Social Media Society

Social Media Society has been getting growing from the start of online chat, and then came the social media platforms. Imagine a world without Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat or Instagram. Quite difficult, isn't it? These online services have such a huge influence in our culture today that it is hard to picture how our lives would be without them. Social media has impacted society tremendously over the years and has shaped and expanded the way we go through living our daily lives. Now in our modern era, there is almost nowhere you can go in the U.S. that does not promote the use of these online services. It plays a huge role in how we interact, communicate, learn, and receive and send information. It is almost like social media now controls us. Our entire society would be completely different if social media had not begun to be one of the main parts of our everchanging world.

The first idea that you think about when it comes to social media is the major "social" part. You think of how you use it to communicate with friends, family, and even some strangers. Social media allows us to stay in contact with these people and stay in the loop with what's happening with each other without physically being there to experience it with them. We share our personal lives. We share our identity to our family and to the public. Our thoughts and opinions, our past and our future, our likes and dislikes. All of this can be found with just a few keystrokes. Scary, isn't it? To some people, it's not. We've become careless on what we share on the internet we don't think about how it might affect us in the long run.

This, meaning, our "online identity" is easily found if someone so desired to find it unless you pay attention to what you're sharing on the internet. An online identity if a person's presence on a social media service. This relates to social media profiles, which is the set of information provided to friends, contacts, and the public (*Computer Concepts 309*). This is the downside of being "social" on social media. Since we are so used to the daily routine of sharing our lives, not a lot of people think about where this information is going and who has access to it. Not all sites are 100% secure and not all information is deleted even if you think it is. This is worrisome and causes the possibility of extremely negative effects. Being hacked, being stalked, having your identity stolen in general. We put all this information online and expect everything to be secure, but it's not.

So why do people put all this information online for all to see? Well, a major part of this is to keep one's "online reputation" maintained. As active members of society, online reputations seem to be the most significant concern when it comes to an individual on social media. An online reputation is the impression that is generated by an online persona (*Computer Concepts 349*). A person's online reputation frequently affects real life. Good reputations can lead to great job opportunities and collaborations with important people that can change your life. A bad reputation can limit your possibilities and have negative consequences. Therefore, people care so much about their online presence. They want to make a good impression to people online and offline because it affects their personal life greatly.

WHY PEOPLE SHARE INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

84% To support a cause or issues they feel strongly about

94% Share to pass valuable information. 49% of these respondents influence action about products by sharing.

68% Use social sharing to build image and demonstrate who they are and what they stand for.

78% To interact, grow, get a sense of fulfillment, nurture relationships and stay in touch with others.

69% To participate and feel involved in things happening in the world.

simp_learn

Gaitho, Maryanne. "What Is the Real Impact of Social Media ?" Simplilearn.com.

Alongside a person's online reputation, businesses also have to worry about their reputation online. Social media is an extremely fast way for businesses to grow and reach several audiences. They use sites like Facebook and Twitter to promote their work to easily inform customers about their services and creations. You will see that major companies have their own social media pages on Facebook and Twitter to inform their consumers on what's happening with their corporation. Having customers "Like" and "Follow" their pages is heavily important because it allows the brands to have more loyal followers. Whether it be updates on new inventions or just to interact with customers and see how they are responding to their products, staying in touch with customers is very important for a business. These interactions and feedback from consumers allow businesses to better understand how they're doing and adjust their products and strategies if needed (*Ta, Jenny*).

A lot of businesses nowadays take advantage of advertisements to grow their companies. With "cookies" companies can now look at analytics and form a target audience because of ads that appear at random through other sites. Businesses pay websites to advertise their company and that is how a lot of costumers become interested in what the business has to offer. There are even some websites who will not allow you to see their content unless you have ads enabled on your device. Even if the customer is not entirely interested in the end, these businesses still make money from the ads that are posted and clicked on. Some even gain revenue from a person simply viewing an advertisement video for a few seconds.
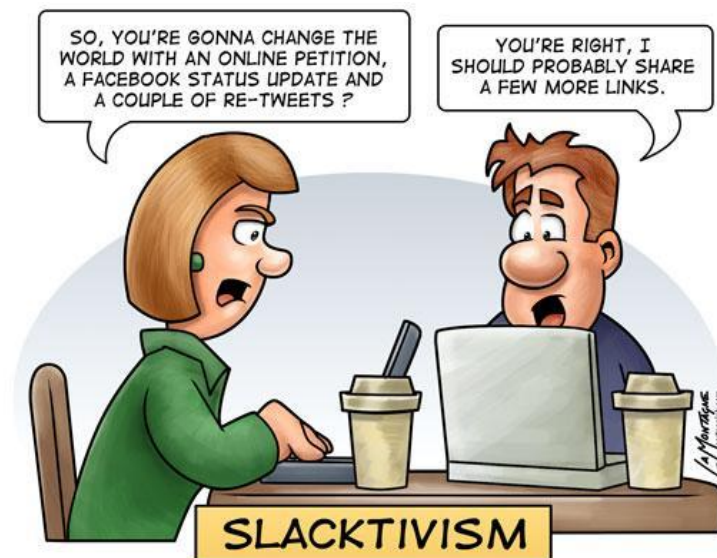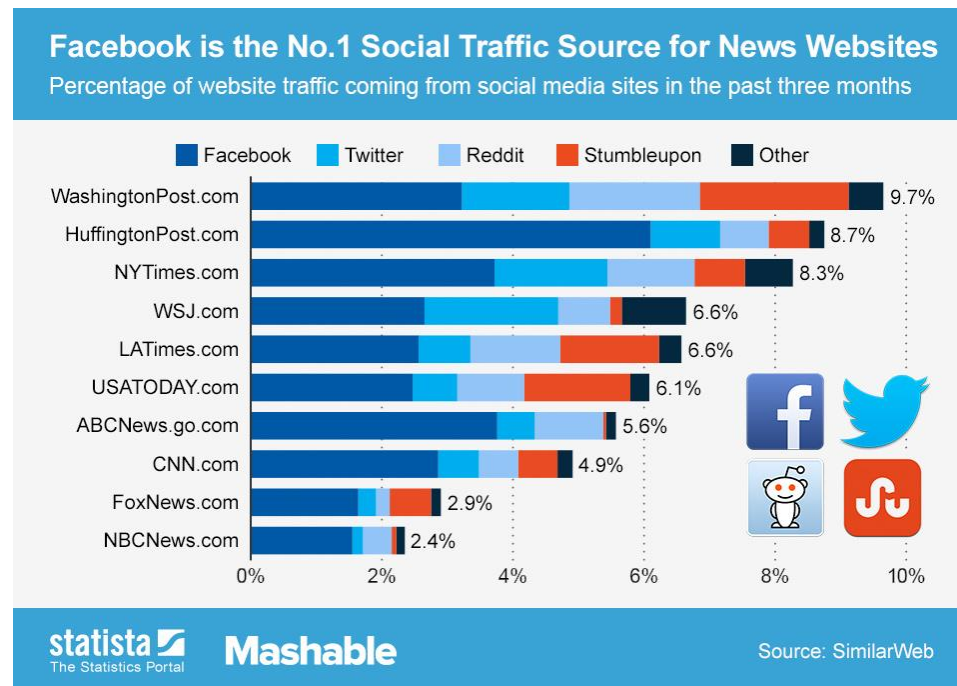
With video, it's easy for a company to make a short ad to capture people's attention. They can easily get an edge by making a short, fun, and creative video to get the customer interested in their products. The social media platform YouTube is a good example of this. YouTube has

advertisements playing before and during videos of very short clips to try to capture an audiences appeal. If regular advertisement videos do not work, another way companies use social media to promote their products are through handing out sponsorships on YouTube. Since YouTube creators are becoming more and more popular nowadays, companies will pay certain creators to promote their product for them. Then, people get the idea that if their favorite YouTuber is using a certain product, then they should too. Companies use these "internet celebrities" more and more to promote their services with ease through a fun way for viewers.

The last critical idea that people must understand about social media is how news information is now shared throughout online media services. Currently, a lot of people now use social media sites to learn about current events in the news. People turn to these company's online news rather than news on cable TV nowadays. The problem with this is that since social media is fast and growing, a lot of false information can be spread to people who view these articles. Big time news corporations like Fox News are more worried about gathering information quickly and being the first to cover a story rather than getting reliable facts about the situation. Even if a situation is proven false, these companies do not bother to remove the misleading information that they have provided to their viewers. "News organizations, whether big or small these days… They care more about getting clicks to their site rather than actually portraying factual information." (*qtd. Defranco, Phillip*). Actions like these can lead to big controversies in society. Some people may have obtained the real information and some people may have obtained the false. When news organizations fail to update audiences and

extremely big stories, there is often debates and disagreements amongst the people who turn to social media for news.

Facebook is the No.1 Social Traffic Source for News Websites
Percentage of website traffic coming from social media sites in the past three months

Legend: Facebook | Twitter | Reddit | Stumbleupon | Other

Website	Percentage
WashingtonPost.com	9.7%
HuffingtonPost.com	8.7%
NYTimes.com	8.3%
WSJ.com	6.6%
LATimes.com	6.6%
USATODAY.com	6.1%
ABCNews.go.com	5.6%
CNN.com	4.9%
FoxNews.com	2.9%
NBCNews.com	2.4%

statista The Statistics Portal   Mashable   Source: SimilarWeb

Richter, Felix. "Infographic: Facebook Is the No.1 Social Traffic Source for News Websites."Statista Infographics.

The influence of fake news relies completely on where you are getting your information from. A lot of people now even use Facebook as their main source of news. It is because it's easy and more convenient for users. The main problem with that is when random organizations use "clickbait" titles to capture a reader's attention and draw them in. Facebook is a good example of how people are taking advantage of this. The headlines of these usually consist of titles that start with "You will NEVER believe…" to get the reader to click the page to see what the rest of the title consists of. The more clicks they get, the higher up they will be shown in your news

feed (*Lu, Jiaxi*). Clickbaiting is a major problem because it provides even more false or skewed information to viewers just to be on top and gain revenue. They are just there to lure a reader in even when the information shown after clicking is slim to none and full of more ads.

All things considered, social media holds a great significance in our world today. It has both negative and positive effects on us that we can no longer prevent because of the advancements of business and technology. Fortunately, social media helps us keep in touch with friends and family – a positive. On the other hand, social media can have a critical effect on us and our lives. We have to be careful what we share, post, and receive. We must take into consideration all sides of the stories that may or may not be true. Preventing things like this may be difficult, but just taking into consideration how information is shared and how you share things about yourself can make a big difference. Social media now dominates our society and it is a major element on what makes our world how it is today.

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