IRIS ‘Major Findings’ Workshop on:
Socio-economic implications of Digital Identity and Social Computing
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Understanding Social Computing:
Challenges and Opportunities for Europe

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The views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the EC.
Introducing Social Computing (SC)

Social Computing: a set of on-line and/or mobile tools that facilitate user interactions and collaborations that enable users to share experiences, to become content co-creators and to provide value.
IPTS research on Social Computing

- IPTS started monitoring uptake and use of SC since 2005 and exploring its socio-economics impacts since 2007

- Studies of SC:
  - In the areas of learning, health, inclusion, government/governance, mobile, identity, industry
  - and on specific themes such as collaborative content, online social networks and the creation and use of SC.

- > 10 published IPTS reports:  http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/publications/index.cfm and similar amount of scientific publications

- Synthesis publication hot off the press:

  The Impact of Social Computing on the EU Information Society and Economy
Video and Photo

- 1 billion Hits a day on YouTube (9 Oct 2009, BBC Online)
- > 2 billion photos & >14 million videos uploaded to Facebook monthly (2009, Facebook)
- > 80% of active internet users worldwide watch video clips online (March 2009, Social Media Tracker)

Social Networking

- > 300 million Facebook users worldwide; 100 million in Europe; ~ 50% daily users (2009, Facebook)
- > 56 million Netlog users in Europe, in 20 languages, > 150 million visitors per month (2009, Netlog)
- > 70% of active internet users worldwide visit a friend’s page (March 2009, Social Media Tracker)

Blogs

- # of blogs 2X every 5-7 months (2005-2007); > 110 million blogs (May 2008, Technorati)
- > 70% of active internet users worldwide read blogs, 46% left a comment and 35% started own blog (March 2009, Social Media Tracker)

Other

- > 5 billion tweets on Twitter (Nov 2009, Popacular.com)
- > 14 million articles on Wikipedia, > 3 million in English, ~269 language versions, 1 million contributions, 85,000 people contributed 5 times or more in Sept09 (Wikipedia)
Social Computing uptake in EU27

Source: IPTS estimation based on EUROSTAT 2008 & Flash EB N.241
• Not only for younger people

• Not only for leisure

• Not all users participate in the same way

• Exponential growth has slowed down

• But supply and use patterns are changing continuously

=> SC is becoming part of mainstream internet use
Does it matter?

Dude, are you on Facebook?
Uh, no.
You're not on Facebook?
He's not on Facebook.

Who's not on Facebook?
You're not on Facebook?

What's the big deal, anyway? What do you use it for?
Uh...
It's a tool for, you know...

Notworking?

Sign me up!

www.phdcomics.com
1. Empowering users, taking up new roles in the digital society and economy

2. Peer-produced resources and harnessing collective knowledge
Cross-cutting impacts of SC on...
SC impacting media and public opinion

16/01/2009 Twitter:
- First tweets 4 min’s after crash
- 15 min’s before mainstream media
- First picture on TwitPic
- FlightStats: “en route” – 26 min’s delay
- Wikipedia page on flight 1549 1hr later
Bloggers catch what Washington Post missed

Oliver Burkeman in New York
The Guardian, Saturday 21 December 2002 00.37 GMT
Article history

The momentum that ended in Trent Lott’s resignation yesterday as the Senate majority leader did not, primarily, come from the traditional behemoths of the US media - the New York Times, the Washington Post and the main TV news networks.

Instead, the controversy has proved a defining moment for the vibrant online culture of weblogs - nimble, constantly updated, opinion-driven internet journals, freed from many of the constraints of the established media.

Mr Lott’s incendiary comments on December 5 went unmentioned in the Washington Post’s account of Senator Strom Thurmond’s 100th birthday party. They were not picked up by the New York Times, which defines the news in the US, until December 10.
SC impacting politics and society

"I did it with a lot of pain."
Abdullah, on quitting the Afghan runoff NYT

President 2.0
Obama harnessed the grass-roots power of the Web to get elected. How will he use that power now?
By Daniel Lyons and Daniel Stone | NEWSWEEK
Published Nov 22, 2008
From the magazine issue dated Dec 1, 2008

WikiLeaks

global defense of sources and press freedoms, circa now—

Wednesday 4 November, 2009

Have documents the world needs to see?
We help you safely get the truth out.
Welcome to Wikiversity

Set learning free

with 11,501 learning resources and growing.

Wikiversity is a Wikimedia Foundation project devoted to learning resources, learning projects, and research for use in all levels, types, and styles of education from preschool to university, including professional training and informal learning. We invite teachers, students, and researchers to join us in creating open educational resources and collaborative learning communities. To learn more, try a guided tour or start editing now.
Wikipedia for Spies: The CIA Discovers Web 2.0

By MASSIMO CALABRESI

Wednesday, Apr. 08, 2009

CIA Director Leon Panetta

Right: Saurabh Das / AP
SC impacting public administrations
Security, safety and privacy risks: *Systems are weak while users are unaware*
- Protect all but especially younger users: awareness raising and LLL for all
- Encourage involvement of SC providers
- Enforce existing regulations, guidelines and confidence building

New skills for new jobs and risk for new digital divides: *Going beyond learning basic ICT skills*
- Ensure learning of digital literacy and digital competences (lifelong and as early as possible)
- Continue with available and affordable broadband and mobile internet
- Raise awareness on new skills for new jobs (e.g. on user-generated content, sharing, etc.)
- Trust and confidence: 54% of US firms with >100 employees forbid use SNS at work (Robert Half Technology, 2009)

Opportunities for government: *Opening-up, more transparency and efficiency*
- Improve and innovate public services, their quality, user-centricity and inclusiveness
- Increase democratic governance (while preventing misuse)
- Social innovation addressing EU challenges
- Develop comparable, systematic, longer-term official data and stats on SC

=> SC enables new ways of doing things, also at the European level, affecting European policies and institutions.
=> Realizing its potential requires organizational change, risk-taking, experimentation and openness.
=> Are these requirements available in Europe?
Published Reports on SC (2008-2009):

- Social Computing: Study on the Use and Impacts of Collaborative Content
- Social Computing: Study on the Use and Impact of Online Social Networking
- An Empirical Analysis of the Creation, Use and Adoption of Social Computing Applications
- Web 2.0 in Government: Why and How?
- Web 2.0: Where does Europe stand?
- Good Practices for Learning 2.0: Promoting Innovation
- Good Practices for Learning 2.0: Promoting Inclusion
- Public Services 2.0: The Future of Public Services (in press)
- The Impact of SC on the EU Information Society and Economy

Thank you

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