What is social media?

Common characteristics

- User generated content
- Direct user-to-user interaction
- Bundles of applications

User Generated Content

Social media sites are dependent on user’s for content
Sites are usually free, but so is the user work
Content can take many forms
Direct user-to-user interaction

- Not mass media
- Not interpersonal communication

Bundles of applications

- "Affordances"
- Sociotechnical systems

"Affordances"

Software and hardware features that allow a user to accomplish an action

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<th>Software</th>
<th>Hardware</th>
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Hardware affordances

- Ubiquity
- Bundle devices
- Comparatively cheap

Software Affordances

- Archive
- Broadcast
- Rate
- Reference
- Filter
- Aggregate

- Ability to refer to another user
- Able to post photos
- Commenting
Different bundles of “affordances” create different genres of social media.

The social media environment has evolved quickly, though is stabilizing a bit.

Most popular social media sites
Consistent research findings on social media.

Use is heterogeneous.

Lurking vs. engaging. Motivations and systems. “90/10” participation curve

Outcomes are based on how one uses social media.

Loneliness and depression are more associated with lurking. Active uses feel more connected to friends. Social Capital.
Social media is about production.

Major issues include self-presentation, audience, and attention.

Social media is about Attention.

Social media and nonprofits

Social Media used for…

- Information
- Inform stakeholders, promote mission, share news
- Community building
- Create identity, nurture partners, grow networks
- Action
- Raise money, mobilize actions, get people to show up
How do you measure success of social media activities to achieve these outcomes?

Summary points

- Social media use continues to grow. It remains dynamic, but not as volatile as several years ago.
- Teens are heavy users of social media. While they have not left Facebook, they are expanding their use over multiple other sites.
- How and why people use social media is VERY heterogeneous. These affect outcomes.
- Sites have very different features that interact and support different types of social interaction.

Thanks!
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