

Athens Institute for Education and Research

ATINER



ATINER's Conference Paper Series

MED2012-0163

**College Students' Use of Social
Media: Site Preferences, Uses and
Gratifications Theory Revisited**

**Bellarmino Ezumah, PhD
Assistant Professor
Murray State University
USA**

Athens Institute for Education and Research
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209
Email: info@atiner.gr URL: www.atiner.gr
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm

Printed in Athens, Greece by the Athens Institute for Education and Research.
All rights reserved. Reproduction is allowed for non-commercial purposes if the
source is fully acknowledged.

ISSN 2241-2891

12/09/2012

An Introduction to ATINER's Conference Paper Series

ATINER started to publish this conference papers series in 2012. It includes only the papers submitted for publication after they were presented at one of the conferences organized by our Institute every year. The papers published in the series have not been refereed and are published as they were submitted by the author. The series serves two purposes. First, we want to disseminate the information as fast as possible. Second, by doing so, the authors can receive comments useful to revise their papers before they are considered for publication in one of ATINER's books, following our standard procedures of a blind review.

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos
President
Athens Institute for Education and Research

This paper should be cited as follows:

Ezumah, B. (2012) "**College Students' Use of Social Media: Site Preferences, Uses and Gratifications Theory Revisited**" Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: MED2012-0163.

College Students' Use of Social Media: Site Preferences, Uses and Gratifications Theory Revisited

Bellarmino Ezumah, PhD
Assistant Professor
Murray State University
USA

Abstract

The Pew Research Center (2011) data indicate that 66% of online adults use one form of social media or another and the majority of users are young adults. With the ubiquity of computer-mediated communication, it is becoming increasingly difficult to choose which medium or content to employ in gratifying whatever use or need that people seek at each point in time. This paper, applying the uses and gratifications theory and combining newer technologies functions of interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity, tests the gratifications college students between the ages of 18 and 28 years seek in their use of four social media networks – MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. It also investigates participants' preferred network site among the selected four sites and factors that influence such choices.

Keeping in touch with friends emerged as the highest use for SMNSs with the affirmation of 97.9% of participants. Other top uses include sharing photos (80.7%), keeping in touch with family (79.3%), reconnecting with old friends (72.6%) and for entertainment (70.9%). Facebook emerged as the preferred site followed by Twitter. While some participants still maintain their MySpace account, they depicted this site as archaic and the usage rate is either once in a long while or non-existent. LinkedIn is the least popular site as 32% of participants are oblivious of its existence. Overall, ease of use and potential for eclectic tasks qualities that garnered Facebook the most preferred social networking site. Another pertinent result from this study is that the hours college students spend on SMNSs tripled over the last decade due to the portable means of accessing these site – their iPods, iPads, and mobile phones. Additionally, the phenomenon of cellular phone providers offering a bundle service of talk, text, creates a seamless access to these sites.

Keywords: Social Media Networks, Uses and Gratifications, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn.

Contact Information of Corresponding author:

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary communications studies are more and more examining the audience as active participants who consciously choose what media and media contents to use with the intention of serving specific needs. Presently, a great number of mass media research focus on what we do with media which in essence contradicts earlier mass society, direct effects, and even limited effects' what-media-do-to-us approaches. At the center of this active audience paradigm is the Uses and Gratifications theory (Katz & Blumler, 1974) which postulates that people put specific media content and medium to specific use in the hopes of having some needs gratified. The trend of emergent technologies comprise three major components, content creation, content sharing, and interactivity which are the attributes shared by social media, a phenomenon that dominates most of adult persons' lives. The Pew Research Center (2011) data indicates that 66% of online adults use one form of social media or another. The study also found that social networking sites prove an appealing way for various gratifications including - staying in touch with current friends, staying in touch with family members, connecting with old friends, connecting with others who share similar hobbies and interests, making new friends, reading comments by celebrities, athletes or politicians, finding potential romantic or dating partners.

With the ubiquity of computer-mediated communication, it is becoming increasingly difficult to choose which medium or content to employ in gratifying whatever use or need that people seek at each point in time. In August 2010, TM.Biz an online resource for trademark owners listed 4,000 active social networking sites worldwide. In addition to the obvious need of creating and maintaining social ties, social media networks have provided avenues for employees to maintain an active voice in the workplace by openly sharing their views. Such practice was neither encouraged nor attempted in the past (Miles & Muuka, 2011). Similarly, these sites also help users to create and maintain community (Ulusu, 2010), construct social identities (Salimkhan, Manago, & Greenfield, 2010) and many other functions.

This paper, applying the uses and gratifications theory and combining newer technologies functions of interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity, tests the gratifications college students seek in their use of four social networks – MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn and compared it to previous studies. Moreover, investigates participants' preferred network site among the selected four sites and determines factors that influence such decision or choice.

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK

Defining social media networking sites is difficult especially since all Web 2.0 technologies seem to share similar traits of interactivity, user-generated content, content sharing and data upload and download. boyd and Ellison (2008), in their groundbreaking research, proffered some universal traits inherent in social media. They include "(1) construct a public or semi-public

profile within bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site” (p. 211). In addition to sharing the above traits, social networking sites vary in so many other ways. As a result, users flock to some while others are abandoned to be rebranded, still others remain dormant. Essentially, SMNs are predominantly for making social connections. But some, like LinkedIn, are intended strictly for business and professional purposes. Others though, can serve multi-purposes of socialization, learning, activism, content creation and sharing and maintaining filial and casual relationships as in Facebook and the earlier version of MySpace. Additional purposes include updating personal information and activities and maintaining a one-way parasocial relationship, as in Twitter.

For purposes of this discussion, the term social media networks, social media networking sites and social media network sites will be used interchangeably. The author however, acknowledges previous discourse on the subject of overlooking the nuances inherent in the technicality of each term when used in their strictest sense. Beer (2008) observed the intricacies of boyd and Ellison’s (2007) usage of the terms. However, the social media phenomenon over the years has metamorphosed into a seamless mesh whereby their purposes include both relationship initiation in terms of strangers and relationship maintenance in the case of family and friends, sharing of information via text, video, audio, picture; learning, and a plethora of other uses. The focus of this discussion however, are on the usage that college students employ the SMNs and what factors compel them to choose one or more forms of this media over others.

Earlier social media networks included SixDegrees.com, Friendster, and many others. When SixDegrees.com debuted in 1997, registered users inputted contact information of friends, family members and acquaintances so that invitations would be sent to them to join the network. The idea for this site was derived from the six degrees of separation concept which holds that essentially every human being on the face of the earth can be connected to another by approximately a chain of six degrees or levels. Due to this concept of connectivity, one could only join through an invitation by another person who is already a user of the network. Sixdegrees.com basically allowed users to share information and post messages through a bulletin board. Several shortcomings plagued the site. First, it was unable to provide much activity for friends, family members and acquaintances after they were connected to one another other than posting information on bulletin boards. Second, during its time, people had not developed the confidence and interest of meeting strangers online. Third, the Web 2.0 technologies that currently allow users to generate and share content as well as download and upload information seamlessly were not easily accessible (boyd and Ellison, 2008). Above all, the idea of infusing advertising with online activities was at its infancy. Therefore, SixDegrees.com closed in 2000, giving way to newer networking sites such as Friendster (2002), MySpace (2003), LinkedIn (2003), Facebook (2004), Twitter (2006), and a plethora of others that burgeon so frequently that it is almost impossible for one to utilize all available social media networks.

Among the four SMNSs of focus for this study, LinkedIn was among the oldest, albeit still very unpopular among younger generations. LinkedIn is a strictly professional site that focuses on business and professional relationships. Its mission statement attests a commitment to “connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful” (LinkedIn, 2012). Its creators, Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Jean-Luc Vaillant, Eric Ly, and Konstantin Guericke had a vision of providing an online forum for a better professional networking.

MySpace’s founder, Tom Anderson, capitalized on a rumor that Friendster network (social networking sites that helped people maintain their offline relationship online and provided a dating forum as well) might be asking for a fee and Andersen lured Friendster users to this new site with an offer for free membership. At the same time, the Indie-rock bands from Los Angeles was expelled from Friendster for violation of some regulation and MySpace extended a welcoming hand to them as well and they found their new home on MySpace site (boyd & Ellison, 2008; Newman, 2008). Certain features such as the ability to build one’s front page and profile, advertising, a forum for interaction between bands and their fans, and complying to user-demands especially requests for personalizing pages including background designs, and uploading information links, were great advantages for MySpace (boyd & Ellison, 2008). MySpace reached its peak in popularity when it attracted News Corp. to pay \$580 million in 2005 for its acquisition (BusinessWeek, 2005). Ironically, as soon as News Corp. acquired MySpace (which was considered the summit of its existence), the site met a downward spiral in terms of popularity, revenue, and membership due to incidences of sexual predators and abusers. This was a serious issue that compelled Connecticut Attorney General, Richard Blumenthal to call for a more stringent control and regulations on MySpace (Oser, 2006).

Facebook, on the other hand, had a humble beginning from the Harvard University campus. The founders, Harvard students Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, Chris Hughes, and Eduardo Saverin (Facebook, 2012) had developed the network exclusively for Harvard Students but it gradually permeated to other universities around the Boston area and beyond allowing only people with a university e-mail address ending with (.edu) to join. Facebook broke the record of SMNs membership on July 21st 2010 when it announced its 500 millionth member (Wauters, 2010). By the end of December 2011, Facebook documented 845 million monthly active users and to date, it is available in more than 70 languages (Facebook.com). Its mission statement says that Facebook exists “to make the world more open and connected” (Facebook.com).

The simplest way of explaining the Twitter network would be an online version of text-messaging with the capability of sending the same message to several thousand people all at once. Twitter was invented in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, and Biz Stone as a faster means of staying in touch (Beaumont, 2008 as cited in Sauerbier, 2010). Twitter’s unique feature is the concept of 140 words and characters limit. Twitter was initially utilized for a journalistic effort, serving as an outlet for breaking a news story; but celebrities later popularized it by using it to tweet events of their daily lives. Also, the

Austin Texas' South by SouthWest (SXSW) festival made Twitter even more prominent (Sauerbier, 2010).

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON COLLEGE STUDENTS USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF SMNSs

Since the conception of, and subsequent recognition of active-audience and their uses of media and fulfillment derived from media and media contents, a plethora of studies have been conducted in this field. However, considering that young adults between the ages of 18 and 28 years use the SMNSs the most (Pew Research Center, 2011), there is a paucity of studies that focus on college students' use of SMNSs and gratifications derived from it. As such, this section reviews only the most current studies and specifically on college students' (ages 18-28 years) social media network usage and gratifications derived thereby. Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) investigated the impact of social media networks on college students in light of the characteristics of students that use the networking sites, why they use them, and the uses and gratifications they derive from using these sites. Another study by Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2010) identified the dimensions of uses and gratifications from friend networking sites among college students. A somewhat similar study in this realm examined the formation and maintenance of social capital among undergraduate students (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007) but did not zoom in on the uses and gratifications per se.

The current study attempts to fill certain gaps. Since the Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) and Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2010) studies reviewed only two networking sites, Facebook and MySpace, the current study furthers knowledge by expanding the research to incorporate the four most popular social media networking sites among college students: Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn to ascertain whether they are still popular among college students. Additionally, considering the concept of demassification that avails users a wide range of choices; there is always a need to choose. With the four networks in questions which are considered the most popular among college students (Martin, 2010), there is still a need for one to choose which site or sites to utilize. Therefore, this study seeks to ascertain those factors that influence college students' choice or preference of one form of social media over others. Finally, this study will extrapolate college student's uses of social media networking sites by comparing the current participants responses with the uses derived from previous studies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The 1940s decade ushered in a divergent perspective of studying the effects and the manner by which media and media contents are used. Herta Herzog and other scholars such as Paul Lazarsfeld and Frank Stanton are considered the pioneers of this trend of thought in media research (Baran & Davis, 2012). Although the term Uses and Gratifications theory as it is used today was the

work of Katz & Blumler, 1974), it has since passed through different major developmental stages. Newer technologies have advanced the methodological application of this theory and provided ground for it to be applied. Baran and Davis (2012) identified that earlier researchers predominantly used the survey methods for their research because most of them especially Lazarsfeld were trained in this area. During this era, the computer resources proved an advantage for researchers to conduct the survey faster and more accurately. Currently, technologies, especially with internet and subsequently, World Wide Web components have resurrected the validity and dynamic presence of the Uses and Gratifications theory in media and media content use. Ruggiero's (2000) puts it succinctly that some characteristics of newer technologies especially the internet, strengthens the theory of uses and gratifications. Such characteristics, he asserts are interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity (p. 15). Interactivity is defined as the users' ability to switch as well as regulate contents and other forms of exchanges during a mutual activity with others. This enables reciprocal information gathering and exchange. Ruggiero further explains demassification as "the ability of the media user to select from a wide menu" (p. 16). Lastly, asynchronicity is the concept of users' ability to access media messages at any time as opposed to one particular time; as such, messages may be "staggered in time" (p. 16) thus allowing accessibility at later time.

These three qualities are inherent in social media. As mentioned earlier, there are over 4,000 SMNSs available for users and each allows for full interaction including creation, sharing, and downloading of contents in different formats: text, video, data, audio, and picture. Ultimately, Uses and Gratifications theory will inform this research by ascertaining the uses that college students employ social media networks, what activities they engage in social media sites; due to the ubiquity of these sites and easier accessibility as well as a plethora of available sites, what factors influence their choice of one or more sites over others especially among the four selected SMNSs. Therefore, the following questions will guide the research:

RQ1: To what use do college students employ Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn?

RQ2: Are Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn still the most popular networking sites among college students in terms of usage?

RQ3: What factors influence college students' preference of one or some sites over others?

METHODOLOGY

The study used a purposive sampling method to assure a representation of the target group for this study, college students and users of the four social media networking sites. Therefore, a call for participation was sent to students between the ages of 18 and 28 years in a four-year public university located in the Midwestern section of the United States and 287 students responded. The study was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were recruited predominantly from several large enrollment

introductory classes from several departments. Data was collected between March 6 and March 26, 2012 using a questionnaire. The questionnaire had two versions - electronic and paper copies. This was to ensure that all participants who willingly volunteered to be a part of the study were given every opportunity to do so. Participant solicitation was administered through the course instructors, while other calls were sent via e-mail. The large enrollment introductory classes were targeted because they encompass diverse student population consisting of different majors and the likelihood of obtaining a sample that fell within the target audience (18-28 years) was high. The questionnaire was pre-tested among 12 students and adequate adjustments were made to clarify some questions that had earlier proved ambiguous. The online version of the questionnaire was administered through the Survey Monkey software and the paper version was administered in a classroom. Participation for both versions of the questionnaire was both anonymous and voluntary for all students.

The questionnaire comprised 26 questions¹ that elicited both quantitative and qualitative data. This was a deliberate measure to collect rich data especially with the qualitative questions that allowed students to articulate their opinions and provide richer responses as opposed to the pre-packaged responses. Follow-up questions also provided opportunity for qualitative answers. For instance, students were asked to rank the four SMNSs (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn) by order of preference from #1 being the most preferred to #4 as the least preferred. A follow-up question required the students to provide attributes that made them rank a site as #1 and another as #4. Other questions listed the uses of social media networks as contained in previous studies and students were asked to check off the uses pertinent to them. Demographic information on age, gender, race and college rank was also obtained.

Participants:

The 287 (n=289) respondents were all useful data as filters were used to eliminate participants outside the target population between the ages of 18 and 28 years. The demographics show n= 107 male (38.2%); n=171 female (61.1%); n=2 transgender (0.7%) and n=7 undeclared. Majority of respondents were Caucasian = 79.5% (n=225). Blacks or African-American were 9.9% (n=28); the Asian population was 6.7% (n=19). Other race/ethnicities were Americans Indian or Native Alaskan 1.4% (n=4), Hispanic or Latino 0.7% (n=2) and "Other" 1.8% (n=5) which was listed as Belizean Creole, Arab, European or Moroccan. In terms of college rank, Seniors had the highest number with a 27.0% (n=76), followed by Juniors at 24.1% (n=68); Sophomores 23.0% (n=65); Freshmen 17.4% (n=49), and graduate students 8.5% (n=24) and n=5 did not declare their college rank.

¹ The questionnaire catered to two research topics: The uses and gratifications obtained from social media networks sites (the current study) and Generation Y'ers perception and reception of advertising on SMNSs.

DATA ANALYSIS

The paper version of the completed questionnaire was inputted on Survey Monkey software. The software provided a compilation of the raw data as well as a summary of responses arranged by questions. The data was downloaded onto an Excel spreadsheet and frequency tables, charts and graphs were drawn from the summary. Data from the open-ended questions was coded to generate categories and, later, themes. The themes then were entered on an Excel spreadsheet and pivot tables were generated for frequencies of responses.

RESULTS

Results are presented according to the three research questions covering uses of social media networks, popularity of the chosen networking sites among college student and factors that influence preference of one or more network over others.

Uses of Social Media Networking Sites among college students.

Keeping in touch with friends emerged as the highest use for SMNSs with the affirmation of 97.9% of participants. Other top uses include sharing photos (80.7%), keeping in touch with family (79.3%), reconnecting with old friends (72.6%) and for entertainment (70.9%). A comprehensive list of participants' uses of SMNSs is listed on Table 1. Interestingly, shopping was the least use of SMNSs among this group with only 5.3%. In the "other" category, participants listed reading Bible verses, having something to do, reading quotes, sharing upcoming events, stalking, and working as other uses for SMNSs.

Popular Sites

Facebook emerged as the favorite site for college students among all four sites and MySpace was the least favorite. However, in terms of popularity, LinkedIn was the least popular for 32% of participants indicated that they have never heard of it and have never used it. For those who currently have account on LinkedIn they described their usage as strictly for business and they don't find it useful at the moment because there is no need for them to engage in such activity or information sharing at the moment. A comprehensive list can be found on Table 2. In terms of number of users, 99.3% (n=282) of participants have a Facebook account, 66.5% (n=189) have Twitter, 40.1% (n=114) have created an account on MySpace and only 28.9% (n=82) students have created account on LinkedIn (see Figure 1 for detailed information). Students spend various hours on these sites. The highest time spent by majority of students for all four sites were a maximum of five hours per day. However, for the "I'm on 24-hours" option, Twitter ranked the highest for a 24-hour log-on (Table 3).

Factors that influence Preference

By order of preference, Facebook was ranked the #1 among the four social networking sites followed by Twitter as #2. Interestingly, MySpace took both the #3 and #4 positions. Obviously LinkedIn was not very popular among college students as 32% of participants indicated that they have never heard of

the site and so were unable to rank it. Participants were asked to provide (on their own, no choices were provided) factors that influenced their preference especially for the first and last position. Characteristics of Facebook that endears it to this group are, easier to navigate and very user-friendly, most popular among friends and family members, provides greater opportunity for interactivity, is universal in nature as it includes international friends, and very eclectic for users can do series of things including ability to upload information especially pictures and videos, chat with friends, get update of friends' activities and link other social media such as Twitter. MySpace on the other hand, was characterized as being outdated and old, very unsafe, unattractive interface. A condensed list of participants' description of all four network sites is contained in Table 4 and Table 5.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There are no surprises as to the uses for which college students apply social media. In fact, the results of this study synchronized with Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) and Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2010) studies. The same purposes of keeping in touch with old friends, current friends and family members emerged as the highest use of social media. However, it is interesting to note that participants on the current study spend more hours on SMNSs than the Raacke and Bonds-Raacke study: 5 hours or more against 1.5 hours in 2008. There is a possibility that emergent technologies especially mobile devices might contribute to this increase especially since most cellular phones and cellular phone providers offer a bundle of Talk, Text, and Web bundle for a reasonable price. This is supported by participant's indication of method of accessing social media. As high as 94.0% of participants access the sites through laptop computers, 77.8% through cellular phones and 13.7% through iPad (Table 6).

With over 500 million users worldwide, it is not surprising also that Facebook is the most popular site especially considering that it was invented by and originally for college students. However, it is worth noting that Twitter is greatly becoming very popular as well among college students with 66.5% of participants owning a Twitter account. Also, majority of participants indicated that they have only owned a Twitter account for less than one year; yet, Twitter was ranked the second most preferred sites among the four sites.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that only about 29% of participants indicated having a LinkedIn account and 32% indicated that they have never heard of the site. This is surprising given that LinkedIn is the oldest among all four sites. Also, LinkedIn's mission is to provide a networking arena that has the potential of benefiting people professionally. College juniors, seniors, and graduate students make up 59.6% of total participants, a group that is expected to be thinking or researching internship and employment opportunities yet had very little knowledge about the site.

Another interesting point that emerged from this study is the fact that MySpace is not dead after all. Several sources have been posting an extinction notice on MySpace including the eMarketer (2012) 2011-2014 Projection of

Social Media Network Advertising Revenue report which removed MySpace from the list effective 2012.

Finally, the available data will further be utilized to draw comparison for gender, college rank, race, and length of use to ascertain further results that might emerge from this study.

Table 1. Social Media Network Uses

Answer Options (count)	Response (%)	Response
Keeping in touch with friends	97.9%	279
Sharing photos	80.7%	230
Keeping in touch with family	79.3%	226
Reconnecting with old friends	72.6%	207
For entertainment	70.9%	202
Getting news	69.8%	199
Sharing videos	45.3%	129
Discovering new music, films, books, and Other entertainment	37.2%	106
Meeting new people	34.7%	99
Providing my opinion to mainstream media	34.0%	97
Promoting a cause	30.5%	87
Sharing music	28.8%	82
Making professional and business contacts	27.4%	78
For learning	26.0%	74
Playing Games	21.8%	62
Sharing information on products/brands	18.9%	54
Promoting a business	18.2%	52
Shopping	6.7%	19
Other	5.3%	15

Table 2. Most Preferred and Least Preferred Site

By order of preference rank the following social media networks. 1=most preferred; 4=least preferred

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Rating Average
Facebook	207	61	6	6	1.33
MySpace	5	20	97	109	3.34
Twitter	58	132	41	10	2.01
LinkedIn	5	27	75	103	3.31

Table 3. Hours Spent on Social Media Networking Sites Per Day

How many hours do you spend on social media networks each day?				
Answer Options	0-5 hours	6-10 hours	I'm on 24 hours	Response Count
MySpace	132	0	1	133
Facebook	241	20	6	267
Twitter	166	14	8	188
LinkedIn	92	2	0	94

Table 4. Abridged list of Participants' description of the most preferred (Facebook) and least preferred (MySpace) sites.

Facebook	MySpace
Most people are on Facebook uses it anymore	Outdated; no one really uses it anymore
I am on it most of the day	It is full of spam and viruses
It's the easiest way to contact family and friends about it	I've heard bad things about it
I like that you can post pictures and see profiles people	It has a lot of creepy people
I can talk and chat with my friends	I don't like the interface
I can see what my friends are up to by other sites	It has been overshadowed
lots of updates	
It has more to offer	It is a dead zone
I like the privacy settings	There are too many ads;
not very useful	
It is cleaner-looking and easier to manage	I don't like the interface;
not pleasing	
I don't like it very much; provides too much Information	You can have your own
song on your page	
Lots of drama and too many baby pictures	You can customize your
own page.	

Table 5. Abridged list of Participants’ description of Twitter and LinkedIn.

Twitter	LinkedIn
Ease of use and condensed information	Never heard of it
You can follow celebrities now	I have no use for it for now
Simpler, fun, less drama profile	It’s more of a business
It’s the latest and less clutter yet	I’m not looking for a job yet
It’s funny and more sociable	
Short bursts of very useless information	
Annoying and useless comments	
I like the quotes	

Table 6. Means of Accessing Social Media Networking Sites

Through what device do you access your social media? Check all that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Cell Phone	77.8%	221
iPad	13.7%	39
Laptop computer	94.0%	267
Other (please specify)	14.4%	41
	answered question	284
	skipped question	3

REFERENCES

Baran, S. J. & Davis, D. K. (2012). *Mass communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Beaumont, C. (2008, November 25). Team behind Twitter: Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone and Evan Williams, *Telegraph*, Retrieved February 18, 2011 from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/3520024/The-team-behind-Twitter-Jack-Dorsey-Biz-Stone-and-Evan-Williams.html>

Beer, D. (2008). Social network(ing) sites ... revisiting the story so far: A response to danah boyd & Nicole Ellison. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 516-529.

Bonds-Raacke, J, & Raacke, J. (2010). MySpace and Facebook: Identifying dimensions of uses and gratifications for friend networking sites. *Individual Difference Research*, 8(1), 27-33.

- boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230.
- BusinessWeek. (2005, July 29). MySpace: WhoseSpace?. *BusinessWeek*. Retrieved February 18, 2011 from http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/jul2005/tc20050729_0719_tc057.htm.
- Ellison, N. B., Steinfeld, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook “friends”: Social capital and college students’ use of online social network sites.
- eMarketer Digital Intelligence. (2012, February 24). Total worldwide social network ad revenues continue strong growth. Retrieved March 1, 2012 from <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?id=1008862&%3bR=1008862&R=1008862>
- Katz, E. J., & Blumler, G. (1974). *The uses of mass communication: Current perspectives on gratifications research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Martin, C. (2010). Social networking usage and grades among college students. A study conducted by the Whittmore School of Business and Economics University of New Hampshire.
- Miles, S. J., & Muuka, G. N. (2011). Employee choice of voice: A new workplace dynamic. *The Journal of Applied Business Research*, 27(4), 91-103).
- Newman, E. (2008). Airwalk print lauds MySpace celebrities. *Brandweek*, 49(10). p.5.
- Oser, K. (2006). MySpace, big audience, big risks. *Advertising Age*, 77(8), 3-25.
- Pew Research Center. (2010, February 24). Millennials: A portrait of generation next. Retrieved February 24, 2012 from <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/>
- Raacke, J. & Bonds-Raacke, J. (2008). MySpace and Facebook: Applying the uses and gratifications theory to exploring friend-networking sites. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 11(2), 169-174.
- Ruggiero, T. (2000). Uses and gratifications theory in the 21st century. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3(1), 3-37.
- Sauerbier, R. A. (2010). Social networking. In A E. Grant and J. H. Meadows (Eds.). *Communications technology update and fundamentals*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press. (pp. 292-304).
- Salimkham, G., Manago, A. M., & Greenfield, P. M. (2010). The construction of the virtual self on MySpace. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial research on Cyberspace*, 4(1).
- Ulusu, Y. (2010). Determinant factors of time spent on Facebook: Brand community engagement and usage types. *Journal of Yasar University*, 18(5), 2949-2957.
- Wauters, R. (2010, July 21). Zuckerberg makes it official: Facebook hits 500 million members. Retrieved, March 13, 2012 from <http://techcrunch.com/2010/07/21/facebook-500-million/>
- Wilkinson, D., & Thelwall, M. (2010). Social network site changes over time: The case of MySpace. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 61(11), 2311-2312.