

Personal and Professional use of social media

Mihaela-Mădălina Boată

Abstract: *As human beings, our instinct is to socialize. Our human needs are about belonging, interacting and sharing attention. Over the years, technological evolution has made it possible to have a global meeting in one place, the online environment. Just as real life we choose the way we must talk to people around us, to be formal or less formal. According to Oxford Dictionaries, the meaning of formal is to be done in accordance with some specific communication rules and etiquettes, so that to be suitable for an official moment. On the other side, informal interaction means more familiarity in an unofficial framework.*

Keywords: *online environment, online interaction, social media*

1. Introduction

Social media has become a society itself embracing various communities. It is increasingly present in social context. Social media performs multiple functions ranging from informing, to convincing the public, to build social relationships between its members. The features of social media tools respond to user audience requirements. So, the condition for a social networking tool to be effective is knowing the

internet users` interests and needs. Many social media tools are used to promote and influence decisions. Thus, digital marketing was born. People are consumers of all kind of social media products. Whether we are talking about informative genres, such as *Wikipedia*, *Answers.com*, whether online rating: *TripAdvisor*, *Zagat*, *Google places* or the most commonly used-multimedia platforms: *YouTube*, *Instagram*, *Facebook* etc. All these social media tools influence the way people live.

The research was conducted in stages. In the theoretical part, we talked about virtual world and social networks, but also ways of managing online and offline identities. A second step was to analyse the current situation. We have analysed what users think about social media platforms. We have highlighted issues such as: the most used platforms, how many active social media accounts, personal or professional preference in the online environment, time spent etc.

2. Methodology

In order to achieve the study objects, we have selected the following research methods: the questionnaire we applied to the 82 respondents. By applying the questionnaire, we proposed to find out which are the social media tools preferred by the users, also the most used social media platforms and, at the same time, what are the reasons why users prefer to create accounts on certain social media platforms instead of any others. After that, I compared using the content analysis, two social media tools belonging to different domains, the both being used by the users for professional and personal purposes. We have objectives such as: to identify the similarities and differences between the two platforms, how they work and the benefits and opportunities through using these two platforms: *Facebook* and *LinkedIn*. In the end of the research we applied individual interview to a person activating in the digital marketing field and we highlighted the main social media tools used in online promotion and the impact of these tools in the professional and personal environment.

3. Results and discussion

The aim of this study is to observe the degree and the way social media tools are used in personal and professional activities and, the purpose for which these platforms are used. The result of the research will be illustrated in the following fragments

As a research method the questionnaire collects a series of written questions and and/or graphic images. Thus, by applying the questionnaire we have obtained more relevant results. The most popular social media tools that respondents have an active account are those used for personal purposes. The main reasons for users to choose these online social tools are to create and maintain links with close friends and family. Navigating on social media platforms takes place in leisure time, work hours, at school or even during meals.

Specific aspects of the content analysis method are objectivity, systematic and quantitative nature. The working tool is the content analysis grid which has the role of encoding the information to be submitted to the expertise. So, as a result of applying content analysis to the both platforms, *Facebook and LinkedIn*, we have concluded the following: referring to the categories of constituent elements, between the two platforms there are a lot of similarities regarding to profile management, media and social impact, interface interaction and other users communication, just as the table found in annexes.

Profile management on *LinkedIn* and *Facebook* is guided by similar principles in terms of provided information and confidentiality of created profiles. The difference is that the information required to create a LinkedIn profile is of course primarily professional and less personal information.

I have pointed out the possibilities of interaction with the other users and especially of establishing a connection between them. From this point of view, there are two differences between the less formal platform, *Facebook* and the official one, *LinkedIn*. I am talking about the impossibility of establishing video or audio connections, or reviewing the links created with the rest of the subscribers in the *LinkedIn* platform.

On the other hand, *LinkedIn* offers to its subscribers the opportunity to recommend and get recommendations. In other words, it gives people the opportunity to generate feedback about other people regarding to their professional interactions. In this way, offering this single option *LinkedIn* meets twice the users` needs. They have the possibility to provide reviews and above all, to promote those who they chose to recommend.

Since *Facebook* and *LinkedIn* are both online social media platforms, the social impact and the media are important issues to be studied. *LinkedIn* provides users *online learning* tool that we do not find on *Facebook*.

The functionality and role of using the both platforms are important issues in content analysis. In my research study, following the application of the questionnaire, it was the Internet's tendency to move to social media tools belonging to the personal sphere. In this way, by establishing so many similarities between the two platforms, *LinkedIn* and *Facebook*, we have set out some basic instructions necessary for the effective use of the *LinkedIn Professional Platform*.

Below is the synthetic presentation of my findings:

Analysed elements		Social media platforms	
Categories	Subcategories	<i>Facebook</i>	<i>LinkedIn</i>
Personal profile management	Updating profile data in other users` new stream	✓	✓
	Check profile views	✓	✓
	How many users have searched for your own profile	✗	✓

	Multiple profile types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Private profile ➤ Public person profile ➤ Company profile 	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
	Information required to complete the profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Name ➤ Mail address ➤ Phone number ➤ Password ➤ Birth date ➤ Hometown ➤ Relationship status ➤ Sex ➤ Studies ➤ Recommendations ➤ Professional Experience 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X ✓ X X X	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓
	Chronology	✓	✓
	<i>About</i> section	✓	✓
	Confidentiality control	✓	✓
Other users' communication	Audio calls	✓	X
	Video calls	✓	X
	Chat	✓	✓
	Audience settings	✓	✓
	People you may know	✓	✓
	Import contacts	✓	✓

	Request/Delete/Block contacts	✓	✓
	Groups	✓	✓
	Reacting: ➤ Buttons	✓ ➤ Like ➤ Love ➤ Haha ➤ Wow ➤ Sad ➤ Angry	✓ ➤ Like ➤ Celebrate ➤ Love ➤ Helpfull ➤ Curious
	➤ Write comments	✓	✓
Interface interaction	Platforms using instructions	✓	✓
	Types of file that can be posted: ➤ Text ➤ Images ➤ Audio ➤ Video	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
	<i>Follow</i> option	✓	✓
	Recommendations	✗	✓
	Simultaneous message transmission	✓	✓
	Smartphone application available	✓	✓
	Notifications settings	✓	✓
	Android/IOS operating system communication	✓	✓

	Other applications communication (e.g.: <i>google maps</i> , event planner)	✓	✓
Social/ media impact	Developing promotions	✓	✓
	Events	✓	✓
	Post adds	✓	✓
	<i>Locations</i> function	✓	✓
	<i>Questions</i> option	✓	✓
	<i>Online learning</i> option	✗	✓

As I stated from the beginning of the paper, in the research part I used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Of the qualitative ones, I chose the individual interview. The interview was applied to a marketing and sales specialist. In the online marketing field, tools are chosen according to several criteria. Some of these criteria are: the promotion level, message to be sent, and kind of public we are addressing to, the budget, the time allocated. The real beauty of online promotion also comes from allowing internet users to react and interact in real time.

4. Conclusions

Social networks are already integral part of our lives. Through them, the internet has come to mean a social adventure of inter-human relationships. We all have been brought to the same point globally.

Social networks become more and more sophisticated and require to the users to pay more and more attention using these social media tools. Online has grown and now social media has roles and functions professionally and personally. In the online environment,

information is transmitted in real time. Social media tools have social and cultural functions, entertainment and business functions alike.

The online environment is easy to handle, versatile and transparent. Thinking of hypothetical situations where a message might be misunderstood, it could be easily rectified, and such situations can be clarified. So, because they are accessible and easy to use social media tools are gaining ground and their marketing utility will become more and more important.

Many people use their personal profile to sign up for professional platforms even if they do not work in the digital market field. The new generations are already informed about the multitude of social media tools. The online space is accessible to everyone, but the way it is understood and used is the decision of each of us.

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