

History and Impact of social media

1.1.2 Describe the history and impact of social media

When did it first start? Why?

- The origins of social media stretch much farther back than most can guess. It's always been natural for humans to want to build relationships through communication, but when circumstances would eliminate face-to-face as an option many didn't know what to do.



Some background...

- We started with handwritten letters, taking forever to get anywhere.
- 1792 we made the telegraph, taking the first step towards closing the gap of long-distance communication.
- 1876 the telephone hit the scene making communications from afar more personal with voice.
- 1992 The first SMS text message is sent, kicking off one of the most well known, and frequently used forms of communication we know today

Why do we care so far?

- I know I know, “why the hell do we care about a lame clicking machine and the earliest phones? We’re supposed to be seeing the history and impact of social media!” Well, like I said social media’s origins date much farther back than we expect. The telegraph, telephone and texting were the beginning baby-steps of the Twitters and Snapchats that we know today. But let’s check out some more mature steps, shall we?



Six Degrees, 1997



- The first social media site that everyone can agree actually was social media was a website called Six Degrees. It was named after the ‘six degrees of separation’ theory and lasted from 1997 to 2001. Six Degrees allowed users to create a profile and then friend other users. Six Degrees even allowed those who didn’t register as users to confirm friendships and connected quite a few people this way.

MySpace, 2003



-
- Although the younger generation of today might not know about it, back in the early 2000's the website MySpace was the popular place to set up a profile and make friends. MySpace was the original social media profile website, leading into and inspiring websites like Facebook.
 - But even though MySpace has a very small user base today compared to Facebook and Twitter, there are musicians who have used MySpace to promote their music and even be heard by record producers and other artists. Colbie Caillat is an example.

LinkedIn, 2003



-
- Another website that was one of the beginning social media websites was LinkedIn, still a social media website today, geared specifically towards professionals who want to network with each other.
 - In fact, most of the social media websites we have today are similar to LinkedIn, in that they are specifically about one particular thing, or they have some kind of unique quality that has made them popular. While MySpace was a general social media site, LinkedIn was, and is still is, meant for professional businesspeople to connect with each other to network, find jobs and socialize.

Facebook, 2005



-
- In 2004, Mark Zuckerberg launched what would soon become the social media giant that would set the bar for all other social media services. Facebook is the number one social media website today and it currently boasts over a billion users.
 - However, back in 2004, Facebook (TheFacebook.com then) was launched just for Harvard students. Zuckerberg saw the potential and released the service to the world at the website facebook.com.

Twitter, 2006

- In 2006, the popularity of text messaging or SMS inspired Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone, Noah Glass and Evan Williams to create Twitter, a service that had the unique distinction of allowing users to send “tweets” of 140 characters or less. Today, Twitter has over 500 million users.





A few miscellaneous ones, late 2000's



-
- Before long, there were dozens of other websites providing social media services of some kind. Flickr was one of the earliest and still is one of the most popular photo sharing sites, but others include Photobucket and Instagram, with Instagram gaining popularity today as one of the top social media sites to include on business cards and other media.
 - Tumblr, a microblogging website started in 2007 by David Karp and now owned by Yahoo, is one of the sites that could be seen sprouting up in the late 2000s. Foursquare was quite a popular website for a while, particularly with smartphones being used so extensively, and then there is Pinterest, Spotify, and many others. Some of the most popular social media platforms in the late 2000's included: Google Buzz, Loopt, Blippy, and Groupon.

Impacts and Changes

- One of the things that started happening right in this time period is that social media not only became widely used, it also became widespread in business.
- Websites were starting to list their social media addresses, businesses would include Facebook and Twitter addresses on their television commercials and many tools were being built to include social media on websites – for example: WordPress plugins that would allow users to include not only links to their social media websites, but also to include their latest social media posts directly on their websites.
- Social media icons were seen everywhere and it became almost unusual to see businesses or brands without them.

Pros+Cons

- Businesses and Brands can spread their popularity around
- Bands and musicians can be discovered easier
- News and information can be released to the public faster
- Private information could be unintentionally leaked or released unto the public
- Could inspire unsocial or obsessive habits if not treated with respect

Video



resources

- <https://smallbiztrends.com/2013/05/the-complete-history-of-social-media-infographic.html>
- <http://www.deirdrebreakenridge.com/social-media-definition-in-a-cloud/>
- <http://historycooperative.org/the-history-of-social-media/>