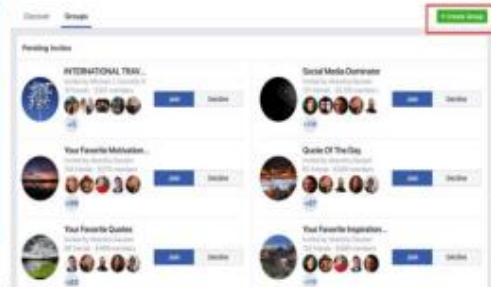
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Facebook features include the wall, status, news feed, photo applications, etcetera. Applications with which I think all of us are pretty well familiar and users as we know can connect by liking a message, by commenting on it, by sharing, fostering interaction and communication within their network. What makes Facebook a great place for professional networking is its wide reach. Through creating personal profiles Facebook approve users to connect with friends and family while sharing various types of content such as text posts, photos, videos and links. Users can engage with content through likes, comments and shares, etcetera within this network.

But the platform also offers features such as groups events, enabling users to join communities, organize events and follow public figures, organizations or businesses.

**Facebook groups** are often common-identity groups, as group members associate around a common interest (e.g., alma mater, travel) or identity (e.g., fandom, political affiliation, graduating class year) rather than the relationships with other group members.

Shared interest (e.g., travel, motivational quotations) or affiliation (e.g., association members, fans of the same book or movie series), but without necessarily seeking to develop **interpersonal connections** among group members.



Source: Facebook

Facebook groups are often common identity groups as group members associate around a common interest rather than the relationships with other group members. Shared interest or affiliation but without necessarily seeking to develop interpersonal connections among group members is a significant feature of it. The algorithms and features of Facebook such as friend suggestions and mutual connections can introduce us to new people we may not have otherwise encountered and thus expanding our social networks further. In terms of professional networking Facebook provides an avenue where a user can contact anybody on it without going through near inaccessible layers created by social and official hierarchies.



- In terms of professional networking, Facebook provides an avenue where a user can contact anybody on it without going through near-inaccessible layers created by public relations professionals and personal secretaries.
  - For example, one can search for the specific executives on Facebook’s search engine and send them a message requesting an interview. Many would reply.
- It is for these reasons that Epstein (2009) says it’s a mistake to dismiss professional networking possibilities on Facebook.
- Facebook has also become a platform for education and learning, with groups and pages devoted to specific topics or fields of study.
  - For example, Edutopia, Wikipedia, Ted, codeacademy, etc. are the pages that share ideas, new innovations, and help others to learn.



Source: learnfromblogs.com



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It is for this reason that we cannot dismiss the possibilities of professional networking through the use of Facebook. It has also become a platform for education and learning with groups and pages devoted to specific topics and fields of studies. Some of them are also listed below on this slide. Also, we find that Facebook has become an important tool for social activism and advocacies with groups and pages dedicated to various causes and issues. It also offers products and services including the Facebook marketplace, Facebook watch and Facebook gaming.

Marketers can use Facebook to run successful campaigns, engage with the audience and analyze the outcome of their efforts. Facebook is a place you go to find people you know, but there is another social networking site LinkedIn which is a place you go to find people you do not know. While this is not literally true it also points to the fundamental difference between LinkedIn and the other popular social networking platforms. They all involve networking, but the behavior expected on the LinkedIn platform is somehow more professional than social. This slide displays certain professional assessments of LinkedIn.

## LinkedIn for Professional Networking



Haydn Shaughnessy (2012) calls LinkedIn a **'networker's paradise'** as LinkedIn offers everyone virtually free and limitless opportunities to connect with professionals globally.



Erin Binns (2013) has titled her advice to young lawyers in the following words: **'LinkedIn® or Locked out'** as not being part of LinkedIn may therefore lock one out of many opportunities for professional growth, including finding the right employer at the right time.



***LinkedIn for Personal Branding: The Ultimate Guide*** (2016) by Sandra Long is a comprehensive resource that focuses on utilizing LinkedIn to build and enhance one's personal brand.



Source: Wikipedia



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Haydn Shaughnessy has called it a networker's paradise. Erin Binns has titled her advice to young lawyers by saying that LinkedIn or locked out as not being a part of LinkedIn perhaps may result in losing certain professional opportunities. *LinkedIn for personal branding*, the ultimate guide, a book by Sandra Long is a comprehensive resource that focuses on utilizing LinkedIn to build and enhance one's personal brand. LinkedIn also provides a formula for success if I may say so to grow enhance and expand businesses and professional networks for every person in every profession. Its strength is that it helps its members start with professionals they know well and are connected, which is the first-degree contacts and through them get connected to their network that is the second-degree contact and through them connect with more professionals in their network which is the third-degree contacts.

LinkedIn is not a charity, but a business for profit. It makes money from the profiles that millions of professionals upload voluntarily.

## What does LinkedIn do with Your Profile?

- LinkedIn's business model is built on the congruence of the interests of subscribers who want to be noticed and buyers of the information they volunteer.
- **Nupur Anand** (2013) reports in the newspaper DNA (Daily News Analysis) that for an annual fee of INR 250,000, a recruiter can get full access to all the profiles uploaded from India.
- LinkedIn makes it easy for members to endorse others on the network for skills and expertise.
- A recruiter who buys **Talent Solutions** can also communicate with the owners of the profiles through LinkedIn's InMail.



Source: <https://www.dnaindia.com/>



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The business model of LinkedIn is built on the congruence of the interests of subscribers who want to be noticed and buyers of the information they volunteer. In 2013, Nupur Anand has reported in the newspaper DNA that is daily news analysis that for an annual fee of 2 like 50,000 Indian rupees, a recruiter can get full access to all the profiles uploaded from India. LinkedIn makes it easy for members to endorse others on the network for skills and expertise. A recruiter who buys talent solutions can also communicate with the owners of the profiles through LinkedIn's InMail.

LinkedIn also creates an ecosystem that promotes professional growth through group discussions and debates. One of the biggest attractions of it is an ever-growing set of short articles by globally recognized leaders from different spheres. Influencers like Bill Gates, Richard Brinson and Barack Obama as well as several others have often shared their views on life leadership and success on LinkedIn platforms.

## Strategies for Effective Networking via LinkedIn

### ▪ **Professionally Attractive Profile:**

- To maximize your professional presence on LinkedIn, provide a comprehensive overview of your expertise, experience, and achievements; while offering glimpses of your personality
  - Utilize LinkedIn's added features, such as uploading videos, images, or documents, to provide a deeper understanding of your expertise to recruiters



Source: The Social Media Butterfly

- **Enhance Discoverability:** When crafting a LinkedIn profile, it is important to include achievements that would be of interest to fellow professionals:

- Use of appropriate keywords and latest skill sets

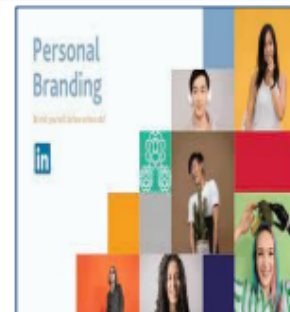


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So, what should be the strategies for effective networking via LinkedIn? To maximize our professional presence on LinkedIn, we must provide a comprehensive overview of our expertise, experience and achievements while also offering glimpses of our personality. We should also enhance discoverability. While crafting a LinkedIn profile, it is important to include achievements that might interest fellow professionals. It can be done with the use of appropriate keywords and latest skill sets and it would enhance the discoverability of a particular person. However, one should avoid tried cliches and overuse buzzwords as they can make the profile appear rather non-specific. Additionally, obtaining a customized URL can also enhance our visibility.

### ▪ **Building Strategic Connections:**

- To expand your professional network and foster growth, **identify** influential individuals who can contribute to your career development, even if they are not part of your immediate connections
- **Utilize** social media platforms to follow and engage with industry leaders, commenting on their articles and offering valuable insights
- Additionally, it is advisable to **reconnect** with individuals from past, sharing updates on life and work to re-establish connections



Source: Microsoft Designer

### ▪ **Develop Brand 'YOU':**

- Ensure that your LinkedIn profile accurately portrays your strengths and abilities, whether you are a professional manager, student, or entrepreneur



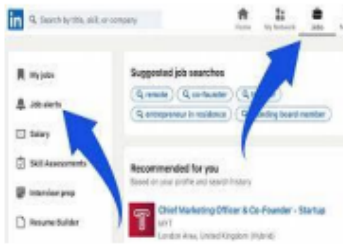
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In order to build the strategic connections through LinkedIn, the keywords are identified, utilize and reconnect. We should identify influential individuals who can contribute to our career development even if they are not part of our immediate connections. We should utilize social media platforms to follow and engage with industry leaders commenting on their articles and offering valuable insights and feedback frequently. Additionally, it is also advisable to reconnect with individuals from the past sharing updates on life and work so that these connections remain live. These strategies would help us to develop the brand 'you' to ensure that our LinkedIn profile accurately portrays the strengths and abilities whether we are a professional manager, student or entrepreneur. It is also advisable that one should avoid creating a false impression by exaggeration etcetera as it always big fires.


Additionally, we can think of optimizing our profile for mobile viewing to make a strong and impressive impact on recruiters or other viewers, irrespective of the device they normally prefer or use to access it.

## How to Do a Job Search on LinkedIn

- Before applying for a job on LinkedIn, it is important to ensure that the profile is complete, including endorsements and recommendations.
- Consider indicating **'In Transition'** in the job title section.
- Utilize the advanced search option on the LinkedIn 'Jobs' tab to customize the job search by specifying job titles, keywords, company names, industries, job functions, geographical area, and more.
- Also, take advantage of the LinkedIn 'Jobs' tab's features, such as email alerts for companies of interest, saving job details, and viewing the number of applicants.



Source: LinkedIn


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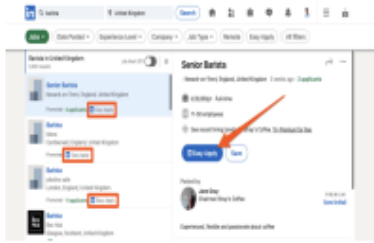
This slide describes certain tips to do a job search on LinkedIn. Before applying for a job on it, it is important to ensure that the profile we want to post is complete. It includes endorsements and also recommendations. The job title section may perhaps indicate in transition. We can also utilize the advanced search option on the LinkedIn jobs tab to customize a job search by specifying job titles, keywords, company names, industries, job functions, geographical area and many more things. We should also utilize different features of the LinkedIn jobs tabs features such as email alerts from companies of interest, saving job details and viewing the number of applicants etcetera. One should also ensure to edit the profile to match the job requirements. It is recommended that one should always apply with a tailor-made covering letter. We can also search for companies in our expertise area under the interests tab following companies, but also keeping our job search activities private by

adjusting our privacy settings.

It also provides a list of other jobs viewed by individuals who looked at the same type of job that offers additional job opportunities for consideration for any applicant.

## How to apply for a Job on LinkedIn

- When viewing a job listing on LinkedIn, individuals can access details such as the job description, desired skills and experience, and company information. The page presents the following options:
  - ✓ Apply Now
  - ✓ Save Job
  - ✓ View Saved jobs
  - ✓ Share Job: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter
  - ✓ Follow company
- The platform also facilitates networking by informing users if they are connected to someone working at the company, allowing them to request a referral.
- It is advisable to personalize referral requests rather than relying solely on LinkedIn's provided template.



Source: LinkedIn

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When we look at a job listing on LinkedIn, we access details such as job description, desired skills experience etcetera, and the page presents certain options which are listed below. It is advisable among other things to personalize referral requests rather than relying solely on the provided template of the LinkedIn. LinkedIn suggests similar jobs to make the job searching process easier and provides the option of jobs alerts. The latest LinkedIn update has made chat GPT an invaluable resource for job seekers providing personalized job search options, opportunities exploration, company research, resume and cover letter improvements, LinkedIn profile optimization and interview preparation.

Uploading a video resume on your LinkedIn profile is a great way to catch the attention of recruiters. Let us look at a sample video resume here that can be a reference point when creating your own.



## LinkedIn Video Resume: Stand Out from the Crowd

Source: Lucas Harris. (2016, March 19). Video Resume - Front End Web Developer - Laura Harris [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KahfDwhfCq8>



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Hi, my name is Laura Harris, and I am a front-end web developer. I am looking for a job and instead of just sending out the usual cover letter resume, I am making this quick video so that you can more easily learn a little about me because we all know what happens to a lot of cover letter resumes.

So let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am from a tiny town called Franklin, North Carolina which is right here. For the last few years I have lived in Greenville, South Carolina over here. In November 2015 I graduated from the Iron Yard. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Iron Yard program, you can click here to learn about the training we provide.

My focus was on front end development where I learned all of these skills here. I love what I have learned, and I am excited about what I have been working on since. I have been creating custom web layouts, navigations, and smooth user experience designs. While at the same time increasing my knowledge in Photoshop, CSS frameworks, and JavaScript libraries. As a recent graduate from Iron Yard, I am an excellent candidate for a company or team looking to capitalize on what I currently know and mold me into what they specifically mean. I am always up for a challenge, and I am looking for a place where I can continue to grow and learn. You can check out my portfolio here or you can contact me directly here. Thank you for your time. I'd love to hear from you. Hopefully we'll be working together soon.

In this video, the applicant begins by introducing herself, her name and current job position, and she also clearly states her objective for making the video that is to find a job as a web developer. Then she shares a bit about her background, education, and the skills and also highlights her personality strengths.

The video concludes with her presenting her portfolio and providing her contact details. Video resumes offer a unique and attention-grabbing format, leaving a memorable impression on recruiters as well as other viewers. We have more control in video resumes over the narrative and we can also easily showcase our personality and communication skills. Video resumes also make the recruitment process less intimidating and often they empower candidates to feel confident and well prepared for interviews. As a social media platform, Microsoft-owned LinkedIn was launched in 2009 in India and since then it has grown remarkably.

## LinkedIn's Growth in India and its Implications

- In February 2023, LinkedIn announced that its registered members in India had surpassed 100 million, solidifying India's position as the second-largest user base after the United States.
- The focus of the platform from a user point of view is to create respectful communities and improve accessibility.
- Keeping the same in mind, says **Ajay Datta**, head of product, LinkedIn India, 'In December 2021, we launched LinkedIn in Hindi. The idea is to make the platform more approachable and improve user experience.'\*



\*<https://www.forbesindia.com/article/take-one-big-story-of-the-day/there-are-100-million-indians-on-linkedin-heres-how-the-microsoftowned-platform-cracked-the-india-growth-story/83459/1>

Source: Forbes

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In February 2023, the registered members in India had surpassed 100 million, solidifying India's position as the second largest user base after the US. Keeping it in mind, LinkedIn also launched LinkedIn in Hindi in December 2021. The idea is to make the platform more approachable and improve the user experience. The platform is available in 26 languages globally, but the inclusion of Hindi was a massive investment in the Indian market.



- The implications of these developments for professionals in India are twofold:
  - First, having a LinkedIn profile has become crucial for professional growth and accessing job opportunities in India.
    - Professionals in IT services, computer software, and financial services are expected to maintain a LinkedIn presence, as many job openings in these fields are no longer advertised elsewhere.
  - Second, Operating within the Indian borders, when using the LinkedIn platform, individuals inevitably become global players, resulting in increased competition, and also better opportunities.



Source: Fortune India

The implications of these developments for professionals in India are twofold. First, having a LinkedIn profile has now become crucial for professional growth and accessing job opportunities in India. Secondly, operating within the Indian borders while using the LinkedIn platform, individuals become global players necessarily and it results in increased competition and also simultaneously having many better opportunities.

## Conclusion

- In conclusion, social networking sites have brought about a transformative shift in the way we communicate and connect with others on a global level.
- As these platforms continue to shape the way we interact, collaborate, and build relationships in online platforms, it also nurtures our participatory instincts while bridging our offline social networking skills.
- Moreover, It includes not only Social networking sites, but also other forms of online communication, such as blogging and micro-blogging platforms, video-sharing platforms, and photo-sharing platforms.

In conclusion, we can say that social networking sites have brought about a transformative shift in the way we communicate and connect with others on a global level. As these platforms continue to shape the way we interact, collaborate and build relationships in online platforms, it also nurtures our participatory instincts while bridging our offline social networking skills. It includes not only social networking sites, but also other forms of online communication such as blogging and microblogging platforms, video sharing platforms and photo sharing platforms.

Today, we have discussed the role and significance of social networking sites for professional growth using digital communication. In the next module, we will discuss blogging and microblogging with reference to some social networking sites and their impact on our digital lives. Thank you.