Internet Culture
Your Guide to the Internet, Powered by Wikipedia
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Chapter 1

I'm from the Internet, let me be your guide

1.1 Cyberculture

Not to be confused with Cyber subculture.

Cyberculture or computer culture is the culture that has emerged, or is emerging, from the use of computer networks for communication, entertainment, and business. Internet culture is also the study of various social phenomena associated with the Internet and other new forms of the network communication, such as online communities, online multi-player gaming, wearable computing, social gaming, social media, mobile apps, augmented reality, and texting.[1] and includes issues related to identity, privacy, and network formation.

1.1.1 Overview

Since the boundaries of cyberculture are difficult to define, the term is used flexibly, and its application to specific circumstances can be controversial. It generally refers at least to the cultures of virtual communities, but extends to a wide range of cultural issues relating to "cyber-topics", e.g. cybernetics, and the perceived or predicted cyborgization of the human body and human society itself. It can also embrace associated intellectual and cultural movements, such as cyborg theory and cyberpunk. The term often incorporates an implicit anticipation of the future.

The Oxford English Dictionary lists the earliest usage of the term "cyberculture" in 1963, when A.M. Hilton wrote the following, "In the era of cyberculture, all the plows pull themselves and the fried chickens fly right onto our plates."[3] This example, and all others, up through 1995 are used to support the definition of cyberculture as "the social conditions brought about by automation and computerization."[3] The American Heritage Dictionary broadens the sense in which "cyberculture" is used by defining it as, "The culture arising from the use of computer networks, as for communication, entertainment, work, and business".[4] However, what both the OED and the American Heritage Dictionary miss is that cyberculture is the culture within and among users of computer networks. This cyberculture may be purely an online culture or it may span both virtual and physical worlds. This is to say, that cyberculture is a culture endemic to online communities; it is not just the culture that results from computer use, but culture that is directly mediated by the computer. Another way to envision cyberculture is as the electronically enabled linkage of like-minded, but potentially geographically disparate (or physically disabled and hence less mobile) persons.

Cyberculture is a wide social and cultural movement closely linked to advanced information science and information technology, their emergence, development and rise to social and cultural prominence between the 1960s and the 1990s. Cyberculture was influenced at its genesis by those early users of the internet, frequently including the architects of the original project. These individuals were often guided in their actions by the hacker ethic. While early cyberculture was based on a small cultural sample, and its ideals, the modern cyberculture is a much more diverse group of users and the ideals that they espouse.

Numerous specific concepts of cyberculture have been formulated by such authors as Lev Manovich,[5][6] Arturo Escobar and Fred Forest.[7] However, most of these concepts concentrate only on certain aspects, and they do not cover these in great detail. Some authors aim to achieve a more comprehensive understanding distinguished between early and contemporary cyberculture (Jakub Macek),[8] or between cyberculture as the cultural context of information technology and cyberculture (more specifically cyberculture studies) as "a particular approach to the study of the 'culture + technology' complex" (David Lister et al.).[9]

1.1.2 Manifestations

Manifestations of cyberculture include various human interactions mediated by computer networks. They can be activities, pursuits, games, place's and metaphors, and include a diverse base of applications. Some are supported by specialized software and others work on commonly accepted internet protocols. Example include but are not limited to:
1.1.3 Qualities

First and foremost, cyberculture derives from traditional notions of culture, as the roots of the word imply. In non-cyberculture, it would be odd to speak of a single, monolithic culture. In cyberculture, by extension, searching for a single thing that is cyberculture would likely be problematic. The notion that there is a single, definable cyberculture is likely the complete dominance of early cyber territory by affluent North Americans. Writing by early proponents of cyberspace tends to reflect this assumption (see Howard Rheingold). [10]

The ethnography of cyberspace is an important aspect of cyberculture that does not reflect a single unified culture. It is not a monolithic or placeless ‘cyberspace’; rather, it is numerous new technologies and capabilities, used by diverse people, in diverse real-world locations. It is malleable, perishable, and can be shaped by the vagaries of external forces on its users. For example, the laws of physical world governments, social norms, the architecture of cyberspace, and market forces shape the way cybercultures form and evolve. As with physical world cultures, cybercultures lend themselves to identification and study.

There are several qualities that cybercultures share that make them warrant the prefix “cyber-”. Some of those qualities are that cyberculture:

- Is a community mediated by ICTs.
- Is culture “mediated by computer screens”. [10]:63
- Relies heavily on the notion of information and knowledge exchange.
- Depends on the ability to manipulate tools to a degree not present in other forms of culture (even artisan culture, e.g., a glass-blowing culture).
- Allows vastly expanded weak ties and has been criticized for overly emphasizing the same (see Bowling Alone and other works).
- Multiplies the number of eyeballs on a given problem, beyond that which would be possible using traditional means, given physical, geographic, and temporal constraints.
- Is a “cognitive and social culture, not a geographic one”. [10]:61
- Is “the product of like-minded people finding a common 'place' to interact.” [11]:58
- Is inherently more “fragile” than traditional forms of community and culture (John C. Dvorak).

Thus, cyberculture can be generally defined as the set of technologies (material and intellectual), practices, attitudes, modes of thought, and values that developed with cyberspace. [12]

1.1.4 Identity – “Architectures of credibility”

Cyberculture, like culture in general, relies on establishing identity and credibility. However, in the absence of direct physical interaction, it could be argued that the process for such establishment is more difficult.

How does cyberculture rely on and establish identity and credibility? This relationship is two-way, with identity and credibility being both used to define the community in cyberspace and to be created within and by online communities.

In some senses, online credibility is established in much the same way that it is established in the offline world; however, since these are two separate worlds, it is not surprising that there are differences in their mechanisms and interactions of the markers found in each.

Following the model put forth by Lawrence Lessig in Code: Version 2.0, [13] the architecture of a given online community may be the single most important factor regulating the establishment of credibility within online communities. Some factors may be:

- Anonymous versus Known
- Linked to Physical Identity versus Internet-based Identity Only
- Unrated Commentary System versus Rated Commentary System
- Positive Feedback-oriented versus Mixed Feedback (positive and negative) oriented
- Moderated versus Unmoderated

Anonymous versus known

See also: Anonymous post

Many sites allow anonymous commentary, where the user-id attached to the comment is something like “guest” or “anonymous user”. In an architecture that allows anonymous posting about other works, the credibility being impacted is only that of the product for sale, the original opinion expressed, the code written, the video, or other entity about which comments are made (e.g., a Slashdot post). Sites that require “known” postings can vary widely from simply requiring some kind of name to be associated with the comment to requiring registration, wherein the identity of the registrant is visible to other readers of the comment. These “known” identities allow and even require commentators to be aware of their own credibility, based on the fact that other users will associate particular content and styles with their identity. By definition, then, all blog postings are “known” in
that the blog exists in a consistently defined virtual location, which helps to establish an identity, around which credibility can gather. Conversely, anonymous postings are inherently incredible. Note that a "known" identity need have nothing to do with a given identity in the physical world.

**Linked to physical identity versus internet-based identity only**

Architectures can require that physical identity be associated with commentary, as in Lessig's example of Counsel Connect.[13]:94–97 However, to require linkage to physical identity, many more steps must be taken (collecting and storing sensitive information about a user) and safeguards for that collected information must be established—the users must have more trust of the sites collecting the information (yet another form of credibility). Irrespective of safeguards, as with Counsel Connect,[13]:94–97 using physical identities links credibility across the frames of the internet and real space, influencing the behaviors of those who contribute in those spaces. However, even purely internet-based identities have credibility. Just as Lessig describes linkage to a character or a particular online gaming environment, nothing inherently links a person or group to their internet-based persona, but credibility (similar to “characters”) is “earned rather than bought, and because this takes time and (credibility is) not fungible, it becomes increasingly hard” to create a new persona.[13]:113

**Unrated commentary system versus rated commentary system**

In some architectures those who review or offer comments can, in turn, be rated by other users. This technique offers the ability to regulate the credibility of given authors by subjecting their comments to direct “quantifiable” approval ratings.

**Positive feedback-oriented versus mixed feedback (positive and negative) oriented**

Architectures can be oriented around positive feedback or a mix of both positive and negative feedback. While a particular user may be able to equate fewer stars with a “negative” rating, the semantic difference is potentially important. The ability to actively rate an entity negatively may violate laws or norms that are important in the jurisdiction in which the internet property is important. The more public a site, the more important this concern may be, as noted by Goldsmith & Wu regarding eBay.[14]

**Moderated versus unmoderated**

Architectures can also be oriented to give editorial control to a group or individual. Many email lists are worked in this fashion (e.g., Freecycle). In these situations, the architecture usually allows, but does not require that contributions be moderated. Further, moderation may take two different forms: reactive or proactive. In the reactive mode, an editor removes posts, reviews, or content that is deemed offensive after it has been placed on the site or list. In the proactive mode, an editor must review all contributions before they are made public.

In a moderated setting, credibility is often given to the moderator. However, that credibility can be damaged by appearing to edit in a heavy-handed way, whether reactive or proactive (as experienced by digg.com). In an unmoderated setting, credibility lies with the contributors alone. It should be noted that the very existence of an architecture allowing moderation may lend credibility to the forum being used (as in Howard Rheingold's examples from the WELL),[10] or it may take away credibility (as in corporate web sites that post feedback, but edit it highly).

**1.1.5 Cyberculture studies**

See also: List of human-computer interaction topics

The field of cyberculture studies examines the topics explained above, including the communities emerging within the networked spaces sustained by the use of modern technology. Students of cyberculture engage with political, philosophical, sociological, and psychological issues that arise from the networked interactions of human beings by humans who act in various relations to information science and technology.

Donna Haraway, Sadie Plant, Manuel De Landa, Bruce Sterling, Kevin Kelly, Wolfgang Schirmacher, Pierre Levy, David Gunkel, Victor J.Vitanza, Gregory Ulmer, Charles D. Laughlin, and Jean Baudrillard are among the key theorists and critics who have produced relevant work that speaks to, or has influenced studies in, cyberculture. Following the lead of Rob Kitchin, in his work *Cyberspace: The World in the Wires*, we might view cyberculture from different critical perspectives. These perspectives include futurism or technutopianism, technological determinism, social constructionism, postmodernism, poststructuralism, and feminist theory.[11]:56–72

**1.1.6 See also**

- Anonymous
- Alt-right
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- Cicada 3301
- Cyber law
- Cyberdelic
- Cyberpunk
- Digitalism
- Information ethics
- Infosphere
- Internet trolls
- Netnography
- Postliteracy society
- Technology and society
- Techno-progressivism
- Technocriticism
- Technorealism
- Wifipicning

1.1.7 References


1.1.8 Further reading

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1.1.9 External links

1.1. CYBERCULTURE

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- First Monday, a peer reviewed journal on the internet
- Institute of Network cultures
- Resource Centre for Cyberculture Studies
- Defining Cyberculture by Jakub Macek
- Voices in My Head - MindVox: The Overture by Patrick Kroupa
- Cyberculture at Mediateca Media Art Space
- Mailinglist Nettime
- A place where Cyberculture is a topic of research and thought
- Cyberpunk Project: Cyberculture, Technoculture, Future Culture
- Roger Clarke's 'Encouraging Cyberculture'
- Virtual Innervation (wikigroup): Futureweb Thoughts and Projections
Chapter 2

User Generated Content

2.1 Blog

“Blogger” redirects here. For the Google service with the same name, see Blogger (service). For other uses, see Blog (disambiguation).

Not to be confused with .blog.

A blog (a truncation of the expression “weblog”) is a discussion or informational website published on the World Wide Web consisting of discrete, often informal diary-style text entries (“posts”). Posts are typically displayed in reverse chronological order, so that the most recent post appears first, at the top of the web page. Until 2009, blogs were usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often covered a single subject or topic. In the 2010s, “multi-author blogs” (MABs) have developed, with posts written by large numbers of authors and sometimes professionally edited. MABs from newspapers, other media outlets, universities, think tanks, advocacy groups, and similar institutions account for an increasing quantity of blog traffic. The rise of Twitter and other “microblogging” systems helps integrate MABs and single-author blogs into the news media. Blog can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

The emergence and growth of blogs in the late 1990s coincided with the advent of web publishing tools that facilitated the posting of content by non-technical users who did not have much experience with HTML or computer programming. Previously, a knowledge of such technologies as HTML and File Transfer Protocol had been required to publish content on the Web, and as such, early Web users tended to be hackers and computer enthusiasts. In the 2010s, the majority are interactive Web 2.0 websites, allowing visitors to leave online comments, and it is this interactivity that distinguishes them from other static websites. In that sense, blogging can be seen as a form of social networking service. Indeed, bloggers do not only produce content to post on their blogs, but also often build social relations with their readers and other bloggers. However, there are high-readership blogs which do not allow comments.

Many blogs provide commentary on a particular subject or topic, ranging from politics to sports. Others function as more personal online diaries, and others function more as online brand advertising of a particular individual or company. A typical blog combines text, digital images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability of readers to leave publicly viewable comments, and interact with other commenters, is an important contribution to the popularity of many blogs. However, blog owners or authors often moderate and filter online comments to remove hate speech or other offensive content. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (art blogs), photographs (photoblogs), videos (video blogs or “vlogs”), music (MP3 blogs), and audio (podcasts). In education, blogs can be used as instructional resources. These blogs are referred to as edublogs. Microblogging is another type of blogging, featuring very short posts.

On 16 February 2011, there were over 156 million public blogs in existence. On 20 February 2014, there were around 172 million Tumblr and 75.8 million WordPress blogs in existence worldwide. According to critics and other bloggers, Blogger is the most popular blogging service used today. However, Blogger does not offer public statistics. Technorati lists 1.3 million blogs as of February 22, 2014.

2.1.1 History

Main articles: History of blogging and online diary

The term “weblog” was coined by Jorn Barger on 17 December 1997. The short form, “blog”, was coined by Peter Merholz, who jokingly broke the word weblog into the phrase we blog in the sidebar of his blog Peterme.com in April or May 1999. Shortly thereafter, Evan Williams at Pyra Labs used “blog” as both a noun and verb (“to blog”, meaning “to edit one’s weblog or to post to one’s weblog”) and devised the term “blogger” in connection with Pyra Labs’ Blogger product, leading to the popularization of the terms.
Before blogging became popular, digital communities took many forms, including Usenet, commercial online services such as GEnie, Byte Information Exchange (BIX) and the early CompaServe, e-mail lists, and Bulletin Board Systems (BBS). In the 1990s, Internet forum software, created running conversations with "threads". Threads are topical connections between messages on a virtual "corkboard". From 14 June 1993, Mosaic Communications Corporation maintained their "What’s New" list of new websites, updated daily and archived monthly. The page was accessible by a special "What's New" button in the Mosaic web browser.

The modern blog evolved from the online diary, where people would keep a running account of the events in their personal lives. Most such writers called themselves diarists, journalists, or journalers. Justin Hall, who began personal blogging in 1994 while a student at Swarthmore College, is generally recognized as one of the earlier bloggers.[16] The Australian Netguide magazine maintained the Daily Net News' list of new websites, updated daily and archived monthly. The page was accessible by a special "What's New" button in the Mosaic web browser.

Another early blog was Wearable Wireless Webcam, an online shared diary of a person's personal life combining text, digital video, and digital pictures transmitted live from a wearable computer and EyeTap device to a web site in 1994. This practice of semi-automated blogging with live video together with text was referred to as sousveillance, and such journals were also used as evidence in legal matters. Early blogs were simply manually updated components of common Websites. However, the evolution of electronic and software tools to facilitate the production and maintenance of Web articles posted in reverse chronological order made the publishing process feasible to a much larger, less technical, population. Ultimately, this resulted in the distinct class of online publishing that produces blogs we recognize today. For instance, the use of some sort of browser-based software is now a typical aspect of "blogging". Blogs can be hosted by dedicated blog hosting services, or they can be run using blog software, or on regular web hosting services. Some early bloggers, such as The Misanthropic Bitch, who began in 1997, actually referred to their online presence as a zine, before the term blog entered common usage.

**Rise in popularity**

After a slow start, blogging rapidly gained in popularity. Blog usage spread during 1999 and the years following, being further popularized by the near-simultaneous arrival of the first hosted blog tools:

- Bruce Ableson launched Open Diary in October 1998, which soon grew to thousands of online diaries. Open Diary innovated the reader comment, becoming the first blog community where readers could add comments to other writers' blog entries.
- Andrew Smales created Pitas.com in July 1999 as an easier alternative to maintaining a "news page" on a Web site, followed by DiaryLand in September 1999, focusing more on a personal diary community.[21]
- Evan Williams and Meg Hourihan (Pyra Labs) launched Blogger.com in August 1999 (purchased by Google in February 2003)

**Political impact**

An early milestone in the rise in importance of blogs came in 2002, when many bloggers focused on comments by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott.[22] Senator Lott, at a party honoring U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond, praised Senator Thurmond by suggesting that the United States would have been better off had Thurmond been elected president. Lott’s critics saw these comments as a tacit approval of racial segregation, a policy advocated by Thurmond’s 1948 presidential campaign. This view was reinforced by documents and recorded interviews dug up by bloggers. (See Josh Marshall’s Talking Points Memo.) Though Lott’s comments were made at a public event attended by the media, no major media organizations reported on his controversial comments until after blogs broke the story. Blogging helped to create a
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On 6 December 2002, Josh Marshall’s talkingpointsmemo.com blog called attention to U.S. Senator Lott’s comments regarding Senator Thurmond. Senator Lott was eventually to resign his Senate leadership position over the matter.

political crisis that forced Lott to step down as majority leader.

Similarly, blogs were among the driving forces behind the "Rathergate" scandal. To wit: (television journalist) Dan Rather presented documents (on the CBS show 60 Minutes) that conflicted with accepted accounts of President Bush’s military service record. Bloggers declared the documents to be forgeries and presented evidence and arguments in support of that view. Consequently, CBS apologized for what it said were inadequate reporting techniques (see Little Green Footballs). Many bloggers view this scandal as the advent of blogs’ acceptance by the mass media, both as a news source and opinion and as means of applying political pressure. The impact of these stories gave greater credibility to blogs as a medium of news dissemination. Though often seen as partisan gossips, bloggers sometimes lead the way in bringing key information to public light, with mainstream media having to follow their lead. More often, however, news blogs tend to react to material already published by the mainstream media. Meanwhile, an increasing number of experts blogged, making blogs a source of in-depth analysis.

In Russia, some political bloggers have started to challenge the dominance of official, overwhelmingly pro-government media. Bloggers such as Rustem Adagamov and Alexei Navalny have many followers and the latter’s nickname for the ruling United Russia party as the "party of crooks and thieves" has been adopted by anti-regime protesters.[23] This led to the Wall Street Journal calling Navalny "the man Vladimir Putin fears most" in March 2012.[24]

Mainstream popularity

By 2004, the role of blogs became increasingly mainstream, as political consultants, news services, and candidates began using them as tools for outreach and opinion forming. Blogging was established by politicians and political candidates to express opinions on war and other issues and cemented blogs’ role as a news source. (See Howard Dean and Wesley Clark.) Even politicians not actively campaigning, such as the UK’s Labour Party’s MP Tom Watson, began to blog to bond with constituents. In January 2005, Fortune magazine listed eight bloggers whom business people “could not ignore”: Peter Rojas, Xeni Jardin, Ben Trott, Mena Trott, Jonathan Schwartz, Jason Goldman, Robert Scoble, and Jason Calacanis.[25] Israel was among the first national governments to set up an official blog.[26] Under David Saranga, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs became active in adopting Web 2.0 initiatives, including an official video blog[26] and a political blog.[27] The Foreign Ministry also held a microblogging press conference via Twitter about its war with Hamas, with Saranga answering questions from the public in common text-messaging abbreviations during a live worldwide press conference.[28] The questions and answers were later posted on IsraelPolitik, the country’s official political blog.[29]

The impact of blogging upon the mainstream media has also been acknowledged by governments. In 2009, the presence of the American journalism industry had declined to the point that several newspaper corporations were filing for bankruptcy, resulting in less direct competition between newspapers within the same circulation area. Discussion emerged as to whether the newspaper industry would benefit from a stimulus package by the federal government. U.S. President Barack Obama acknowledged the emerging influence of blogging upon society by saying “if the direction of the news is all blogosphere, all opinions, with no serious fact-checking, no serious attempts to put stories in context, then what you will end up getting is people shouting at each other across the void but not a lot of mutual understanding”. [30] Between 2009 and 2012, an Orwell Prize for blogging was awarded.
2.1. BLOG

2.1.2 Types

A screenshot from the BlogActive website.

A screenshot from the Citizenmadeinpunks blog website.

There are many different types of blogs, differing not only in the type of content, but also in the way that content is delivered or written.

Personal blogs The personal blog is an ongoing online diary or commentary written by an individual, rather than a corporation or organization. While the vast majority of personal blogs attract very few readers, other than the blogger’s immediate family and friends, a small number of personal blogs have become popular, to the point that they have attracted lucrative advertising sponsorship. A tiny number of personal bloggers have become famous, both in the online community and in the real world.

Collaborative blogs or group blogs A type of weblog in which posts are written and published by more than one author. The majority of high-profile collaborative blogs are based around a single unifying theme, such as politics, technology or advocacy. In recent years, the blogosphere has seen the emergence and growing popularity of more collaborative efforts, often set up by already established bloggers wishing to pool time and resources, both to reduce the pressure of maintaining a popular website and to attract a larger readership.

Microblogging Microblogging is the practice of posting small pieces of digital content—which could be text, pictures, links, short videos, or other media—on the Internet. Microblogging offers a portable communication mode that feels organic and spontaneous to many users. It has captured the public imagination, in part because the short posts are easy to read on the go or when waiting. Friends use it to keep in touch, business associates use it to coordinate meetings or share useful resources, and celebrities and politicians (or their publicists) microblog about concert dates, lectures, book releases, or tour schedules. A wide and growing range of add-on tools enables sophisticated updates and interaction with other applications. The resulting profusion of functionality is helping to define new possibilities for this type of communication.[31] Examples of these include Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr and, by far the largest, WeiBo.

Corporate and organizational blogs A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business or not-for-profit organization or government purposes. Blogs used internally, and only available to employees via an Intranet are called corporate blogs. Companies use internal corporate blogs to enhance the communication, culture and employee engagement in a corporation. Internal corporate blogs can be used to communicate news about company policies or procedures, build employee esprit de corps and improve morale. Companies and other organizations also use external, publicly accessible blogs for marketing, branding, or public relations purposes. Some organizations have a blog authored by their executive; in practice, many of these executive blog posts are penned by a ghostwriter, who makes posts in the style of the credited author. Similar blogs for clubs and societies are called club blogs, group blogs, or by similar names; typical use is to inform members and other interested parties of club and member activities.

Aggregated blogs Individuals or organization may aggregate selected feeds on specific topic, product or service and provide combined view for its readers. This allows readers to concentrate on reading instead of searching for quality on-topic content
and managing subscriptions. Many such aggregation called planets from name of Planet (software) that perform such aggregation, hosting sites usually have planet subdomain in domain name (like http://planet.gnome.org/).

**By genre** Some blogs focus on a particular subject, such as political blogs, journalism blogs, health blogs, travel blogs (also known as travelogs), gardening blogs, house blogs, book blogs,"[32]"[33] fashion blogs, beauty blogs, lifestyle blogs, party blogs, wedding blogs, photography blogs, project blogs, psychology blogs, sociology blogs, education blogs, niche blogs, classical music blogs, quizzes blogs, legal blogs (often referred to as a law blogs), or dreamblogs. How-to/Tutorial blogs are becoming increasingly popular."[34] Two common types of genre blogs are art blogs and music blogs. A blog featuring discussions especially about home and family is not uncommonly called a mom blog and one made popular is by Erica Diamond who created Womenonthefence.com which is syndicated to over two million readers monthly."[35]"[36]"[37]"[38]"[39]"[40] While not a legitimate type of blog, one used for the sole purpose of spamming is known as a splog.

**By media type** A blog comprising videos is called a vlog, one comprising links is called a linklog, a site containing a portfolio of sketches is called a sketchblog or one comprising photos is called a photoblog. Blogs with shorter posts and mixed media types are called tumblelogs. Blogs that are written on typewriters and then scanned are called typecast or typecast blogs. A rare type of blog hosted on the Gopher Protocol is known as a phlog.

**By device** A blog can also be defined by which type of device is used to compose it. A blog written by a mobile device like a mobile phone or PDA could be a mobillog."[41] One early blog was Wearable Wireless Webcam, an online shared diary of a person's personal life combining text, video, and pictures transmitted live from a wearable computer and EyeTap device to a web site. This practice of semi-automated blogging with live video together with text was referred to as sousveillance. Such journals have been used as evidence in legal matters.

**Reverse blog** A reverse blog is composed by its users rather than a single blogger. This system has the characteristics of a blog, and the writing of several authors. These can be written by several contributing authors on a topic, or opened up for anyone to write. There is typically some limit to the number of entries to keep it from operating like a web forum.

### 2.1.3 Community and cataloging

An artist's depiction of the interconnections between blogs and blog authors in the "blogosphere" in 2007.

**Blogosphere** The collective community of all blogs and blog authors, particularly notable and widely read blogs, is known as the blogosphere. Since all blogs are on the internet by definition, they may be seen as interconnected and socially networked, through blogrolls, comments, linkbacks, and backlinks. Discussions "in the blogosphere" are occasionally used by the media as a gauge of public opinion on various issues. Because new, untapped communities of bloggers and their readers can emerge in the space of a few years, Internet marketers pay close attention to "trends in the blogosphere".[42]

**Blog search engines** Several blog search engines have been used to search blog contents, such as Bloglines, BlogScope, and Technorati. Technorati was one of the more popular blog search engines, but the website stopped indexing blogs and assigning authority scores in May 2014. The research community is working on going beyond simple keyword search, by inventing new ways to navigate through huge amounts of information present in the blogosphere, as demonstrated by projects like BlogScope, which was shut down in 2012.

**Blogging communities and directories** Several online communities exist that connect people to blogs and bloggers to other bloggers. Some of these communities include Indiblogger, Bloggadda, Blog Chatter, BlogCatalog and MyBlogLog.[43] Interest-specific blogging platforms are also available. For instance, Blogster has a sizable community of political bloggers among its members. Global Voices aggregates
international bloggers, “with emphasis on voices that are not ordinarily heard in international mainstream media.” “[44]

**Blogging and advertising** It is common for blogs to feature banner advertisements or promotional content, either to financially benefit the blogger, support website hosting costs, or to promote the blogger’s favorite causes or products. The popularity of blogs has also given rise to “fake blogs” in which a company will create a fictional blog as a marketing tool to promote a product.”[45]

As the popularity of blogging continues to rise, the commercialisation of blogging is rapidly increasing. Many corporations and companies collaborate with bloggers to increase advertising and engage online communities towards their products. In the book *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers*, Henry Jenkins stated that “Bloggers take knowledge in their own hands, enabling successful navigation within and between these emerging knowledge cultures. One can see such behaviour as co-optation into commodity culture insofar as it sometimes collaborates with corporate interests, but one can also see it as increasing the diversity of media culture, providing opportunities for greater inclusiveness, and making more responsive to consumers.””[46]

### 2.1.4 Popularity

As of 2008, blogging had become such a mania that a new blog was created every second of every minute of every hour of every day.[47] Researchers have actively analyzed the dynamics of how blogs become popular. There are essentially two measures of this: popularity through citations, as well as popularity through affiliation (i.e., blogroll). The basic conclusion from studies of the structure of blogs is that while it takes time for a blog to become popular through blogrolls, permalinks can boost popularity more quickly, and are perhaps more indicative of popularity and authority than blogrolls, since they denote that people are actually reading the blog’s content and deem it valuable or noteworthy in specific cases.”[48]

The blogdex project was launched by researchers in the MIT Media Lab to crawl the Web and gather data from thousands of blogs in order to investigate their social properties. Information was gathered by the tool for over four years, during which it autonomously tracked the most contagious information spreading in the blog community, ranking it by recency and popularity. It can, therefore, be considered the first instantiation of a memetracker. The project was replaced by tailrank.com which in turn has been replaced by spinn3r.com.

Blogs are given rankings by Alexa Internet (web hits of Alexa Toolbar users), and formerly by blog search engine Technorati based on the number of incoming links (Technorati stopped doing this in 2014). In August 2006, Technorati found that the most linked-to blog on the internet was that of Chinese actress Xu Jinglei.[49] Chinese media Xinhua reported that this blog received more than 50 million page views, claiming it to be the most popular blog in the world.”[50] Technorati rated Boing Boing to be the most-read group-written blog.”[49]

### 2.1.5 Blurring with the mass media

Many bloggers, particularly those engaged in participatory journalism, are amateur journalists, and thus they differentiate themselves from the professional reporters and editors who work in mainstream media organizations. Other bloggers are media professionals who are publishing online, rather than via a TV station or newspaper, either as an add-on to a traditional media presence (e.g., hosting a radio show or writing a column in a paper newspaper), or as their sole journalistic output. Some institutions and organizations see blogging as a means of “getting around the filter” of media “gatekeepers” and pushing their messages directly to the public. Many mainstream journalists, meanwhile, write their own blogs—well over 300, according to CyberJournalist.net’s J-blog list. The first known use of a blog on a news site was in August 1998, when Jonathan Dube of The Charlotte Observer published one chronicling Hurricane Bonnie.”[51]

Some bloggers have moved over to other media. The following bloggers (and others) have appeared on radio and television: Duncan Black (known widely by his pseudonym, Atrios), Glenn Reynolds (Instapundit), Markos Moulitsas Zúñiga (Daily Kos), Alex Steffen (Worldchanging), Ana Marie Cox (Wonkette), Nate Silver (FiveThirtyEight.com), and Ezra Klein (Ezra Klein blog in The American Prospect, now in the Washington Post). In counterpoint, Hugh Hewitt exemplifies a mass media personality who has moved in the other direction, adding to his reach in “old media” by being an influential blogger. Similarly, it was *Emergency Preparedness and Safety Tips On Air and Online* blog articles that captured Surgeon General of the United States Richard Carmona’s attention and earned his kudos for the associated broadcasts by talk show host Lisa Tolleiver and Westchester Emergency Volunteer Reserves-Medical Reserve Corps Director Marianne Partridge.”[52]"[53]"[54]"[55]

Blogs have also had an influence on minority languages, bringing together scattered speakers and learners; this is particularly so with blogs in Gaelic languages. Minority language publishing (which may lack economic feasibility) can find its audience through inexpensive blogging. There are examples of bloggers who have published books based on their blogs, e.g., Salam Pax, Ellen Simonetti, Jessica Cutler, ScrappleFace. Blog-based books have been given the name blook. A prize for the best blog-based book was initiated in 2005,”[56] the Lulu Bloooker Prize.”[57] However, success has been elusive offline,
with many of these books not selling as well as their blogs. The book based on Julie Powell's blog "The Julie/Julia Project" was made into the film Julie & Julia, apparently the first to do so.

2.1.6 Consumer-generated advertising

Consumer-generated advertising is a relatively new and controversial development, and it has created a new model of marketing communication from businesses to consumers. Among the various forms of advertising on blogs, the most controversial are the sponsored posts. [58] These are blog entries or posts and may be in the form of feedback, reviews, opinion, videos, etc. and usually contain a link back to the desired site using a keyword or several keywords. Blogs have led to some disintermediation and a breakdown of the traditional advertising model, where companies can skip over the advertising agencies (previously the only interface with the customer) and contact the customers directly via social media websites. On the other hand, new companies specialised in blog advertising have been established, to take advantage of this new development as well. However, there are many people who look negatively on this new development. Some believe that any form of commercial activity on blogs will destroy the blogosphere’s credibility. [59]

2.1.7 Legal and social consequences

Blogging can result in a range of legal liabilities and other unforeseen consequences. [60]

Defamation or liability

Several cases have been brought before the national courts against bloggers concerning issues of defamation or liability. U.S. payouts related to blogging totaled $17.4 million by 2009; in some cases these have been covered by umbrella insurance. [61] The courts have returned with mixed verdicts. Internet Service Providers (ISPs), in general, are immune from liability for information that originates with third parties (U.S. Communications Decency Act and the EU Directive 2000/31/EC). In Doe v. Cahill, the Delaware Supreme Court held that stringent standards had to be met to unmask the anonymous bloggers, and also took the unusual step of dismissing the libel case itself (as unfounded under American libel law) rather than referring it back to the trial court for reconsideration. [62] In a bizarre twist, the Cahills were able to obtain the identity of John Doe, who turned out to be the person they suspected: the town's mayor, Councilman Cahill's political rival. The Cahills amended their original complaint, and the mayor settled the case rather than going to trial.

In January 2007, two prominent Malaysian political bloggers, Jeff Ooi and Ahirudin Attan, were sued by a pro-government newspaper, The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad, Kalimullah bin Masheerul Hassan, Hishamuddin bin Aun and Brenden John a/l John Pereira over an alleged defamation. The plaintiff was supported by the Malaysian government. [63] Following the suit, the Malaysian government proposed to "register" all bloggers in Malaysia in order to better control parties against their interests. [64] This is the first such legal case against bloggers in the country. In the United States, blogger Aaron Wall was sued by Traffic Power for defamation and publication of trade secrets in 2005. [65] According to Wired magazine, Traffic Power had been "banned from Google for allegedly rigging search engine results." [66] Wall and other "white hat" search engine optimization consultants had exposed Traffic Power in what they claimed was an effort to protect the public. The case was dismissed for lack of personal jurisdiction, and Traffic Power failed to appeal within the allowed time. [67]

In 2009, NDTV issued a legal notice to Indian blogger Kunte for a blog post criticizing their coverage of the Mumbai attacks. [68] The blogger unconditionally withdrew his post, which resulted in several Indian bloggers criticizing NDTV for trying to silence critics. [69]

Employment

Employees who blog about elements of their place of employment can begin to affect the reputation of their employer, either in a positive way, if the employee is praising the employer and its workplaces, or in a negative way, if the blogger is making negative comments about the company or its practices.

In general, attempts by employee bloggers to protect themselves by maintaining anonymity have proved ineffective. [70] In 2009, a controversial and landmark decision by The Hon. Mr Justice Eady refused to grant an order to protect the anonymity of Richard Horton. Horton was a police officer in the United Kingdom who blogged about his job under the name "NightJack." [71]

Delta Air Lines fired flight attendant Ellen Simonetti because she posted photographs of herself in uniform on an airplane and because of comments posted on her blog "Queen of Sky: Diary of a Flight Attendant" which the employer deemed inappropriate. [72] [73] This case highlighted the issue of personal blogging and freedom of expression versus employer rights and responsibilities, and so it received wide media attention. Simonetti took legal action against the airline for "wrongful termination, defamation of character and lost future wages". [74] The suit was postponed while Delta was in bankruptcy proceedings. [75]

In early 2006, Erik Ringmar, a senior lecturer at the London School of Economics, was ordered by the convenor of his department to "take down and destroy" his blog in which he discussed the quality of education at the school." [76]
Mark Jen was terminated in 2005 after 10 days of employment as an assistant product manager at Google for discussing corporate secrets on his personal blog, then called 99zeros and hosted on the Google-owned Blogger service."[77] He blogged about unreleased products and company finances a week before the company’s earnings announcement. He was fired two days after he complied with his employer’s request to remove the sensitive material from his blog."[78]

In India, blogger Gaurav Sabnis resigned from IBM after his posts questioned the claims made by a management school."[79] Jessica Cutler, aka “The Washingtonienne,”[80] blogged about her sex life while employed as a congressional assistant. After the blog was discovered and she was fired,"[81] she wrote a novel based on her experiences and blog: The Washingtonienne: A Novel. As of 2006, Cutler is being sued by one of her former lovers in a case that could establish the extent to which bloggers are obligated to protect the privacy of their real life associates."[82]

Catherine Sanderson, a.k.a. Petite Anglaise, lost her job in Paris at a British accountancy firm because of blogging."[83] Although given in the blog in a fairly anonymous manner, some of the descriptions of the firm and some of its people were less than flattering. Sanderson later won a compensation claim case against the British firm, however."[84]

On the other hand, Penelope Trunk wrote an upbeat article in the Boston Globe in 2006, entitled “Blogs ‘essential’ to a good career”.[85] She was one of the first journalists to point out that a large portion of bloggers are professionals and that a well-written blog can help attract employers.

Business owners Business owners who blog about their business can also run into legal consequences. Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, was fined during the 2006 NBA playoffs for criticizing NBA officials on the court and in his blog."[86]

Political dangers

See also: Political repression of cyber-dissidents

Blogging can sometimes have unforeseen consequences in politically sensitive areas. In some countries, Internet police or secret police may monitor blogs and arrest blog authors of commentators. Blogs can be much harder to control than broadcast or print media, because a person can create a blog whose authorship is hard to trace, by using anonymity technology such as Tor. As a result, totalitarian and authoritarian regimes often seek to suppress blogs and/or to punish those who maintain them.

In Singapore, two ethnic Chinese individuals were imprisoned under the country’s anti-sedition law for posting anti-Muslim remarks in their blogs."[87] Egyptian blogger Kareem Amer was charged with insulting the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak and an Islamic institution through his blog. It is the first time in the history of Egypt that a blogger was prosecuted. After a brief trial session that took place in Alexandria, the blogger was found guilty and sentenced to prison terms of three years for insulting Islam and inciting sedition, and one year for insulting Mubarak."[88] Egyptian blogger Abdel Monem Mahmoud was arrested in April 2007 for anti-government writings in his blog."[89] Monem is a member of the then banned Muslim Brotherhood. After the 2011 Egyptian revolution, the Egyptian blogger Maikel Nabil Sanad was charged with insulting the military for an article he wrote on his personal blog and sentenced to 3 years."[90]

After expressing opinions in his personal blog about the state of the Sudanese armed forces, Jan Pronk, United Nations Special Representative for the Sudan, was given three days notice to leave Sudan. The Sudanese army had demanded his deportation."[91] In Myanmar, Nay Phone Latt, a blogger, was sentenced to 20 years in jail for posting a cartoon critical of head of state Than Shwe."[93]

Personal safety

See also: Cyberstalking and Internet homicide

One consequence of blogging is the possibility of online or in-person attacks or threats against the blogger, sometimes without apparent reason. In some cases, bloggers have faced cyberbullying. Kathy Sierra, author of the blog “Creating Passionate Users”,[94] was the target of threats and misogynistic insults to the point that she canceled her keynote speech at a technology conference in San Diego, fearing for her safety."[95] While a blogger’s anonymity is often tenuous, Internet trolls who would attack a blogger with threats or insults can be emboldened by the anonymity of the online environment, where some users are known only by a pseudonymous “username” (e.g., “Hacker1984”). Sierra and supporters initiated an online discussion aimed at countering abusive online behavior[96] and developed a Blogger’s Code of Conduct, which set out a rules for behaviour in the online space.

Behavior

The Blogger’s Code of Conduct is a proposal by Tim O’Reilly for bloggers to enforce civility on their blogs by being civil themselves and moderating comments on their blog. The code was proposed in 2007 due to threats made to blogger Kathy Sierra."[97] The idea of the code was first reported by BBC News, who quoted O’Reilly saying, "I do think we need some code of conduct around what is acceptable behaviour, I would hope that it doesn’t come
through any kind of regulation it would come through self-regulation.” [98]

O’Reilly and others came up with a list of seven proposed ideas: [99] [100] [101] [102]

1. Take responsibility not just for your own words, but for the comments you allow on your blog.
2. Label your tolerance level for abusive comments.
3. Consider eliminating anonymous comments.
4. Ignore the trolls.
5. Take the conversation offline, and talk directly, or find an intermediary who can do so.
6. If you know someone who is behaving badly, tell them so.
7. Don’t say anything online that you wouldn’t say in person.

These ideas were predictably intensely discussed on the Web and in the media. While the internet has continued to grow, with online activity and discourse only picking up both in positive and negative ways in terms of blog interaction, the proposed Code has drawn more widespread attention to the necessity of monitoring blogging activity and social norms being as important online as offline.

2.1.8 See also

- Bitter Lawyer
- Blog award
- BROG
- Chat room
- Citizen journalism
- Collaborative blog
- Comparison of free blog hosting services
- Customer engagement
- Glossary of blogging
- Interactive journalism
- Internet think tank
- Israbloog
- Bernando LaPallo
- List of blogs
- List of family-and-homemaking blogs
- Mass collaboration
- Prison blogs
- Sideblog
- Social blogging
- Webmaster
- Web template system
- Web traffic

2.1.9 References

2.1. BLOG

[17] Pournelle, Jerry. “Chaos Manor in Perspective”. Jerry Pournelle’s blog. “I can make some claim to this being The Original Blog and Daybook. I certainly started keeping a day book well before most, and long before the term ‘blog’ or Web Log was invented. BIX, the Byte information exchange, preceded the Web by a lot, and I also had a daily journal on GE Genie. All that was long before the World Wide Web.” -- Jerry Pournelle.
[19] “…Dave Winer… whose Scripting News (scripting.com) 978-1857885200
[21] See for instance:
[25] Israel Video Blog aims to show the world ‘the beautiful face of real Israel’ Ynet, February 24, 2008.
[34] [35] Casserly, Meghan and Goudreau, Jenna. Top 100 Websites For Women 2011, Forbes, June 23, 2011
[42] See for instance:
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[66] Wired Magazine, Legal Showdown in Search Fracas, Sept 8, 2005


[71] "Ruling on NightJack author Richard Horton kills blogger anonymity”. Archived from the original on 2011-08-29.


2.2. VIDEO CLIP


2.2.11 External links

- Legal Guide for bloggers by the Electronic Frontier Foundation
- Law Library Legal Blawgs Web Archive from the U.S. Library of Congress

2.2 Video clip

“Web video” redirects here. For technical details of video on the web, see HTML5 video.

This article is about the visual medium. For what is understood by this word in several parts of Europe, see music video. For the 2007 Thai film, see Video Clip (2007 film). For Olivia Lufkin album, see Video Clips (album).

Video clips are short clips of video, usually part of a longer recording. The term is also more loosely used to mean any short video less than the length of a traditional television program.

2.2.1 On the Internet

Main article: Video hosting service

With the spread of Internet global accessing (fastest Internet broadband connection TCP with accumulator cables and semi-fast connection), video clips have become very popular online. By mid-2006 there were tens of millions of video clips available online, with new websites springing up focusing entirely on offering free video clips to users and many established and corporate sites adding video clip content to their websites. With the spread of broadband Internet access, video clips have become very popular online. Whereas most of this content is non-exclusive and available on competing sites, some companies produce all their own videos and do not rely on the work of outside companies or amateurs.

While some video clips are taken from established media sources, community or individual produced clips are becoming more common. Some individuals host their created works on vlogs, which are video blogs. The use of Internet video is growing very fast. Between March and July 2006, YouTube grew from 30 to 100 million views of videos per day. [1] More recent developments includes the BBC’s iPlayer, which was released for open beta testing in July 2007.

2.1.10 Further reading

CHAPTER 2. USER GENERATED CONTENT

2.2.2 Clip culture

The widespread popularity of video clips, with the aid of new distribution channels, has evolved into 'clip culture'. It is compared to 'lean-back' experience of seeing traditional movies, refers to the Internet activity of sharing and viewing a short video, mostly less than 15 minutes. The culture began with the development of broadband Internet service, and has seen a boom since 2005 when websites for uploading clips first started, including Shockinghumor, YouTube, Google Video, MSN Video and Yahoo! Video.

Such video clips often show moments of significance, humour, oddity, or prodigy performance. Sources for video clips include news, movies, music video and amateur video shot. In addition to clips recorded by high-quality camcorders, it has become more common to produce clips with digital cameras, webcams, and mobile phones.

Rise of amateurs

Unlike traditional movies largely dominated by studios, clip movies are overwhelmingly supplied by amateurs. In May 2006, The Economist reported that 90% of clips on YouTube came from amateurs, a few of whom are young comedians. It, in effect, also brought amateur talents. In 2005, two Chinese students Huang Yixin and Wei Wei, now dubbed as "Back Dorm Boys", lip-synched to a song by the Backstreet Boys in a video uploaded to some clip websites and became quickly renowned. They appeared on television shows and concerts, and were also granted a contract by a media company in Beijing for lip-syncing for cash.

An earlier celebrity was David Elsewhere, a talent at popping and liquidating. His performance to Kraftwerk's song Expo 2000 at the Kollaboration talent show in 2001 was widely viewed on the Internet, leading later to his being hired for TV commercials and music videos. Not only have video clips submerged into the world of TV commercials and music videos but it is now also a popular form of entertainment and a hobby for people called "Vloggers" (video blog creators). Many professional video bloggers can be found on the Internet; additionally many notable amateur video bloggers have also emerged.

Citizen journalism

Citizen journalism video reporting dates back as early as the development of camcorders, but all videos were screened by the local media outlets of the time, until its spread has been aided by free upload websites in which censorship is limited to make a vast amount of videos available to anyone who wants it. Scenes rarely broadcast on television, and many first-witnessed scenes have since become publicly available.

Notably, in December 2004, tourist videos of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami offered worldwide audiences the first scenes of the disaster. In December 2003, videos in Hong Kong showing the bully in De La Salle School outraged the public and raised a wide concern on school violence that led to the arrest of 11 students.

Advertising

Online video advertising is used by advertisers. With online entertainment sites delivering high-quality television programming content free of charge, online video entertainment is rising in popularity.

With consumer attention came advertisers. MAGNA estimated that online video advertisement spending will approach nearly US$700 million in 2008, a 32% increase from 2008. [2] As businesses seek to tighten budgetary allocations, online video is a highly measurable and results-driven delivery platform.

Vlog

From late 2005 to early 2006, a new form of blogging emerged called a vlog."[3][4][5] It is a blog that takes video as the primary content, often accompanied by supporting text, image, and additional metadata to provide context. Su Li Walker, an analyst with the Yankee Group, said that like blogs, which have become an extension of traditional media, video blogs will be a supplement to traditional broadcasting. [6][7] Regular entries are typically presented in reverse chronological order and often combine embedded video or a video link with supporting text, images, and metadata.
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Convergence with traditional media

The potential markets of video clips has caught the attention of traditional movie studios. In 2006, the producers of Lucky Number Slevin, a film with Morgan Freeman, Lucy Liu and Bruce Willis, made an 8-minute clip for YouTube. Celebrities in traditional media have proven to confer bigger popularity in clip culture.

The emerging potential for success in web video has caught the eye of some of the top entertainment executives in America, including former Disney executive and current head of the Tornante Company, Michael Eisner. Eisner's Vuguru subdivision of Tornante partnered with Canadian media conglomerate Rogers Media on October 26, 2009, securing plans to produce upwards of 30 new web shows a year. Rogers Media will help fund and distribute Vuguru's upcoming productions, thereby solidifying a direct connection between old and new media. [8]

2.2.3 Web video presenters

2009 saw an increase in the number of corporate e-presenters using green screen technology in an attempt to direct user traffic to profitable areas of web sites, e.g.; a user logs on to a web site and an e-presenter appears, giving fast, concise information and directing users to visit customer testimonials pages, special offers or incentives to either buy or enquire online. Adding such human touches gives users confidence in the web site and company, increasing their trust in their brand and turns visits into inquiries.

2.2.4 Use of corporate web videos

Corporations have used Web video in communicating with people and in driving traffic to their sites. According to one article, the most common types of corporate Web video are:

- Customer testimonials
- Video success stories
- Video Case Studies
- Man-On-the-Street interviews and market research
- Product presentations and video brochures
- Product demonstrations
- Product Reviews
- Corporate Overviews
- Presentations, Trade Shows and Events
- Facilities Tours
- Training and support videos
- Commercials and Infomercials

2.2.5 See also

- Timeline of online video
- List of Internet phenomena
- Media clip
- Screencast
- Video sharing
- GIF

2.2.6 References

[2] “Hulu Shakes Up the Online Video Scene”. eMarketer
[8] Eisner cuts deal for Web shows

2.2.7 Further reading

2.2.8 External links

- Video directories at DMOZ

2.3 Let’s Play

This article is about the video game term. For other uses, see Let's Play (disambiguation).

A Let’s Play (commonly referred to as an LP) is a style of video series documenting the playthrough of a video game, usually including commentary by the gamer. A Let’s Play differs from a video game walkthrough or strategy guide by focusing on an individual's subjective experience with the game, often with humorous, irreverent, or critical commentary from the gamer, rather than being an objective source of information on how to progress through the game. While Let’s Plays and live streaming of game playthroughs are related, Let’s Plays tend to be curated experiences that include editing and scripted narration, while streaming is an unedited experience performed on the fly.

2.3.1 History

From the onset of computer video entertainment, video game players with access to screenshot capture software, video capture devices, and screen recording software have recorded themselves playing through games, often as part of walkthroughs, longplays, speedruns or other entertainment form. For example, the Japanese television program GameCenter CX had the host challenged to complete retro games within a single day, and others like Skip Rodgers had provided VHS tapes describing to players how to complete difficult games. One such form these took was the addition of running commentary, typically humorous in nature, along with the screenshots or videos; video-based playthroughs would typically be presented without significant editing to maintain the raw response the players had to the game. The presenter would also often poll the readers or viewers to certain in-game decisions as to provide an element of interactivity for longer games. Though others had used the same approach at the time, the forums at the website Something Awful are credited with coming up with the term “Let’s Play” in 2007 to describe such playthroughs. The exact origins of the term are unclear, but believed to be in reference to a screenshot playthrough of The Oregon Trail via the Something Awful forums sometime in 2005; the playthrough can no longer be found on the site though has been referenced by other forum threads.

Sawyer stated that the format he adopted came from an earlier playthrough by forum user “Vlaphor” for I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream. Sawyer's adaption would become the format that future Something Awful users would subsequently use. Sawyer is also credited for creating the first video playthrough for the game The Immortal which he made alongside his screenshot playback. With the onset of user-created video streaming websites like YouTube or Twitch, more users have been able to prepare and share such videos, making the Let's Play format widely popular, spreading beyond the Something Awful forums.

2.3.2 Contemporary

Felix Kjellberg, better known as PewDiePie, has one of the largest subscriber bases for his Let's Play videos.

The exact format for contemporary Let's Play videos is vague, and at times may be compared or considered the same as a player completing a game via streaming video for an audience. According to Patrick Lee of The A.V. Club, a good Let's Play video distinguishes itself from straightforward streaming playthroughs when the player has sufficiently familiarized themselves with the game as to be able to offer better commentary and show off more of the game to their audience, is able to provide the audience with personal recollections about the game, or can play through a game they have already completed under self-imposed challenges, such as completing a game without killing any enemy. Through this approach, Lee states,
such Let's Play videos serve to help memorialize these games, helping those who may not have access to the titles (due to age or regional restrictions) to appreciate more obscure games."[19]

Some of the more popular gamers that create these videos have become Internet celebrities and seen as a type of "professional fan", according to Maker Studios’ Dar Nothhaft; other gamers tune into these videos to get a different perspective on games rather than professional review sources."[10] Felix Kjellberg, known by his online handle PewDiePie, has monetized his "Let's Play" videos which reach over 40 million subscribers and over 10 billion views, as of September 2015."[11][12][13][14] Some other people or groups include Achievement Hunter, The Yogscast, Smosh Games, Markiplier, Game Grumps, Stampylonghead, and Machinima.com.

Such Let's Plays are monetized by ad revenue from the video hosting site. For example, standard Google affiliate programs pay approximately 55% of the price paid by advertisers to the content provider, while Google retains the rest; as such, revenue from Let's Play channel are based on the number of viewers they obtain. Providers can also join various content networks like Maker Studios, which offer promotion and advertising for content providers in exchange for a share of the ad revenue. PewDiePie’s monthly revenue from his Let's Plays are estimated between $140,000 and $1.4 million, while smaller channels can still earn between $500 and $1000 a month;"[12] the Wall Street Journal reported that PewDiePie made over $4 million in 2013,"[13] while Forbes ranked him the highest YouTube personality in 2015, earning over $12 million a year before taxes."[15] Several of these individual Let's Players, as they are called, have transformed this into a full-time career while learning skills such as communications and video editing that can be used for future jobs."[12] More popular broadcasters often share part of their revenue for charitable efforts, or hold charity drives while they play through games for a live audience. PewDiePie’s contribution in this area led to him being listed as one of thirty most influential people on the Internet in a March 2015 list, and as one of the top 100 influential people overall in an April 2016 list, both compiled by Time magazine."[16][17] Business Insider reported that eleven of the top twenty most-subscribed, independent YouTube publishers as of November 2014 are those that produce Let's Play videos."[18]

Let's Play videos have been considered a favorable way to market game titles, in particular for smaller developers. In one case for Thomas Was Alone, Mike Bithell, its developer, attributed the success of a game to a Let's Play video by game commentator and critic John Bain, also known as TotalBiscuit."[19] Similarly, Davey Wrede, the developer of The Stanley Parable developed a relationship with various Let's Play channels prior to the release to assure they could play and record his game; his team further created specialized demos for two popular channels (Rev3Games and Steam Train) that jokingly teased the specific players. Wreden believes this helped lead to the over 100,000 sales of the full game within the first three days of release."[20] Some developers have designed their games to be favorable for Let's Play videos. The developers of Octodad: Dadliest Catch aimed to have the game covered by Let's Play videos by "crea[ting] a lot of room where there are a lot of different options for a player to create their own comedy and put their own personality into that"."[21]

The popularity of Let's Play and similar video commentaries have also led to changes in how some video games have been developed. The Let's Play approach favors games that are quirky and idiosyncratic that draw viewer attention, making some developers aim for these qualities in their games. It also helps for games in early access or beta release cycles as developers from such games can use these videos for feedback to improve their games prior to full release. The Let's Play videos also can bring in more attention to a niche title than traditional gaming press."[22] Some games such as Goat Simulator and I am Bread are considered by critics and players to have been purposely made to be the subject of Let's Plays on popular channels as to drive interest in an otherwise-lackluster game, and are usually derided as "YouTube bait"."[23]

Survival horror games, such as Five Nights at Freddy's and its sequels, which focus more on immersion than skill, are considered tailor-made to take advantage of Let's Play videos and other live-streaming play, as the games' design is aimed to shock the streaming users, providing humorous reactions such as jump scares that are a source of entertainment for viewers."[24][25] This also provides a way for people who would not normally play such games for the discomfort of being scared by the game to find enjoyment in watching the reaction someone else has while playing it."[26] The developers of both Amnesia: The Dark Descent and Outlast stated that Let's Plays of their games helps to make them successful considering that in neither case they had a large promotional budget."[26]

In at least one case, the popularity of a game featured in Let's Plays has led to further sales far after the game's typical shelf-life has expired. In 2014, Electronic Arts opted to print more copies of the 2010 title Skate 3 after its appearance on PewDiePie's and other Let's Play channels have kept sales of the game high, keeping it in the top 40 sales charts for new games in the United Kingdom and with its 2014 sales being 33% higher than 2013 sales."[27]

Let's Plays can also be seen harming a game's distribution particularly for short, linear, narrative-driven games, since viewers can witness the entire game from a Let's Play recording without purchasing it and have no incentive to purchase the title. For the art game That Dragon, Cancer, its developer Ryan Green noted that while there were Let's Plays of the game, several which commented emotionally on the game's topic, some of these playthroughs had simply played through the game...
without added commentary, and provided no links to where players could learn more about the title. Green and his team at Numinous Games had used YouTube’s ContentID to have some of these videos taken down, a result that brought some complaints and which Green admitted later was not the right approach to address the issue. Green requested that with games such as That Dragon, Cancer, that those creating Let’s Play use the playthrough of the game to initiation conversations with their viewers, and that viewers could show their appreciation of the game by tipping the developers in lieu of purchasing the full title.[28][29]

The phenomenon of Let’s Plays was a focal point for the South Park episode “#REHASH”. [30] Double Fine Productions and 2 Player Productions have worked together to create a series called “Dev’s Play”, inspired by Let’s Plays where game developers play through games and offer their commentary from a developer’s perspective, typically alongside one of the developers from the selected game.[31]

2.3.3 Legal issues

The copyright nature of “Let’s Play” videos remains in question; while the developer and/or publisher of games typically possess the copyright and granted exclusive distribution rights on the media assets of the game, others cite fair use claims for these works as their nature is to provide commentary on the video game.[32][33] In one case, Nintendo claimed that they retain the copyright and have registered the content through YouTube’s Content ID system such that they can generate ad revenue from user videos.[34] though Nintendo would later back off of such claims,[35] and later created its own affiliate program between themselves, Google, and proactive uploaders to split profits.[36] Smaller developers have been more open to allowing Let’s Play videos. Ubisoft has stated that it allows its games to be used in Let’s Play videos and allows for those making them to monetize from any ad revenue as long they stay within certain content-appropriateness guidelines.[37] Microsoft Studios similarly created a set of Game Content Usage Rules that sets certain requirements and limitations on those using its software for Let’s Play videos.[38]

In early December 2013, a change in YouTube’s ContentID policy caused many existing Let’s Play and other video-game related material to be blocked.[39] In response, many developers and publishers issued statements and worked with YouTube to assure such videos were not meant to be blocked, helping those whose videos were affected, and encouraging users to continue to show these; these companies included Blizzard, Ubisoft, Capcom, Paradox Interactive, and Valve.[40] YouTube later clarified that the change in the ContentID system that caused videos to be flagged was likely a result of new tools it made available for multi-channel networks, which can cover separate video and audio copyrights. At least two known music multi-channel networks, TuneCore and INDMusic, who represent many video game music composers and artists, had automatically enabled the copyright protection for all of its clients without seeking their input, and as such, many of the Let’s Play videos as well as the game developers’ own promotional videos were blocked due to these actions.[42] YouTube states they do not plan to change this system despite complaints from the original music composers.[43] The streaming website Twitch implemented a similar copyright control approach that would mute recorded streams for up to half-hour blocks if copyrighted music was discovered in August 2014, which was found to have the same problems with blocking Let’s Plays that used original game music. This prompted Twitch to alter the method to reduce false positive and provide ways for users to challenge such claims.[44] Some games which have used licensed music, such as Concrete Jungle and Quantum Break, have provided a game option that disables licensed music playback or replaces this music with copyright-free music, making to make the games “stream-safe” to avoid being tagged as copyright infringing.[45][46] In other cases, music licenses sites now consider the impact of Let’s Plays on the video game marketing cycle, and offer broader licensing options for their music that includes their legal use in Let’s Play for that game, and assurances that any Let’s Plays tagged with ContentID violations would be remedied. Even though these can be resolved, the time it takes to clear the ContentID claim can be costly to Let Play broadcasters as they lose advertising revenue on the video while it is offline, as well as losing impact for the developer and publisher of the game. Pinokl Games and tinyBuild, the developers and publishers, respectively, of Party Hard, had found Let’s Plays of their game hit frequently with ContentID claims that were resolved by the music licensing service; they opted to craft a new YouTube-friendly soundtrack for this purpose to avoid these.[47]

Another legal issue related to Let’s Play is disclosure. More popular YouTube channels will sometimes receive free promotional copies of games from developers and publishers in advance of release to promote the title.[48] According to the US Federal Trade Commission, players that review or create commentary for such games should disclose the game if they subsequently make money from the review to stay within ethical business practices.[49][50] In one specific scenario, John Bain, who has previously argued for clear disclosure of paid reviews,[51] has revealed that he and several others were approached by Plaid Social, a marketing outlet for Warner Bros. Entertainment and offered promotional copies of the upcoming Middle-Earth: Shadow of Mordor in exchange for meeting very specific tasks in their presentation. Bain refused on these terms, but other commentators had taken the deal without disclosure of the deal, raising the issue of how many of these works were made through paid reviews.[52] If an advertiser or marketer is offering to someone to write a review that is fa-
2.3. LET’S PLAY

2.3.4 See also

- Game demo
- Game replay
- Longplay
- Speedrun
- Video game walkthrough

2.3.5 References


[22] "How has the rise of YouTubers affected how you make games?", Gamasutra. 2014-06-20, retrieved 2014-06-20


Twitch is a live streaming video platform owned by Twitch Interactive, a subsidiary of Amazon.com. In June 2011 as a spin-off of the general-interest streaming platform, Justin.tv, the site primarily focuses on video gaming, including playthroughs of video games, broadcasts of eSports competitions, creative content, and more recently, music broadcasts. Content on the site can either be viewed live or via video on demand.

The popularity of Twitch would eclipse that of its general-interest counterpart; in October 2013, the website had 45 million unique viewers, and by February 2014, it was considered the fourth largest source of peak Internet traffic in the United States. At the same time, Justin.tv’s parent company was re-branded as Twitch Interactive to represent the shift in focus – Justin.tv was shut down in August 2014. That month, the service was acquired by Amazon for $970 million, which later led to the introduction of synergies with the company’s subscription service Amazon Prime. Twitch later acquired Curse, an operator of online video gaming communities, and introduced means to purchase games through links on streams, along with a program allowing streamers to receive commissions on the sales of games that they play.

In 2015, Twitch announced it had more than 1.5 million broadcasters and 100 million visitors per month. [4]

2.4.1 History

Further information: Timeline of Twitch.tv

When Justin.tv was launched in 2007 by Justin Kan and Emmett Shear, the site was divided into several content categories. The gaming category grew especially fast, and became the most popular content on the site. [5] In June 2011, it was decided to spin off the gaming content as Twitch.TV, inspired by the term Twitch, the term used to describe a peak Internet traffic during peak times in the United States, behind Google, Apple, and Netflix. Twitch makes up 1.8% of total US Internet traffic during peak periods. [17]

Especially since the shutdown of its direct competitor Own3d.tv in early 2013, Twitch has become the most popular e-sports streaming service by a large margin, leading some to conclude that the website has a near monopoly on the market. [13] Competing video services, such as YouTube and Dailymotion, began to increase the prominence of their gaming content to compete, but have had a much smaller impact so far. [14] As of mid-2013, there were over 43 million viewers on Twitch monthly, with the average viewer watching an hour and a half a day. [16] As of February 2014, Twitch is the fourth largest source of Internet traffic during peak times in the United States, behind Netflix, Google, and Apple. Twitch plays Pokémon, a crowdsourced attempt to play Pokémon using a system translating

For the reaction time-based game mechanism, see Twitch Playthrough (reaction time).

Not to be confused with TWiT.tv.
chat commands into game controls, went viral; by February 17, the channel had reached over 6.5 million total views since its introduction five days prior, and was averaging concurrent viewership between 60 and 70 thousand viewers, with at least 10% participating. Vice President of Marketing Matthew DiPietro praised the stream, considering it "one more example of how video games have become a platform for entertainment and creativity that extends WAY beyond the original intent of the game creator. By merging a video game, live video and a participatory experience, the broadcaster has created an entertainment hybrid custom made for the Twitch community. This is a wonderful proof of concept that we hope to see more of in the future.” *[19]* *[20]* Beginning with its 2014 edition, Twitch was made the official live streaming platform of the Electronic Entertainment Expo.” *[21]*

On May 18, 2014, *Variety* first reported that Google had reached a preliminary deal to acquire Twitch through its YouTube subsidiary for approximately US$1 billion. *[22]* *[23]* *[24]* *[25]* *[26]*

**August 2014 changes**

On August 5, 2014, the original Justin.tv site was abruptly shut down, citing a need to focus resources entirely on Twitch. *[27]* *[28]* *[29]* On August 6, 2014, Twitch introduced an updated archive system, with multi-platform access to highlights from past broadcasts by a channel, higher quality video, increased server backups, and a new Video Manager interface for managing past broadcasts and compiling “highlights” from broadcasts that can also be exported to YouTube. Due to technological limitations and resource requirements, the new system contained several regressions; the option to archive complete broadcasts on an indefinite basis (“save forever”) was removed, meaning that they can only be retained for a maximum of 14 days, or 60 for partners and Turbo subscribers. While compiled highlights can be archived indefinitely, they were limited to two hours in length. *[30]* *[31]* Additionally, all on-demand videos became subject to acoustic fingerprinting using software provided by Audible Magic; if copyrighted music (particularly, songs played by users from outside of the game they are playing) is detected, the 30-minute portion of the video which contains the music will be muted. Live broadcasts are not subject to these filters. *[32]* *[33]*

The audio filtering system, along with the lack of communication surrounding the changes in general, proved to be controversial among users. In particular, users felt that the new filtering system was too inaccurate, flagged music played within games themselves, and voiced concerns that it could affect the service’s ability to present footage from games which notably include large amounts of licensed music, such as the *Grand Theft Auto* series. The change also drew comparisons to the similar policies employed by YouTube—especially given the rumors surrounding Google’s bid to purchase the service. In a Reddit AMA, co-founder Emmett Shear admitted that his staff had “screwed up” and should have provided advance warning of the changes, and promised that Twitch would “absolutely no intention” of implementing audio filtering on live broadcasts. *[34]* On August 7, 2014, the 2-hour length limit on highlights was again removed, and an appeals process was added for flagged audio contained within on-demand recordings. *[35]* In January 2015, to further rectify these issues, Twitch introduced a royalty-free music library featuring tracks from various independent labels cleared for use in streams. *[36]*

**Amazon.com subsidiary (2014–present)**

On August 25, 2014, it was announced that Amazon.com would acquire Twitch Interactive for US$970 million. *[37]* *[38]* The deal was expected to be finalized by the end of 2014. *[2]* *[39]* Sources reported that the rumored Google deal had fallen through and allowed Amazon to make the bid; *Forbes* reported that Google had backed out of the deal due to potential antitrust concerns surrounding it and its existing ownership of YouTube. *[40]* The acquisition was closed on September 25, 2014. *[41]*

Twitch is now operated as a wholly owned subsidiary of Amazon.com, with Emmett Shear remaining as CEO. Shear touted the Amazon Web Services platform as an "attractive" aspect of the deal, and that Amazon had "built relationships with the big players in media,” which could be used to the service's advantage—particularly in the realm of content licensing. The purchase of Twitch marked the third recent video gaming-oriented acquisition by Amazon, which had previously acquired the developers Reflexive Entertainment and Double Helix Games. *[42]*

On December 9, 2014, Twitch announced it had acquired GoodGame Agency, an organization that owns the eSports teams Evil Geniuses and Alliance. *[43]* *[44]* In March 2015, Twitch reset all user passwords and disabled all connections to external Twitter and YouTube accounts, after the service reported that someone had gained "unauthorized access" to the user information of some Twitch users. *[45]*

In June 2016, Twitch added a new feature known as "Cheering", a special form of emoticon purchased as a microtransaction using an in-site currency known as "Bits". Bits are bought using Amazon Payments, and cheers act as donations to the channel. Users also earn badges within a channel based on how much they have cheered. *[46]*

On August 16, 2016, Twitch acquired Curse, Inc., an operator of online video gaming communities and gaming-oriented VoIP software. *[47]* In December 2016, GoodGame Agency was divested by Amazon to their respective members due to conflict of interest concerns. *[48]* On September 30, 2016, Twitch announced...
Twitch Prime, a service which provides premium features that are exclusive to users who have an active Amazon Prime subscription. This includes advertising-free streaming, and monthly offers of free add-on content ("Game Loot") and game discounts.\[49\]

In December 2016, Twitch announced a semi-automated chat moderation tool, which uses natural language processing and machine learning to set aside potentially unwanted content for human review.\[50\] In February 2017, Twitch announced that it would allow users to purchase games through the service, with major launch partners such as Paradox Interactive, Telltale Games, and Ubisoft. Links to purchase an eligible game will be displayed within Twitch's browsing interface, and partners can opt to display a purchase button on their stream when an eligible game is being played. If a game is bought via a stream's purchase link, the respective channel receives a 5% commission on the sale. Users also receive a "Twitch Crate" on every purchase, which includes Bits and a collection of random emoticons.\[51\]\[52\]\[53\]

Twitch and Blizzard Entertainment signed a two-year deal in June 2017 to have Twitch be the exclusive streaming broadcaster of select Blizzard eSports championship events, with viewers under Twitch Prime getting special rewards in various Blizzard games.\[54\]

### 2.4.2 Content and audience

Twitch is designed to be a platform for video game-related content, including e-sports tournaments, personal streams of individual players, and gaming-related talk shows.\[55\] A number of channels do live speedrunning.\[56\] The Twitch homepage currently displays games based on viewership. The typical viewer is male and aged between 18 and 34 years of age, although the site has also made attempts at pursuing other demographics, including women.\[16\]\[57\] As of December 2016 some of the most popular games streamed on Twitch are League of Legends, Hearthstone, and Dota 2 with a combined total of over 174 million hours watched.\[58\]

Twitch has also made expansions into non-gaming content; in July 2013, the site streamed a performance of *Video Games Live* from San Diego Comic-Con, and on July 30, 2014, electronic dance music act Steve Aoki broadcast a live performance from a nightclub in Ibiza.\[59\]\[60\]\[61\]\[62\] In January 2015, Twitch introduced an official category for music streams, such as radio shows and music production activities, and in March 2015, announced that it would become the new official live streaming partner of the Ultra Music Festival, an electronic music festival in Miami.\[36\]\[63\]

On October 28, 2015, Twitch launched a second non-gaming category, "Creative", which is intended for streams showcasing the creation of artistic and creative works. To promote the launch, the service also streamed an eight-day marathon of Bob Ross' *The Joy of Painting*.\[64\] In July 2016, Twitch launched "Social eating" as a beta; it was inspired by the Korean phenomenon of *Muk-bang* and Korean players having engaged in the practice as intermissions on their gaming streams.\[65\]

### Charity

![Games Done Quick](image)

*Games Done Quick* is a bi-annual speedrunning event for charity hosted on Twitch.\[66\]

Broadcasters on Twitch often host streams promoting and raising money towards charity. By 2013, the website has hosted events which, in total, raised over US$8 million in donations for charitable causes, such as *Extra Life* 2013.\[67\]

### Lag issues

In late 2013, particularly due to increasing viewership and using a legacy Adobe Flash plugin to present video to desktop users, Twitch had issues with lag, predominantly in Europe.\[14\] Twitch has subsequently added new servers in the region.\[68\] Also in order to address these problems, Twitch implemented a new video system shown to be more efficient than the previous system. Initially, the new video system was criticized by users because it caused a significant stream delay, interfering with broadcaster-viewer interaction.\[69\] Twitch staff said that the increased delay was likely temporary and at the time, was an acceptable tradeoff for the decrease in buffering.\[70\]

### Banned content

Twitch users are not allowed to stream any game that is rated "Adults Only" (AO) in the United States by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB), regardless of its rating in any other geographical region, and any game that contains "overtly sexual content" or "gratuitous violence". Twitch has also explicitly banned specific games from streaming, regardless of rating; this includes games such as *BMX XXX*, eroge visual novel games such as *Dramatic Murder*, *HuniePop*, *Rinse and Repeat, Second Life*, and *Yandere Simulator*.\[71\]\[72\]\[73\]\[74\]
Twitch users are also not allowed to stream content which violates the terms of use of third-party services. The banning of *Yandere Simulator* was criticized by its anonymous developer, who believed that the game was being arbitrarily singled out with no explanation, as Twitch has not banned other games with similarly excessive sexual or violent content such as *Mortal Kombat X*, *Grand Theft Auto*, or *The Witcher 3*. Advertising on the site has been handled by a number of partners. In 2011, Twitch had an exclusive deal with Future US. On April 17, 2012, Twitch announced a deal to give CBS Interactive the rights to exclusively sell advertising, promotions and sponsorships for the community. On June 5, 2013, Twitch announced the formation of the Twitch Media Group, a new in-house advertisement sales team which has taken over CBS Interactive's role of selling advertisements.

### 2.4.3 Partner and affiliate programs

In July 2011, Twitch launched its Partner Program, which reached 4,000 members as of June 2013. As of 2015, there are 11,000 partnered Twitch streamers. Similar to the Partner Program of other video sites like YouTube, the Partner Program allows popular content producers to share in the advertisement revenue generated from their streams. Additionally, Twitch users can subscribe to partner streamers' channels for US$4.99 a month, often granting the user access to unique emoticons, live chat privileges, and other various perks. Twitch retains US$2.50 of every US$4.99 channel subscription, with the remaining US$2.49 going directly to the partnered streamer. Although exceptions can be made, Twitch requires that prospective partners have an "average concurrent viewership of 500+", as well as a consistent streaming schedule of at least three days a week. Amazon Prime subscribers may freely subscribe to a user once every 30 days. On April 19, 2017, Twitch announced that it would allow channels to offer higher-priced subscription tiers alongside the lowest US$4.99 tier.

In April 2017, Twitch launched its Affiliate Program that allows smaller channels to generate revenue as well. The participants of this program get some, but not all of the benefits of the Twitch Partners. As of April 26, the streamers could make profit from cheering with Bits which are purchasable from Twitch directly. As of June 27, affiliates are now able to access the Twitch Subscriptions feature, with all the same functionality that Partners have access to, alongside one subscribe emoticon. Affiliates are currently unable to receive revenue from ads, but Twitch has stated they plan to introduce this functionality in the future. The criteria to qualify to the affiliate program is currently as follows:

- Have at least 500 total minutes broadcast in the last 30 days.
- Have at least 7 unique broadcast days in the last 30 days.
- Have an average of 3 concurrent viewers or more over the last 30 days.
- Have at least 50 Followers.

### 2.4.4 Platform support

Twitch CEO Emmett Shear has stated a desire to support a wide variety of platforms, stating that they wanted to be on "every platform where people watch video." Twitch streaming apps are available for mobile devices and video game consoles, including Android and iOS, as well as PlayStation 4, PlayStation 3, Xbox One, and Xbox 360 video game consoles. PlayStation 4 and Xbox One video game consoles include built-in support for streaming to Twitch. Twitch has been integrated into PC software, including video streaming to Twitch directly from EA’s Origin software, Ubisoft’s Uplay, games played on modern Nvidia video cards (via the driver’s ShadowPlay feature), and games such as *Eve Online*, *PlanetSide 2* and the *Call of Duty* franchise. 40 Players also have the ability to link their Twitch accounts with accounts on Valve’s Steam. In 2013, Twitch released a software development kit to allow any developer to integrate Twitch streaming into their software.

### 2.4.5 TwitchCon

In 2015, Twitch first held TwitchCon, a convention devoted to Twitch and the culture of video game streaming. The inaugural TwitchCon was held at the Moscone Center in San Francisco from September 25–26, 2015. It featured a keynote by CEO Emmett Shear, as well as an afterparty featuring Finnish electronic musician Darude. All of the convention’s panels were streamed live on Twitch. At least 20,000 attended the inaugural event.

On February 18, 2016, Twitch announced that TwitchCon 2016 will expand to a three-day event from September 30–October 2, 2016 and will move venue to the San Diego Convention Center. 35,000 people attended that year's event. On January 10, 2017, Twitch announced that they will move venue again for TwitchCon 2017 to the Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center and will be held from October 20–22, 2017.
2.4.6 Media

Twitch will be the subject of an upcoming documentary film, now in production by the National Film Board of Canada and Arte, which will incorporate footage from a Twitch channel called "Streamersdoc", hosting live panels about game streaming.[101]

2.4.7 See also

- LiveStream
- Machinima
- Major League Gaming
- Mixer
- Dingit.tv
- Streamup
- Ustream
- YY
- Hitbox.tv

2.4.8 References


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[79] How exactly do Twitch streamers make a living? Destiny breaks it down! The Daily Dot

[80] Twitch


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[84] "Keep your eyes peeled for Sub buttons!”. Twitch. 27 June 2017.


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2.4.9 External links

- Official website
Chapter 3

Platforms

3.1 Internet forum

“Double post” redirects here. For the PC BIOS double cold boot behaviour, see double POST.

A discussion forum is hierarchical or tree-like in structure: a forum can contain a number of subforums, each of which may have several topics. Within a forum’s topic, each new discussion started is called a thread, and can be replied to by as many people as so wish.

Depending on the forum’s settings, users can be anonymous or have to register with the forum and then subsequently log in in order to post messages. On most forums, users do not have to log in to read existing messages.

3.1.1 History

The modern forum originated from bulletin boards, and so-called computer conferencing systems, and are a technological evolution of the dialup bulletin board system. From a technological standpoint, forums or boards are web applications managing user-generated content.

Early Internet forums could be described as a web version of an electronic mailing list or newsgroup (such as exist on Usenet); allowing people to post messages and comment on other messages. Later developments emulated the different newsgroups or individual lists, providing more than one forum, dedicated to a particular topic.

Internet forums are prevalent in several developed countries. Japan posts the most with over two million per day on their largest forum, 2channel. China also has many millions of posts on forums such as Tianya Club.

Some of the very first forum systems were the Planet-Forum system, developed in the beginning of the 1970-s, the EIES system, first operational in 1976, and the KOM system, first operational in 1977.

One of the first forum sites, and still active today, is Delphi Forums, once called Delphi (online service). The service, with four million members, dates to 1983.

Forums perform a function similar to that of dial-up bulletin board systems and Usenet networks that were first created starting in the late 1970s. Early web-based forums date back as far as 1994, with the WIT project from W3 Consortium and starting from this time, many alternatives were created. A sense of virtual community often develops around forums that have regular
users. Technology, video games, sports, music, fashion, religion, and politics are popular areas for forum themes, but there are forums for a huge number of topics. Internet slang and image macros popular across the Internet are abundant and widely used in Internet forums.

Forum software packages are widely available on the Internet and are written in a variety of programming languages, such as PHP, Perl, Java and ASP. The configuration and records of posts can be stored in text files or in a database. Each package offers different features, from the most basic, providing text-only postings, to more advanced packages, offering multimedia support and formatting code (usually known as BBCode). Many packages can be integrated easily into an existing website to allow visitors to post comments on articles.

Several other web applications, such as weblog software, also incorporate forum features. WordPress comments at the bottom of a blog post allow for a single-threaded discussion of any given blog post. Slashcode, on the other hand, is far more complicated, allowing fully threaded discussions and incorporating a robust moderation and meta-moderation system as well as many of the profile features available to forum users.

Some stand-alone threads on forums have reached fame and notability such as the "I am lonely will anyone speak to me" thread on MovieCodec.com's forums, which was described as the "web's top hangout for lonely folk" by Wired Magazine."[7]

### 3.1.2 Structure

A forum consists of a tree-like directory structure. The top end is "Categories". A forum can be divided into categories for the relevant discussions. Under the categories are sub-forums and these sub-forums can further have more sub-forums. The topics (commonly called threads) come under the lowest level of sub-forums and these are the places under which members can start their discussions or posts. Logically forums are organized into a finite set of generic topics (usually with one main topic) driven and updated by a group known as members, and governed by a group known as moderators. It can also have a graph structure."[8] All message boards will use one of three possible display formats. Each of the three basic message board display formats: Non-Threaded/Semi-Threaded/Fully Threaded, has its own advantages and disadvantages. If messages are not related to one another at all a Non-Threaded format is best. If a user has a message topic and multiple replies to that message topic a semi-threaded format is best. If a user has a message topic and replies to that message topic, and replies to replies, then a fully threaded format is best."[9]

### User groups

Internally, Western-style forums organize visitors and logged in members into user groups. Privileges and rights are given based on these groups. A user of the forum can automatically be promoted to a more privileged user group based on criteria set by the administrator."[10] A person viewing a closed thread as a member will see a box saying he does not have the right to submit messages there, but a moderator will likely see the same box granting him access to more than just posting messages."[11]

An unregistered user of the site is commonly known as a guest or visitor. Guests are typically granted access to all functions that do not require database alterations or breach privacy. A guest can usually view the contents of the forum or use such features as read marking, but occasionally an administrator will disallow visitors to read their forum as an incentive to become a registered member."[note 1] A person who is a very frequent visitor of the forum, a section or even a thread is referred to as a lurker and the habit is referred to as lurking. Registered members often will refer to themselves as lurking in a particular location, which is to say they have no intention of participating in that section but enjoy reading the contributions to it.

**Moderators** The moderators (short singular form: "mod") are users (or employees) of the forum who are granted access to the posts and threads of all members for the purpose of moderating discussion (similar to arbitration) and also keeping the forum clean (neutralizing spam and spambots etc.)."[12] Moderators also answer users' concerns about the forum, general questions, as well as respond to specific complaints. Common privileges of moderators include: deleting, merging, moving, and splitting of posts and threads, locking, renaming, sticky-ing of threads, banning, suspending, unsuspend, unbanning, warning the members, or adding, editing, removing the polls of threads."[13] "Junior Modding", "Backseat Modding", or "Forum coping" can refer negatively to the behavior of ordinary users who take a moderator-like tone in criticizing other members.

Essentially, it is the duty of the moderator to manage the day-to-day affairs of a forum or board as it applies to the stream of user contributions and interactions. The relative effectiveness of this user management directly impacts the quality of a forum in general, its appeal, and its usefulness as a community of interrelated users.

**Administrator** The administrators (short form: "admin") manage the technical details required for running the site. As such, they may promote (and demote) members to/from moderators, manage the rules, create sections and sub-sections, as well as perform any database operations (database backup etc.). Administrators often also act as moderators. Administrators may also make
forum-wide announcements, or change the appearance (known as the skin) of a forum. There are also many forums where administrators share their knowledge."[13]

Post

A post is a user-submitted message enclosed into a block containing the user's details and the date and time it was submitted. Members are usually allowed to edit or delete their own posts. Posts are contained in threads, where they appear as blocks one after another. The first post"[14] starts the thread; this may be called the TS (thread starter) or OP (original post). Posts that follow in the thread are meant to continue discussion about that post, or respond to other replies; it is not uncommon for discussions to be derailed.

On Western forums, the classic way to show a member's own details (such as name and avatar) has been on the left side of the post, in a narrow column of fixed width, with the post controls located on the right, at the bottom of the main body, above the signature block. In more recent forum software implementations, the Asian style of displaying the members' details above the post has been copied.

Posts have an internal limit usually measured in characters. Often one is required to have a message of minimum length of 10 characters. There is always an upper limit but it is rarely reached – most boards have it at either 10,000, 20,000, 30,000, or 50,000 characters.

Most forums keep track of a user's postcount. The postcount is a measurement of how many posts a certain user has made."[15] Users with higher postcounts are often considered more reputable than users with lower postcounts, but not always. For instance some forums have disabled postcounts with the hopes that doing so will emphasize the quality of information over quantity.

Thread

See also: Conversation threading

A thread (sometimes called a topic) is a collection of posts, usually displayed from oldest to latest, although this is typically configurable: Options for newest to oldest and for a threaded view (a tree-like view applying logical reply structure before chronological order) can be available. A thread is defined by a title, an additional description that may summarize the intended discussion, and an opening or original post (common abbreviation OP, which can also mean original poster), which opens whatever dialogue or makes whatever announcement the poster wished. A thread can contain any number of posts, including multiple posts from the same members, even if they are one after the other.

Bumping  A thread is contained in a forum, and may have an associated date that is taken as the date of the last post (options to order threads by other criteria are generally available). When a member posts in a thread it will jump to the top since it is the latest updated thread. Similarly, other threads will jump in front of it when they receive posts. When a member posts in a thread for no reason but to have it go to the top, it is referred to as a bump or bumping. It has been suggested that "bump" is an acronym of "bring up my post";[16] however, this is almost certainly a backronym and the usage is entirely consistent with the verb "bump" which means "to knock to a new position" .[17]

On some messageboards, users can choose to sage (correctly pronounced /sa-ɣe/ though often confused as IPA: [sɛrdʒ] a post if they wish to make a post, but not "bump" it. The word "sage" derives from the 2channel terminology "サジェスツ" meaning "to lower" .

Stickying  Threads that are important but rarely receive posts are stickied (or in some software, "pinned"). A sticky thread will always appear in front of normal threads, often in its own section. A threaded discussion group is simply any group of individuals who use a forum for threaded, or asynchronous, discussion purposes. The group may or may not be the only users of the forum.

A thread's popularity is measured on forums in reply (total posts minus one, the opening post, in most default forum settings) counts. Some forums also track page views. Threads meeting a set number of posts or a set number of views may receive a designation such as "hot thread" and be displayed with a different icon compared to other threads. This icon may stand out more to emphasize the thread. If the forum's users have lost interest in a particular thread, it becomes a dead thread.

3.1.3 Discussion

Forums prefer a premise of open and free discussion and often adopt de facto standards. Most common topics on forums include questions, comparisons, polls of opinion as well as debates. It is not uncommon for nonsense or unsocial behavior to sprout as people lose temper, especially if the topic is controversial. Poor understanding of differences in values of the participants is a common problem on forums. Because replies to a topic are often worded aimed at someone's point of view, discussion will usually go slightly off into several directions as people question each other's validity, sources and so on. Circular discussion and ambiguity in replies can extend for several tens of posts of a thread eventually ending when everyone gives up or attention spans waver and a more interesting subject takes over. It is not uncommon for debate to end in ad hominem attacks.
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Liabilities of owners and moderators

Several lawsuits have been brought against the forums and moderators claiming libel and damage. A recent case is the scubaboard lawsuit where a business in the Maldives filed a suit against scubaboard for libel and defamation in January 2010.

For the most part, though, forum owners and moderators in the United States are protected by Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which states that "[n]o provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider."

3.1.4 Common features

By default to be an Internet forum, the web application needs an ability to submit threads and replies. Typically, threads are in newer to older view, and replies in older to newer view.

Tripcodes and capcodes

Main article: Tripcode

In a tripcode system, a secret password is added to the user’s name following a separator character (often a number sign). This password, or tripcode, is hashed into a special key, or trip, distinguishable from the name by HTML styles. Tripcodes cannot be faked but on some types of forum software they are insecure and can be guessed. On other types, they can be brute forced with software designed to search for tripcodes such as Tripcode Explorer.[18]

Moderators and administrators will frequently assign themselves capcodes, or tripcodes where the guessable trip is replaced with a special notice (such as "# Administrator"), or cap.

Private message

Main article: Personal message

A private message, or PM for short, is a message sent in private from a member to one or more other members. The ability to send so-called blind carbon copies is sometimes available. When sending a blind carbon copy (bcc), the users to whom the message is sent directly will not be aware of the recipients of the blind carbon copy or even if one was sent in the first place.[example 1]

Private messages are generally used for personal conversations. They can also be used with tripcodes—a message is addressed to a public trip and can be picked up by typing in the tripcode.

Attachment

An attachment can be almost any file. When someone attaches a file to a person’s post they are uploading that particular file to the forum’s server. Forums usually have very strict limit on what can be attached and what cannot be (among which the size of the files in question). Attachments can be part of a thread, social group, etc.,

BBCode and HTML

HyperText Markup Language (HTML) is sometimes allowed but usually its use is discouraged or when allowed, it is extensively filtered. Modern bulletin board systems often will have it disabled altogether or allow only administrators use it, as allowing it on any normal user level is considered a security risk due to a high rate of XSS vulnerabilities. When HTML is disabled Bulletin Board Code (BBCode) is the most common preferred alternative. BBCode usually consists of a tag, similar to HTML only instead of < and > the tagname is enclosed within square brackets (meaning: [ and ]). Commonly [i] is used for italic type, [b] is used for bold, [u] for underline, [color="value"] for color and [list] for lists, as well as [img] for images and [url] for links.

The following example BBCode: [b][This[/b] is [i]clever[/i]] when the post is viewed the code is rendered to HTML and will appear as: This is clever text.

Many forum packages offer a way to create Custom BB-Codes, or BBcodes that are not built into the package, where the administrator of the board can create complex BBCodes to allow the use of JavaScript or iframe functions in posts, for example embedding a YouTube or Google Video complete with viewer directly into a post.

Emoticon

Main article: Emoticon

An emoticon or smiley is a symbol or combination of symbols used to convey emotional content in written or message form. Forums implement a system through which some of the text representations of an emoticons (e.g. xD, ;p) are rendered as a small image. Depending on what part of the world the forum’s topic originates (since most forums are international) smiles can be replaced by other forms of similar graphics, an example would be kaoani (e.g. *(^O^)*, (^-^)b), or even text between special symbols (e.g. :blink:, ;idea:).
Poll

Most forums implement an opinion poll system for threads. Most implementations allow for single-choice or multi-choice (sometimes limited to a certain number) when selecting options as well as private or public display of voters. Polls can be set to expire after a certain date or in some cases after a number of days from its creation. Members vote in a poll and a statistic is displayed graphically.

RSS and ATOM

Main article: Web feed

RSS and ATOM feeds allow a minimalistic means of subscribing to the forum. Common implementations allow RSS feeds to list only the last few threads updated for the forum index and the last posts in a thread.

Other features

An ignore list allows members to hide posts of other members that they do not want to see or have a problem with. In most implementations, they are referred to as foe list or ignore list. Usually the posts are not hidden, but minimized with only a small bar indicating a post from the user on the ignore list is there."[19][20] Almost all Internet forums include a member list, which allows display of all forum members, with integrated search feature. Some forums will not list members with 0 posts, even if they have activated their accounts.

Many forums allow users to give themselves an avatar. An avatar is an image that appears beside all of a user’s posts, in order to make the user more recognizable. The user may upload the image to the forum database, or may provide a link to an image on a separate website. Each forum has limits on the height, width, and data size of avatars that may be used; if the user tries to use an avatar that is too big, it may be scaled down or rejected.

Similarly, most forums allow users to define a signature (sometimes called a sig), which is a block of text, possibly with BBCode, which appears at the bottom of all of the user’s posts. There is a character limit on signatures, though it may be so high that it is rarely hit. Often the forum’s moderators impose manual rules on signatures to prevent them from being obnoxious (for example, being extremely long or having flashing images), and issue warnings or bans to users who break these rules. Like avatars, signatures may improve the recognizability of a poster. They may also allow the user to attach information to all of their posts, such as proclaiming support for a cause, noting facts about themselves, or quoting humorous things that have previously been said on the forum.

Common on forums, a subscription is a form of automated notification integrated into the software of most forums. It usually notifies either by email or on the site when the member returns. The option to subscribe is available for every thread while logged in. Subscriptions work with read marking, namely the property of unread, which is given to the content never served to the user by the software.

Recent development in some popular implementations of forum software has brought social network features and functionality. Such features include personal galleries, pages as well as a social network like chat systems.

Most forum software is now fully customizable with "hacks" or "modifications" readily available to customize a person’s forum to theirs and their members' needs.

Often forums use "cookies", or information about the user’s behavior on the site sent to a user's browser and used upon re-entry into the site. This is done to facilitate automatic login and to show a user whether a thread or forum has received new posts since his or her last visit. These may be disabled or cleared at any time."[21]

3.1.5 Rules and policies

Forums are governed by a set of individuals, collectively referred to as staff, made up of administrators and moderators, which are responsible for the forums’ conception, technical maintenance, and policies (creation and enforcing). Most forums have a list of rules detailing the wishes, aim and guidelines of the forums’ creators. There is usually also a FAQ section containing basic information for new members and people not yet familiar with the use and principles of a forum (generally tailored for specific forum software).

Rules on forums usually apply to the entire user body and often have preset exceptions, most commonly designating a section as an exception. For example, in an IT forum any discussion regarding anything but computer programming languages may be against the rules, with the exception of a general chat section.

Forum rules are maintained and enforced by the moderation team, but users are allowed to help out via what is known as a report system. Most American forum software contains such a system."[19][22] It consists of a small function applicable to each post (including one’s own). Using it will notify all currently available moderators of its location, and subsequent action or judgment can be carried out immediately, which is particularly desirable in large or very developed boards. Generally, moderators encourage members to also use the private message system if they wish to report behavior. Moderators will generally frown upon attempts of moderation by non-moderators, especially when the would-be moderators do not even issue a report. Messages from non-moderators acting as moderators generally declare a post as against the rules, or predict punishment. While
not harmful, statements that attempt to enforce the rules are discouraged.\cite{23}

When rules are broken several steps are commonly taken. First, a warning is usually given; this is commonly in the form of a private message but recent development has made it possible for it to be integrated into the software. Subsequent to this, if the act is ignored and warnings do not work, the member is – usually – first exiled from the forum for a number of days. Denying someone access to the site is called a ban. Bans can mean the person can no longer log in or even view the site anymore. If the offender, after the warning sentence, repeats the offense, another ban is given, usually this time a longer one. Continuous harassment of the site eventually leads to a permanent ban. In most cases, this means simply that the account is locked. In extreme cases where the offender – after being permanently banned – creates another account and continues to harass the site, administrators will apply an IP address ban or block (this can also be applied at the server level): If the IP address is static, the machine of the offender is prevented from accessing the site. In some extreme circumstances, IP address range bans or country bans can be applied; this is usually for political, licensing, or other reasons. See also: Block (Internet), IP address blocking, and Internet censorship.

Offending content is usually deleted. Sometimes if the topic is considered the source of the problem, it is locked; often a poster may request a topic expected to draw problems to be locked as well, although the moderators decide whether to grant it. In a locked thread, members cannot post anymore. In cases where the topic is considered a breach of rules it – with all of its posts – may be deleted.

Troll

Main article: Troll (Internet)

Forum trolls are users that repeatedly and deliberately breach the netiquette of an established online community, posting inflammatory, extraneous, or off-topic messages to bait or excite users into responding or to test the forum rules and policies, and with that the patience of the forum staff. Their provocative behavior may potentially start flame wars (see below) or other disturbances. Responding to a troll’s provocations is commonly known as ‘feeding the troll’ and is generally discouraged, as it can encourage their disruptive behavior.

Sock puppet

Main article: Sockpuppet (Internet)

The term sock puppet refers to multiple pseudonyms in use by the same person on a particular message board or forum. The analogy of a sock puppet is of a puppeteer holding up both hands and supplying dialogue to both puppets simultaneously. A typical use of a sockpuppet account is to agree with or debate another sockpuppet account belonging to the same person, for the purposes of reinforcing the puppeteer’s position in an argument. Sock puppets are usually found when an IP address check is done on the accounts in forums.

Spamming

Main article: Forum spam

Forum spamming is a breach of netiquette where users repeat the same word or phrase over and over, but differs from multiple posting in that spamming is usually a willful act that sometimes has malicious intent. This is a common trolling technique. It can also be traditional spam, unpaid advertisements that are in breach of the forum’s rules. Spammers utilize a number of illicit techniques to post their spam, including the use of botnets.

Some forums consider concise, comment-oriented posts spam, for example Thank you, Cool or I love it.

Double posting

One common faux pas on Internet forums is to post the same message twice. Users sometimes post versions of a message that are only slightly different, especially in forums where they are not allowed to edit their earlier posts. Multiple posting instead of editing prior posts can artificially inflate a user’s post count. Multiple posting can be unintentional; a user’s browser might display an error message even though the post has been transmitted or a user of a slow forum might become impatient and repeatedly hit the submit button. An offline editor may post the same message twice. Multiple posting can also be used as a method of trolling or spreading forum spam. A user may also send the same post to several forums, which is termed crossposting. The term derives from Usenet, where crossposting was an accepted practice but causes problems in web forums, which lack the ability to link such posts so replies in one forum are not visible to people reading the post in other forums.

Necroposting

A necropost is a message that revives (as in necromancy) an arbitrarily old thread, causing it to appear above newer and more active threads. This practice is generally seen as a breach of netiquette on most forums. Because old threads are not usually locked from further posting, necroposting is common for newer users and in cases where the date of previous posts is not apparent.
Word censor

Main article: Scunthorpe problem

A word censoring system is commonly included in the forum software package. The system will pick up words in the body of the post or some other user-editable forum element (like user titles), and if they partially match a certain keyword (commonly no case sensitivity) they will be censored. The most common censoring is letter replacement with an asterisk character. For example, in the user title, it is deemed inappropriate for users to use words such as “admin”, “moderator”, “leader” and so on. If the censoring system is implemented, a title such as “forum leader” may be filtered to “forum *******”. Rude or vulgar words are common targets for the censoring system. [24] [25] But such auto-censors can make mistakes, for example censoring “wristwatch” to “wrisk****ch” and “Scunthorpe” to “S****horpe.”

Flame wars

Main article: Flaming (Internet)

When a thread—or in some cases, an entire forum—becomes unstable, the result is usually uncontrolled spam in the form of one-line complaints, image macros, or abuse of the report system. When the discussion becomes heated and sides do nothing more than complain and not accept each other’s differences in point of view, the discussion degenerates into what is called a flame war. To flame someone means to go off-topic and attack the person rather than their opinion. Likely candidates for flame wars are usually religion and socio-political topics, or topics that discuss pre-existing rivalries outside the forum (e.g., rivalry between games, console systems, car manufacturers, nationalities, etc.).

When a topic that has degenerated into a flame war is considered akin to that of the forum (be it a section or the entire board), spam and flames have a chance of spreading outside the topic and causing trouble, usually in the form of vandalism. Some forums (commonly game forums) have suffered from forum-wide flame wars almost immediately after their conception, because of a pre-existing flame war element in the online community. Many forums have created devoted areas strictly for discussion of potential flame war topics that are moderated like normal.

Registration or anonymity

Nearly all Internet forums require registration to post. Registered users of the site are referred to as members and are allowed to submit or send electronic messages through the web application. The process of registration involves verification of one’s age (typically over 12 is required so as to meet COPPA requirements of American forum software) followed by a declaration of the terms of service (other documents may also be present) and a request for agreement to said terms. [26] [27] [28] Subsequently, if all goes well, the candidate is presented with a web form to fill requesting at the very least a username (an alias), password, email and validation of a CAPTCHA code. While simply completing the registration web form is in general enough to generate an account, [note 2] the status label Inactive is commonly provided by default until the registered user confirms the email address given while registering indeed belongs to the user. Until that time, the registered user can log in to the new account but may not post, reply, or send private messages in the forum.

Internet Forums are used frequently in conjunction with multiplayer online games.

Sometimes a referrer system is implemented. A referrer is someone who introduced or otherwise “helped someone” with the decision to join the site (likewise, how a HTTP referrer is the site who linked one to another site). Usually, referrers are other forum members and members are usually rewarded for referrals. The referrer system is also sometimes implemented so that, if a visitor visits the forum though a link such as referrerd=300, the user with the id number (in this example, 300) would receive referral credit if the visitor registers. [29] The purpose is commonly just to give credit (sometimes rewards are implied) to those who help the community grow.

In areas such as Japan, registration is frequently optional and anonymity is sometimes even encouraged.” [30] On these forums, a tripcode system may be used to allow verification of an identity without the need for formal registration. People who regularly read the forum discussions but do not register or do not post are often referred to as “lurkers”.

3.1.6 Comparison with other web applications

Electronic mailing lists: The main difference between forums and electronic mailing lists is that mailing lists automatically deliver new messages to the subscriber, while
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forums require the reader to visit the website and check for new posts. Because members may miss replies in threads they are interested in, many modern forums offer an "e-mail notification" feature, whereby members can choose to be notified of new posts in a thread, and web feeds that allow members to see a summary of the new posts using aggregator software. There are also software products that combine forum and mailing list features, i.e. posting and reading via email as well as the browser depending on the member's choice.

Newsreader: The main difference between newsgroups and forums is that additional software, a News client, is required to participate in newsgroups whereas using a forum requires no additional software beyond the web browser.

Shoutboxes: Unlike Internet forums, most shoutboxes do not require registration, only requiring an email address from the user. Additionally, shoutboxes are not heavily moderated, unlike most message boards.

Wiki: Unlike conventional forums, the original wikis allowed all users to edit all content (including each other's messages). This level of content manipulation is reserved for moderators or administrators on most forums. Wikis also allow the creation of other content outside the talk pages. On the other hand, weblogs and generic content management systems tend to be locked down to the point where only a few select users can post blog entries, although many allow other users to comment upon them.

It should be noted that the Wiki hosting site known as Wikia has two features in operation, known as the Forum and Message Wall. The forum is used solely for discussion and works through editing, while the message wall works through posted messages more similar to a traditional forum.

Chat rooms and instant messaging: Forums differ from chats and instant messaging in that forum participants do not have to be online simultaneously to receive or send messages. Messages posted to a forum are publicly available for some time even if the forum or thread is closed, which is uncommon in chat rooms that maintain frequent activity.

One rarity among forums is the ability to create a picture album. Forum participants may upload personal pictures onto the site and add descriptions to the pictures. Pictures may be in the same format as posting threads, and contain the same options such as "Report Post" and "Reply to Post".

3.1.7 See also

- Bulletin board system
- Chat room
- Comparison of Internet forum software
- Delphi (online service)
- Godwin's Law
- Imageboard
- Internet
- Internet social network
- List of Internet forums
- Stealth banning
- Textboard
- Virtual community
- Warnock's dilemma

3.1.8 Notes

[1] read marking is the process through which a thread, post, or forum that has been viewed is distinguished from those that have not. The function is usually automatic with the addition of controls, like Mark All etc.

[2] an account is a space on the site identified by the chosen username through which a member carries out activities and contributes.

3.1.9 Examples

[1] Presuming someone is sending a private message and has the ability to send blind carbon copies: If someone fills the recipient field with "John" and "Tom", and the carbon copy field with "Gordon". John will know Tom got the message. Tom knows John got the message. But, both Tom and John have no clue that Gordon got the message as well.

3.1.10 References

[1] "vBulletin Community Forum - FAQ: What is a bulletin board?". vBulletin.com. Retrieved 2008-09-01. A bulletin board is an online discussion site. It is sometimes also called a 'board' or 'forum'. It may contain several categories, consisting of sub-forums, threads and individual posts.


[7] wired.com
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3.11 External links

- Xenforo Forums
- Delphi Forums
- Adobe forums posting guidelines
- The Purple Martin Forum Posting Policy
- Ubuntu Forums: The BUMP Thread
- Threadbombing: Bump Images
- Why people like to use Internet forums

3.2 Imageboard

An imageboard or image board is a type of Internet forum which operates mostly via posting images. The first imageboards were created in Japan, and inspired the creation of a number of English language imageboards. They are based on the textboard concept.

3.2.1 Characteristics

Imageboards, similar to bulletin board systems, are used for discussions of a variety of topics. The primary focus of imageboards, however, is directed away from text posts, and is instead placed on picture posts. The two share many of the same structures, including separate forums for separate topics, as well as similar audiences. Imageboards are much more transitory with content — on some boards (especially highly trafficked ones), the thread deletion time can be as little as 10 minutes. In Japan, where imageboards are more common, topics will vary widely, ranging from trains to current news. The most popular English language imageboard, 4chan, similarly revolves around a wide variety of topics.
Imageboards are also different from online galleries in that most of the works posted are not made by the poster, but instead are taken from other online sources: galleries, other imageboards, and edited pictures.

### Tripcodes

![A diagram of a typical tripcode derivation process.](image)

Most imageboards and 2channel-style discussion boards allow (and encourage) anonymous posting and use a system of *tripcodes* instead of registration. A tripcod is the hashed result of a password that allows one’s identity to be recognized without storing any data about users. Entering a particular password will let one “sign” one’s posts with the tripcod generated from that password, while trying to take another user’s tripcod and compute their password from it (for instance, to make posts that appear to come from a particular person) is computationally difficult. For those who want a custom tripcod, however, there are custom tripcod generators available, such as Meriken’s Tripcod Engine[1] and MTY_CL.[2] In general, anonymity is considered to be one of the advantages of an imageboard, and some boards have from time to time removed the ability to post with a name altogether (known as “forced anonymous/anonymity”).

#### 3.2.2 Software

There are two primary types of imageboard software packages in widespread use: linearly directed imageboards modeled closely after Futaba Channel (in which content is posted through hierarchical subsections of topical interest, usually denoted by a forward slash such as “/f” for female), and nonlinear imageboards modeled after Danbooru (usually indicated by the usage of controlled folksonomic vocabulary for topical tagging and search).

**Futaba Channel clones**

There are currently several Futaba-based imageboard software packages in widespread use: *Futallaby, Wakaba, Kusaba X*.

*Futallaby* is a PHP script based on the Futaba script from Futaba Channel. Although the Futallaby source is still freely available at 1chan,[3] it is no longer in development, and the download page recommends using Wakaba instead, stating that “Wakaba can do everything Futallaby does and so much more.” Futallaby started as a translation of Futaba, later retooled to support XHTML and customizable CSS styles. It is mostly notable for being the first open source English imageboard script. *Wakaba* is a Perl imageboard script with a SQL backend to store thread information.[4] It is designed to be more efficient and cleanly written than other scripts that are available, while preserving the same kind of functionality. Wakaba is one of the most popular Western imageboard software scripts, used most notably by iichan (*Wakachan*).[5] Because of its focus on barebones functionality, Wakaba lacks many of the modern amenities provided by 4chan’s Yotsuba,[6] and newer imageboard scripts. A few users have attempted to remedy this by forking the original project and adding in features they consider beneficial. Two FOSS examples of this are frankus’s Wakaba fork,[7] and the user experience focused *Glaukaba.*[8]

*Kusaba* was a modular imageboard software written in PHP, which used MySQL.[9] The creator has discontinued the project, however, and recommends TinyIB instead.

*Kusaba X* is a continuation of Kusaba. Like Kusaba, Kusaba X is written in PHP, and is designed with modularity in mind. It requires a MySQL or SQLite database to run. Kusaba and its derivatives were at one time some of the most popular imageboard solutions. Kusaba X has since fallen out of active development, and has not been updated since July 2011.

**Danbooru-style boards**

Usually referred to as a "booru" (plural “boorus”). Unlike Futaba-inspired imageboard software packages, Danbooru and derivatives aim for a non-hierarchical semantic structure in which users are able to post content and add tags, annotations, translations, and comments.

There exist a number of different Danbooru-style imageboards, both those with shared source code and those that are not released for others to use. The two main Danbooru derivatives are Gelbooru and MyImouto.

#### 3.2.3 Imageboards

**Futaba Channel**

Main article: Futaba Channel

*Futaba Channel* (ふたば☆ちゃんねる), or “Futaba” for short, is a popular, anonymous BBS and imageboard system based in Japan. Its boards usually do not distinguish between *not safe for work* and *clean* content,
but there is a strict barrier between two-dimensional (drawn) and three-dimensional (computer graphics (CG) and photographic) pictures that is heavily enforced and debated.\footnote{[15]}

4chan

Main article: 4chan

4chan is an English language imageboard based on the Japanese imageboard Futaba Channel. This imageboard is based primarily upon the posting of pictures (generally related to a wide variety of topics, from anime and popular culture to politics and sports) and their discussion. The Guardian describes it as “at once brilliant, ridiculous and alarming.”\footnote{[16]}

The site and its userbase have received attention from the media for a number of reasons, including attacks against Hal Turner on his Internet shows,\footnote{[17]} distributed denial-of-service attacks against eBaum’s World,\footnote{[18]}\footnote{[19]} taking part in Project Chanology,\footnote{[20]}\footnote{[21]} and multiple cases of anti-animal abuse reports.\footnote{[21]}

Many Internet memes have originated there, including lolcats,\footnote{[22]}\footnote{[23]}\footnote{[24]} rickrolling and Pedobear.

8chan

Main article: 8chan

8chan (or Infinitechan) is a primarily English language imageboard, though there are boards dedicated to other languages. Just like 4chan, 8chan is based on posting pictures and discussion anonymously, but unlike 4chan, 8chan lets its users decide what they want to discuss by allowing any user to create their own board dedicated to any topic, a concept first made popular by news bulletin boards like Reddit. 8chan also claims to have a strong dedication to freedom of speech and allows all content — so long as the discussion and board creation abides by United States law.\footnote{[25]} However, local moderators enforce the rules of their own boards and may delete posts as they see fit. It is currently partnered with the Japanese textboard 2channel.

Dvach

Was opened in 2006.\footnote{[26]} One of the imageboards that were created shortly after the collapse\footnote{[27]} of 2ch.ru, then the largest Russian-speaking imageboard, on 17 January 2009. Unlike the others it copied the original layout thoroughly and was actively advertised and soon surpassed the original in popularity.\footnote{[28]} At the moment, the number of posts in /b/ exceeds 150 million.\footnote{[29]} It is the third imageboard in the world by the number of messages in /b/.\footnote{[30]}

420chan

An English-language imageboard based on cannabis culture\footnote{[31]} which was created on April 4, 2005 by Kirtaner Aster. The name is a reference to the larger 4chan\footnote{[32]} and the code term 420 of the cannabis subculture. Its boards include various drug-specific boards,\footnote{[33]} as well as a board featuring a chatterbot.\footnote{[33]}

Hispachan

Hispachan was launched in November 2012\footnote{[34]} as a global imageboard for all Spanish-speaking countries. Vice Magazine describes it as “a site for completely anonymous Spanish-language discussion that has proven popular among hackers since its launch in 2012.”\footnote{[35]}

In January 2017 a shooting in a school in Monterrey (Mexico) was previously announced on Hispachan.\footnote{[36]}

Krautchan

A primarily German-language imageboard that was founded in 2007.\footnote{[37]} The name is an allusion to the ethnophaulism Kraut for Germans. In 2009, after the Winnenden school shooting, the Interior Minister of Baden-Württemberg cited a post on the imageboard in a press conference that appeared to forewarn of the shooting, but was later found to be fake.\footnote{[38]}\footnote{[39]}\footnote{[40]} The site also features a popular English language board, /intl/, which is also the origin of the Polandball internet phenomenon.

Ylilauta

Main article: Ylilauta

Ylilauta is a Finnish-language imageboard that was founded in 2011 with the joining of the two most popular Finnish imageboards, Kotilauta and Lauta.net.

Wizardchan

Wizardchan is an imageboard which discusses topics including anime, hobbies, and depression. Users often discuss suicide or self-harm, and a controversy emerged in the board’s community about whether to refer users to suicide prevention hotlines.\footnote{[41]}

Karachan

Karachan is a Polish imageboard founded in 2010. Karachan has received attention from the Polish media after many trolling actions targeting Polish politicians, journalists and the Pope John Paul II.\footnote{[42]}\footnote{[43]}\footnote{[44]}\footnote{[45]}\footnote{[46]}\footnote{[47]}
3.2. IMAGEBOARD

3.2.4 See also
- Textboard
- Anonymous (group)

3.2.5 References

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3.3 YouTube

YouTube is an American video-sharing website headquartered in San Bruno, California. The service was created by three former PayPal employees—Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim—in February 2005. Google bought the site in November 2006 for US$1.65 billion; YouTube now operates as one of Google’s subsidiaries.

YouTube allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to favorites, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users. It uses WebM, H.264/MPEG-4 AVC, and Adobe Flash Video technology to display a wide variety of user-generated and corporate media videos. Available content includes video clips, TV show clips, music videos, short and documentary films, audio recordings, movie trailers and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, and educational videos. Most of the content on YouTube has been uploaded by individuals, but media corporations including CBS, the BBC, Vevo, and Hulu offer some of their material via YouTube as part of the YouTube partnership program. Unregistered users can only watch videos on the site, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos and add comments to videos. Videos deemed potentially offensive are available only to registered users affirming themselves to be at least 18 years old.

YouTube earns advertising revenue from Google AdSense, a program which targets ads according to site content and audience. The vast majority of its videos are free to view, but there are exceptions, including subscription-based premium channels, film rentals, as well as YouTube Red, a subscription service offering ad-free access to the website and access to exclusive content made in partnership with existing users. As of February 2017, there are more than 400 hours of content uploaded to YouTube each minute, and one billion hours of content are watched on YouTube every day. As of April 2017, the website is ranked as the second most popular site in the world by Alexa Internet, a web traffic analysis company.[1]

3.3.1 Company history

Main article: History of YouTube

YouTube was founded by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, who were all early employees of PayPal.[4] Hurley had studied design at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Chen and Karim studied computer science together at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.[5] According to a story that has often been repeated in the media, Hurley and Chen developed the idea for YouTube during the early months of 2005, after they had experienced difficulty sharing videos that had been shot at a dinner party at Chen's apartment in San Francisco. Karim did not attend the party and denied that it had occurred, but Chen commented that the idea that YouTube was founded after a dinner party “was probably very strengthened by marketing ideas around creating a story that was very digestible”.[6]

Karim said the inspiration for YouTube first came from Janet Jackson’s role in the 2004 Super Bowl incident, when her breast was exposed during her performance, and later from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Karim could not easily find video clips of either event online, which led to the idea of a video sharing site.[7] Hurley and Chen said that the original idea for YouTube was a video version of an online dating service, and had been influenced by the website Hot or Not.[6][8]
YouTube began as a venture capital-funded technology startup, primarily from an $11.5 million investment by Sequoia Capital between November 2005 and April 2006. In March 2010, YouTube's early headquarters were situated above a pizzeria and Japanese restaurant in San Mateo, California. The domain name www.youtube.com was activated on February 14, 2005, and the website was developed over the subsequent months. The first YouTube video, titled *Me at the zoo*, shows co-founder Jawed Karim at the San Diego Zoo. The video was uploaded on April 23, 2005, and can still be viewed on the site. YouTube offered the public a beta test of the site in May 2005. The first video to reach one million views was a Nike advertisement featuring Ronaldinho in November 2005. Following a $3.5 million investment from Sequoia Capital in November, the site launched officially on December 15, 2005, by which time the site was receiving 8 million views a day. The site grew rapidly, and in July 2006 the company announced that more than 65,000 new videos were being uploaded every day, and that the site was receiving 100 million video views per day. According to data published by market research company comScore, YouTube is the dominant provider of online video in the United States, with a market share of around 43% and more than 14 billion views of videos in May 2010.

In May 2011, 48 hours of new videos were uploaded to the site every minute, which increased to 60 hours every minute in January 2012. 100 hours every minute in May 2013, 300 hours every minute in November 2014, and 400 hours every minute in February 2017. The site has 800 million unique users a month. It is estimated that in 2007 YouTube consumed as much bandwidth as the entire Internet in 2000. According to third-party web analytics providers, Alexa and SimilarWeb, YouTube is the second-most visited website in the world, as of December 2016; SimilarWeb also lists YouTube as the top TV and video website globally, attracting more than 15 billion visitors per month.

The choice of the name www.youtube.com led to problems for a similarly named website, www.utube.com. The site's owner, Universal Tube & Rollform Equipment, filed a lawsuit against YouTube in November 2006 after being regularly overloaded by people looking for YouTube. Universal Tube has since changed the name of its website to www.utubeonline.com.

In October 2010, Hurley announced that he would be stepping down as chief executive officer of YouTube to take on an advisory role, and that Salar Kamangar would take over as head of the company. In April 2011, James Zern, a YouTube software engineer, revealed that 30% of videos accounted for 99% of views on the site. In November 2011, the Google+ social networking site was integrated directly with YouTube and the Chrome web browser, allowing YouTube videos to be viewed from within the Google+ interface. In December 2011, YouTube launched a new version of the site interface, with the video channels displayed in a central column on the home page, similar to the news feeds of social networking sites. At the same time, a new version of the YouTube logo was introduced with a darker shade of red, the first change in design since October 2006. In May 2013, YouTube launched a pilot program to begin offering some content providers the ability to charge $0.99 per month or more for certain channels, but the vast majority of its videos would remain free to view.

In February 2015, YouTube released a secondary mobile app known as YouTube Kids. The app is designed to provide an experience optimized for children, and features a simplified user interface, curated selections of channels featuring age-appropriate content (including existing channels and entertainment brands), and parental control features. Later on August 26, 2015, YouTube launched YouTube Gaming—a video gaming-oriented sub-site and app that is intended to compete with the Amazon-owned Twitch.tv. In 2015 also saw the announcement of a premium YouTube service titled YouTube Red, which provides users with both ad-free content as well as the ability to download videos among other features.
On August 10, 2015, Google announced that it was creating a new company, Alphabet, to act as the holding company for Google, with the change in financial reporting to begin in the fourth quarter of 2015. YouTube remains as a subsidiary of Google."[58] In January 2016, YouTube expanded its headquarters in San Bruno by purchasing an office park for $215 million. The complex has 554,000 square feet of space and can house up to 2,800 employees."[59]

### 3.3.2 Features

#### Video technology

##### Playback

Previously, viewing YouTube videos on a personal computer required the Adobe Flash Player plug-in to be installed in the browser."[60] In January 2010, YouTube launched an experimental version of the site that used the built-in multimedia capabilities of web browsers supporting the HTML5 standard."[61] This allowed videos to be viewed without requiring Adobe Flash Player or any other plug-in to be installed."[62] [63] The YouTube site had a page that allowed supported browsers to opt into the HTML5 trial. Only browsers that supported HTML5 Video using the H.264 or WebM formats could play the videos, and not all videos on the site were available."[64] [65] On January 27, 2015, YouTube announced that HTML5 will be the default playback method on supported browsers. Supported browsers include Chrome, Safari 8, and Internet Explorer 11."[66] YouTube experimented with Dynamic Adaptive Streaming over HTTP (MPEG-DASH), an adaptive bit-rate HTTP-based streaming solution optimizing the bitrate and quality for the available network."[67] YouTube uses Adobe Dynamic Streaming for Flash."[68]

##### Uploading

All YouTube users can upload videos up to 15 minutes each in duration. Users who have a good track record of complying with the site’s Community Guidelines may be offered the ability to upload videos up to 12 hours in length, which requires verifying the account, normally through a mobile phone."[69] When YouTube was launched in 2005, it was possible to upload long videos, but a ten-minute limit was introduced in March 2006 after YouTube found that the majority of videos exceeding this length were unauthorized uploads of television shows and films."[70] The 10-minute limit was increased to 15 minutes in July 2010."[71] Videos can be at most 128 GB in size."[69] Video captions are made using speech recognition technology when uploaded. Such captioning is usually not perfectly accurate, so YouTube provides several options for manually entering the captions for greater accuracy."[72]

YouTube accepts videos that are uploaded in most container formats, including AVI, MP4, MPEG-PS, QuickTime File Format and FLV. It supports WebM files and also 3GP, allowing videos to be uploaded from mobile phones."[73]

Videos with progressive scanning or interlaced scanning can be uploaded, but for the best video quality, YouTube suggests interlaced videos be deinterlaced before uploading. All the video formats on YouTube use progressive scanning."[74] YouTube’s statistics shows that interlaced videos are still being uploaded to YouTube, and there is no sign of that actually dwindling. YouTube attributes this to uploading of made-for-TV content."[75]

#### Quality and formats

YouTube originally offered videos at only one quality level, displayed at a resolution of 320×240 pixels using the Sorenson Spark codec (a variant of H.263),"[76] [77] with mono MP3 audio."[78] In June 2007, YouTube added an option to watch videos in 3GP format on mobile phones."[79] In March 2008, a high-quality mode was added, which increased the resolution to 480×360 pixels."[80] In November 2008, 720p HD support was added. At the time of the 720p launch, the YouTube player was changed from a 4:3 aspect ratio to a widescreen 16:9."[81] With this new feature, YouTube began a switchover to H.264/MPEG-4 AVC as its default video compression format. In November 2009, 1080p HD support was added. In July 2010, YouTube announced that it had launched a range of videos in 4K format, which allows a resolution of up to 4096×3072 pixels."[82] [83] In June 2015, support for 8K resolution was added, with the videos playing at 7680×4320 pixels."[84] In November 2016, support for HDR video was added which can be encoded with Hybrid Log-Gamma (HLG) or Perceptual Quantizer (PQ)."[85] HDR video can be encoded with the Rec. 2020 color space."[86]

In June 2014, YouTube introduced videos playing at 60 frames per second, in order to reproduce video games with a frame rate comparable to high-end graphics cards."[87] [88] The videos play back at a resolution of 720p or higher."[89] YouTube videos are available in a range of quality levels. The former names of standard quality (SQ), high quality (HQ), and high definition (HD) have been replaced by numerical values representing the vertical resolution of the video. The default video stream is encoded in the VP9 format with stereo Opus audio; if VP9/WebM is not supported in the browser/device or the browser's user agent reports Windows XP, then H.264/MPEG-4 AVC video with stereo AAC audio is used instead."[90]

Comparison of YouTube media encoding options

#### Non-DASH

- **DASH (video only)**
- **DASH (audio only)**

#### Live streaming

[^1]: istag is an undocumented parameter used internally
3.3. YOUTUBE

by YouTube to differentiate between quality profiles. Un-}

til December 2010, there was also a URL parameter known as idtag that allowed a user to force a profile using itag codes.

^ [2] Approximate values based on statistical data; actual bitrate can be higher or lower due to variable encoding rate.

"[91][92][93][94][95]

3D videos In a video posted on July 21, 2009, YouTube software engineer Peter Bradshaw announced that YouTube users can now upload 3D videos. The videos can be viewed in several different ways, including the common anaglyph (cyan/red lens) method which utilizes glasses worn by the viewer to achieve the 3D effect. The YouTube Flash player can display stereoscopic content interleaved in rows, columns or a checkerboard pattern, side-by-side or anaglyph using a red/cyan, green/magenta or blue/yellow combination. In May 2011, an HTML5 version of the YouTube player began supporting side-by-side 3D footage that is compatible with Nvidia 3D Vision.

360° videos In January 2015, Google announced that 360° videos would be natively supported on YouTube. On March 13, 2015, YouTube enabled 360° videos which can be viewed from Google Cardboard, a virtual reality system. YouTube 360 can also be viewed from all other virtual reality headsets.

User features

Community On September 13, 2016, YouTube launched a public beta of Community, a social media-based feature that allows users to post text, images (including GIFs), live videos and others in a separate "Community" tab on their channel. Prior to the release, several creators had been consulted to suggest tools Community could incorporate that they would find useful; these YouTubers included Vlogbrothers, AsapScience, Lilly Singh, The Game Theorists, Karmin, The Key of Awesome, The Kloons, Peter Hollens, Rosianna Halse Rojas, Sam Tsui, Threadbanger and Vsauce3.

Content accessibility

YouTube offers users the ability to view its videos on web pages outside their website. Each YouTube video is accompanied by a piece of HTML that can be used to embed it on any page on the Web. This functionality is often used to embed YouTube videos in social networking pages and blogs. Users wishing to post a video discussing, inspired by or related to another user's video are able to make a "video response". On August 27, 2013, YouTube announced that it would remove video responses for being an underused feature. Embedding, rating, commenting and response posting can be disabled by the video owner.

You Tube does not usually offer a download link for its videos, and intends for them to be viewed through its website interface. A small number of videos, such as the weekly addresses by President Barack Obama, can be downloaded as MP4 files. Numerous third-party web sites, applications and browser plug-ins allow users to download YouTube videos. In February 2009, YouTube announced a test service, allowing some partners to offer video downloads for free or for a fee paid through Google Checkout. In June 2012, Google sent cease and desist letters threatening legal action against several websites offering online download and conversion of YouTube videos. In response, Zamzar removed the ability to download YouTube videos from its site. The default settings when uploading a video to YouTube will retain a copyright on the video for the uploader, but since July 2012, it has been possible to select a Creative Commons license as the default, allowing other users to reuse and remix the material if it is free of copyright.

Platforms Most modern smartphones are capable of accessing YouTube videos, either within an application or through an optimized website. YouTube Mobile was launched in June 2007, using RTSP streaming for the video. Not all of YouTube's videos are available on the mobile version of the site. Since June 2007, YouTube's videos have been available for viewing on a range of Apple products. This required YouTube's content to be transcoded into Apple's preferred video standard, H.264, a process that took several months. YouTube videos can be viewed on devices including Apple TV, iPod Touch and the iPhone. In July 2010, the mobile version of the site was relaunched based on HTML5, avoiding the need to use Adobe Flash Player and optimized for use with touch screen controls. The mobile version is also available as an app for the Android platform. In September 2012, YouTube launched its first app for the iPhone, following the decision to drop YouTube as one of the preloaded apps in the iPhone 5 and iOS 6 operating system. According to GlobalWebIndex, YouTube was used by 35% of smartphone users between April and June 2013, making it the third most used app.

A TiVo service update in July 2008 allowed the system to search and play YouTube videos. In January 2009, YouTube launched "YouTube for TV", a version of the website tailored for set-top boxes and other TV-based media devices with web browsers, initially allowing its videos to be viewed on the PlayStation 3 and Wii video game consoles. In June 2009, YouTube XL was introduced, which has a simplified interface designed for viewing on a standard televi-
sion screen."[125] YouTube is also available as an app on Xbox Live."[126] On November 15, 2012, Google launched an official app for the Wii, allowing users to watch YouTube videos from the Wii channel. "[127] An app is also available for Wii U and Nintendo 3DS, and videos can be viewed on the Wi U Internet Browser using HTML5."[128] Google made YouTube available on the Roku player on December 17, 2013,"[129] and, in October 2014, the Sony PlayStation 4."[130]

**Localization**

On June 19, 2007, Google CEO Eric Schmidt was in Paris to launch the new localization system."[131] The interface of the website is available with localized versions in 89 countries, one territory (Hong Kong) and a worldwide version."[132]

The YouTube interface suggests which local version should be chosen on the basis of the IP address of the user. In some cases, the message "This video is not available in your country" may appear because of copyright restrictions or inappropriate content."[180] The interface of the YouTube website is available in 76 language versions, including Amharic, Albanian, Armenian, Bengali, Burmese, Khmer, Kyrgyz, Laotian, Mongolian, Persian and Uzbek, which do not have local channel versions."[181] Access to YouTube was blocked in Turkey between 2008 and 2010, following controversy over the posting of videos deemed insulting to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and some material offensive to Muslims."[182] In October 2012, a local version of YouTube was launched in Turkey, with the domain youtube.com.tr. The local version is subject to the content regulations found in Turkish law."[184] In March 2009, a dispute between YouTube and the British royalty collection agency PRS for Music led to premium music videos being blocked for YouTube users in the United Kingdom. The removal of videos posted by the major record companies occurred after failure to reach agreement on a licensing deal. The dispute was resolved in September 2009."[185] In April 2009, a similar dispute led to the removal of premium music videos for users in Germany."[186]

**YouTube Red**

Main article: YouTube Red

YouTube Red is YouTube’s premium subscription service. It offers advertising-free streaming, access to exclusive content, background and offline video playback on mobile devices, and access to the Google Play Music “All Access” service."[187] YouTube Red was originally announced on November 12, 2014, as “Music Key”, a subscription music streaming service, and was intended to integrate with and replace the existing Google Play Music “All Access” service."[188] On October 28, 2015, the service was re-launched as YouTube Red, offering ad-free streaming of all videos, as well as access to exclusive original content."[191] As of November 2016, the service has 1.5 million subscribers, with a further million on a free-trial basis."[194]

**YouTube TV**

On February 28, 2017, in a press announcement held at YouTube Space Los Angeles, YouTube announced the launch of YouTube TV, an over-the-top MVPD-style subscription service that would be available for $35 per month. Initially launching in five major U.S. markets (New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco) on April 5, 2017,"[195] the service offers live streams of programming from the five major broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, The CW, Fox Broadcasting Company and NBC), as well as approximately 40 cable channels owned by the corporate parents of those networks, The Walt Disney Company, CBS Corporation, 21st Century Fox, and NBCUniversal (including among others Bravo, USA Network, Syfy, Disney Channel, E!, Fox Sports 1, Freeform, FX and ESPN). Subscribers can also receive Showtime and Fox Soccer Plus as optional add-ons for an extra fee, and can access YouTube Red original content (YouTube TV does not include a YouTube Red subscription)."[197]"[198]

**3.3.3 Social impact**

Main article: Social impact of YouTube

Both private individuals"[199] and large production companies"[200] have used YouTube to grow audiences. Independent content creators have built grassroots followings numbering in the thousands at very little cost or effort, while mass retail and radio promotion proved problematic."[199] Concurrently, old media companies moved into the website at the invitation of a YouTube management that witnessed early content creators accruing substantial followings, and perceived audience sizes potentially larger than that attainable by television."[200] YouTube channels launched by The Ellen DeGeneres Show and The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon became two of the most subscribed. While YouTube’s revenue-sharing “Partner Program” made it possible to earn a substantial living as a video producer—its top five hundred partners each earning more than $100,000 annually"[201] and its ten highest-earning channels grossing from $2.5 million to $12 million (the most successful of whom were YouTubers PewDiePie, Smosh, and the Fine Brothers)"[202]—in 2012 CMU business editor characterized YouTube as “a free-to-use... promotional platform for the music labels”. "[203] In 2013 Forbes’ Kathryn Thayer asserted that digital-era artists’ work must
not only be of high quality, but must elicit reactions on the YouTube platform and social media."[204] Videos of the 2.5% of artists categorized as "mega" , "mainstream" and "mid-sized" received 90.3% of the relevant views on YouTube and Vevo in that year, [205] as the Vevo channels of Justin Bieber and Rihanna became two of the top five most subscribed, and music videos outperformed other content in attracting the most views and the most likes, particularly in the cases of "Gangnam Style" in 2012 and "See You Again" in 2015. By early 2013 Billboard had announced that it was factoring YouTube streaming data into calculation of the Billboard Hot 100 and related genre charts." [206]

YouTube has enabled people to more directly engage with government, such as in the CNN/YouTube presidential debates (2007) in which ordinary people submitted questions to U.S. presidential candidates via YouTube video, with a techPresident co-founder saying that Internet video was changing the political landscape."[214] Describing the Arab Spring (2010- ), sociologist Philip N. Howard quoted an activist's succinct description that organizing the political unrest involved using "Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world."[215] In 2012, more than a third of the U.S. Senate introduced a resolution condemning Joseph Kony 16 days after the "Kony 2012" video was posted to YouTube, with resolution co-sponsor Senator Lindsey Graham remarking that the video "will do more to lead to (Kony's) demise than all other action combined."[216]

Conversely, YouTube has also allowed government to more easily engage with citizens, the White House’s official YouTube channel being the seventh top news organization producer on YouTube in 2012"[219] and in 2013 a healthcare exchange commissioned Obama impersonator Iman Crosson’s YouTube music video spoof to encourage young Americans to enroll in the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)-compliant health insurance."[220] In February 2014, U.S. President Obama held a meeting at the White House with leading YouTube content creators to not only promote awareness of Obamacare[221] but more generally to develop ways for government to better connect with the "YouTube Generation". [217] Whereas
YouTube's inherent ability to allow presidents to directly connect with average citizens was noted, the YouTube content creators' new media savvy was perceived necessary to better cope with the website's distracting content and fickle audience. [217]

Some YouTube videos have themselves had a direct effect on world events, such as Innocence of Muslims (2012) which spurred protests and related anti-American violence internationally. [222] TED curator Chris Anderson described a phenomenon by which geographically distributed individuals in a certain field share their independently developed skills in YouTube videos, thus challenging others to improve their own skills, and spurring invention and evolution in that field. [207] Journalist Virginia Heffernan stated in The New York Times that such videos have “surprising implications” for the dissemination of culture and even the future of classical music. [223]

The Legion of Extraordinary Dancers [224] and the YouTube Symphony Orchestra [225] selected their membership based on individual video performances. [207] [225] Further, the cyber-collaboration charity video “We Are the World 25 for Haiti (YouTube edition)” was formed by mixing performances of 57 globally distributed singers into a single musical work. [226] with The Tokyo Times noting the “We Pray for You” YouTube cyber-collaboration video as an example of a trend to use crowdsourcing for charitable purposes. [227] The anti-bullying It Gets Better Project expanded from a single YouTube video directed to discouraged or suicidal LGBT teens, [228] that within two months drew video responses from hundreds including U.S. President Barack Obama, Vice President Biden, White House staff, and several cabinet secretaries. [229] Similarly, in response to fifteen-year-old Amanda Todd’s video “My story: Struggling, bullying, suicide, self-harm”, legislative action was undertaken almost immediately after her suicide to study the prevalence of bullying and form a national anti-bullying strategy. [230]

### 3.3.4 Revenue

Google does not provide detailed figures for YouTube's running costs, and YouTube's revenues in 2007 were noted as "not material" in a regulatory filing. [231] In June 2008, a Forbes magazine article projected the 2008 revenue at $200 million, noting progress in advertising sales. [232] In January 2012, it was estimated that visitors to YouTube spent an average of 15 minutes a day on the site, in contrast to the four or five hours a day spent by a typical U.S. citizen watching television. [26] In 2012, YouTube's revenue from its ads program was estimated at 3.7 billion. [233] In 2013 it nearly doubled and estimated to hit 5.6 billion dollars according to eMarketer, [233] [234] [235] others estimated 4.7 billion. [233] The vast majority of videos on YouTube are free to view and supported by advertising. [53] In May 2013, YouTube introduced a trial scheme of 53 subscription channels with prices ranging from $0.99 to $6.99 a month. [236] The move was seen as an attempt to compete with other providers of online subscription services such as Netflix and Hulu. [53]

### Advertisement partnerships

YouTube entered into a marketing and advertising partnership with NBC in June 2006. [237] In March 2007, it struck a deal with BBC for three channels with BBC content, one for news and two for entertainment. [238] In November 2008, YouTube reached an agreement with MGM, Lions Gate Entertainment, and CBS, allowing the companies to post full-length films and television episodes on the site, accompanied by advertisements in a section for US viewers called “Shows”. The move was intended to create competition with websites such as Hulu, which features material from NBC, Fox, and Disney. [239] [240] In November 2009, YouTube launched a version of “Shows” available to UK viewers, offering around 4,000 full-length shows from more than 60 partners. [241] In January 2010, YouTube introduced an online film rentals service, [242] which is available only to users in the US, Canada and the UK as of 2010. [243] [244] The service offers over 6,000 films. [245]

### Partnership with video creators

In May 2007, YouTube launched its Partner Program, a system based on AdSense which allows the uploader of the video to share the revenue produced by advertising on the site. [246] YouTube typically takes 45 percent of the advertising revenue from videos in the Partner Program, with 55 percent going to the uploader. [247] There are over a million members of the YouTube Partner Program. [248] According to TubeMogul, in 2013 a pre-roll advertisement on YouTube (one that is shown before the video starts) cost advertisers on average $7.60 per 1000 views. Usually no more than half of eligible videos have a pre-roll advertisement, due to a lack of interested advertisers. [249] Assuming pre-roll advertisements on half of videos, a YouTube partner would earn 0.5 X $7.60 X 55% = $2.09 per 1000 views in 2013. [249]

### Revenue to copyright holders

Much of YouTube's revenue goes to the copyright holders of the videos. [235] In 2010, it was reported that nearly a third of the videos with advertisements were uploaded without permission of the copyright holders. YouTube gives an option for copyright holders to locate and remove their videos or to have them continue running for revenue. [250] In May 2013, Nintendo began enforcing its copyright ownership and claiming the advertising revenue from video creators who posted...
screenshots of its games."[251] In February 2015, Nintend agreed to share the revenue with the video creators.[252][253][254]

3.3.5 Community policy

YouTube has a set of community guidelines aimed to reduce abuse of the site's features. Generally prohibited material includes sexually explicit content, videos of animal abuse, shock videos, content uploaded without the copyright holder's consent, hate speech, spam, and predatory behavior.[255] Despite the guidelines, YouTube has faced criticism from news sources for content in violation of these guidelines.

Copyrighted material

At the time of uploading a video, YouTube users are shown a message asking them not to violate copyright laws.[256] Despite this advice, there are still many unauthorized clips of copyrighted material on YouTube. YouTube does not view videos before they are posted online, and it is left to copyright holders to issue a DMCA takedown notice pursuant to the terms of the Online Copyright Infringement Liability Limitation Act. Any successful complaint about copyright infringement results in a YouTube copyright strike. Three successful complaints for copyright infringement against a user account will result in the account and all of its uploaded videos being deleted.[257][258] Organizations including Viacom, Mediaset, and the English Premier League have filed lawsuits against YouTube, claiming that it has done too little to prevent the uploading of copyrighted material.[259][260][261] Viacom, demanding $1 billion in damages, said that it had found more than 150,000 unauthorized clips of its material on YouTube that had been viewed "an astounding 1.5 billion times."] YouTube responded by stating that it "goes far beyond its legal obligations in assisting content owners to protect their works."[262]

During the same court battle, Viacom won a court ruling requiring YouTube to hand over 12 terabytes of data detailing the viewing habits of every user who has watched videos on the site. The decision was criticized by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which called the court ruling "a setback to privacy rights".[263][264] In June 2010, Viacom's lawsuit against Google was rejected in a summary judgment, with U.S. federal Judge Louis L. Stanton stating that Google was protected by provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Viacom announced its intention to appeal the ruling.[265] On April 5, 2012, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reinstated the case, allowing Viacom's lawsuit against Google to be heard in court again.[266] On March 18, 2014, the lawsuit was settled after seven years with an undisclosed agreement.[267]

In August 2008, a US court ruled in Lenz v. Universal Music Corp. that copyright holders cannot order the removal of an online file without first determining whether the posting reflected fair use of the material. The case involved Stephanie Lenz from Gallitzin, Pennsylvania, who had made a home video of her 13-month-old son dancing to Prince's song "Let's Go Crazy", and posted the 29-second video on YouTube.[268] In the case of Smith v. Summit Entertainment LLC, professional singer Matt Smith sued Summit Entertainment for the wrongful use of copyright takedown notices on YouTube.[269] He asserted seven causes of action, and four were ruled in Smith's favor.[270]

In April 2012, a court in Hamburg ruled that YouTube could be held responsible for copyrighted material posted by its users. The performance rights organization GEMA argued that YouTube had not done enough to prevent the uploading of German copyrighted music. YouTube responded by stating:

On November 1, 2016, the dispute with GEMA was resolved, with Google content ID being used to allow advertisements to be added to videos with content protected by GEMA.[272]

In April 2013, it was reported that Universal Music Group and YouTube have a contractual agreement that prevents content blocked on YouTube by a request from UMG from being restored, even if the uploader of the video files a DMCA counter-notice. When a dispute occurs, the uploader of the video has to contact UMG.[273][274] YouTube's owner Google announced in November 2015 that they would help cover the legal cost in select cases where they believe "fair use" laws apply.[275]

Content ID  See also: Criticism of Google § YouTube

In June 2007, YouTube began trials of a system for automatic detection of uploaded videos that infringe copyright. Google CEO Eric Schmidt regarded this system as necessary for resolving lawsuits such as the one from Viacom, which alleged that YouTube profited from content that it did not have the right to distribute.[276] The system, which became known as Content ID,[277] creates an ID File for copyrighted audio and video material, and stores it in a database. When a video is uploaded, it is checked against the database, and flags the video as a copyright violation if a match is found.[278] When this occurs, the content owner has the choice of blocking the video to make it unviewable, tracking the viewing statistics of the video, or adding advertisements to the video. YouTube describes Content ID as "very accurate in finding uploads that look similar to reference files that are of sufficient length and quality to generate an effective ID File".[279] Content ID accounts for over a third of the monetized views on YouTube.[279]

An independent test in 2009 uploaded multiple versions
of the same song to YouTube, and concluded that while the system was "surprisingly resilient" in finding copyright violations in the audio tracks of videos, it was not infallible. [280] The use of Content ID to remove material automatically has led to controversy in some cases, as the videos have not been checked by a human for fair use. [281] If a YouTube user disagrees with a decision by Content ID, it is possible to fill in a form disputing the decision. [282] YouTube has cited the effectiveness of Content ID as one of the reasons why the site's rules were modified in December 2010 to allow some users to upload videos of unlimited length. [283]

Controversial content

See also: Criticism of Google § YouTube, and Censorship by Google § YouTube

YouTube has also faced criticism over the offensive content in some of its videos. The uploading of videos containing defamation, pornography, and material encouraging criminal conduct is forbidden by YouTube's "Community Guidelines". [255] YouTube relies on its users to flag the content of videos as inappropriate, and a YouTube employee will view a flagged video to determine whether it violates the site's guidelines. [255]

Controversial content has included material relating to Holocaust denial and the Hillsborough disaster, in which 96 football fans from Liverpool were crushed to death in 1989. [284] [285] In July 2008, the Culture and Media Committee of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom stated that it was "unimpressed" with YouTube's system for policing its videos, and argued that "proactive review of content should be standard practice for sites hosting user-generated content". [285] YouTube responded by stating:

We have strict rules on what's allowed, and a system that enables anyone who sees inappropriate content to report it to our 24/7 review team and have it dealt with promptly. We educate our community on the rules and include a direct link from every YouTube page to make this process as easy as possible for our users. Given the volume of content uploaded on our site, we think this is by far the most effective way to make sure that the tiny minority of videos that break the rules come down quickly. [286] (July 2008)

In October 2010, U.S. Congressman Anthony Weiner urged YouTube to remove from its website videos of imam Anwar al-Awlaki. [287] YouTube pulled some of the videos in November 2010, stating they violated the site's guidelines. [288] In December 2010, YouTube added the ability to flag videos for containing terrorism content. [289] YouTube's policies on "advertiser-friendly content" restrict what may be incorporated into videos being monetized; this includes strong violence, language, sexual content, and "controversial or sensitive subjects and events, including subjects related to war, political conflicts, natural disasters and tragedies, even if graphic imagery is not shown". [290] unless the content is "usually newsworthy or comedic and the creator's intent is to inform or entertain". In September 2016, after introducing an enhanced notification system to inform users of these violations, YouTube's policies were criticized by prominent users, including Phillip DeFranco and Vlogbrothers. DeFranco argued that not being able to earn advertising revenue on such videos was "censorship by a different name". A YouTube spokesperson stated that while the policy itself was new, the service had "improved the notification and appeal process to ensure better communication to our creators." [291] [292] [293]

In March 2017, the government of the United Kingdom pulled its advertising campaigns from YouTube, after reports that its ads had appeared on videos containing extremism content. The government demanded assurances that its advertising would "be delivered in a safe and appropriate way". The Guardian newspaper, as well as other major British and U.S. brands, similarly suspended their advertising on YouTube in response to their advertising appearing near offensive content. Google stated that it had "begun an extensive review of our advertising policies and have made a public commitment to put in place changes that give brands more control over where their ads appear". [294] [295] In early-April 2017, the YouTube channel h3h3Productions presented evidence claiming that a Wall Street Journal article had fabricated screenshots showing major brand advertising on an offensive video containing Johnny Rebel music overlaid on a Chief Keef music video, citing that the video itself had not earned any ad revenue for the uploader. The video was retracted after it was found that the ads had actually been triggered by the use of copyrighted content in the video. [296] [297]

On April 6, 2017, YouTube announced that in order to "ensure revenue only flows to creators who are playing by the rules", it would change its practices to require that a channel undergo a policy compliance review, and have at least 10,000 lifetime views, before they may join the Partner Program. [298]

User comments

See also: Criticism of Google § YouTube user comments

Most videos enable users to leave comments, and these have attracted attention for the negative aspects of both their form and content. In 2006, Time praised Web 2.0 for enabling "community and collaboration on a scale never seen before", and added that YouTube "harnesses
the stupidity of crowds as well as its wisdom. Some of the comments on YouTube make you weep for the future of humanity just for the spelling alone, never mind the obscenity and the naked hatred.”[299] The Guardian in 2009 described users’ comments on YouTube as: In September 2008, The Daily Telegraph commented that YouTube was “notorious” for “some of the most confrontational and ill-formed comment exchanges on the internet”, and reported on YouTube Comment Snob, “a new piece of software that blocks rude and illiterate posts.”[301] The Huffington Post noted in April 2012 that finding comments on YouTube that appear “offensive, stupid and crass” to the “vast majority” of the people is hardly difficult.[302] On November 6, 2013, Google implemented a comment system oriented on Google+ that required all YouTube users to use a Google+ account in order to comment on videos. The stated motivation for the change was giving creators more power to moderate and block comments, thereby addressing frequent criticisms of their quality and tone.[303] The new system restored the ability to include URLs in comments, which had previously been removed due to problems with abuse.[304][305] In response, YouTube co-founder Jawed Karim posted the question “why the fuck do I need a google+ account to comment on a video?” on his YouTube channel to express his negative opinion of the change.[306] The official YouTube announcement[307] received 20,097 “thumbs down” votes and generated more than 32,000 comments in two days.[308] Writing in the Newsday blog Silicon Island, Chase Melvin noted that “Google+ is nowhere near as popular a social media network as Facebook, but it’s essentially being forced upon millions of YouTube users who don’t want to lose their ability to comment on videos” and “Discussion forums across the Internet are already bursting with outcry against the new comment system.” In the same article Melvin goes on to say:”[309] On July 27, 2015, Google announced in a blog post that it would be removing the requirement to sign up to a Google+ account to post comments to YouTube.[310] On November 3, 2016, YouTube announced a trial scheme which allows the creators of videos to decide whether to approve, hide or report the comments posted on videos based on an algorithm that detects potentially offensive comments.”[311]

View counts

In December 2012, two billion views were removed from the view counts of Universal and Sony music videos on YouTube, prompting a claim by The Daily Dot that the views had been deleted due to a violation of the site’s terms of service, which ban the use of automated processes to inflate view counts. This was disputed by Billboard, which said that the two billion views had been moved to Vevo, since the videos were no longer active on YouTube.”[312][313] On August 5, 2015, YouTube removed the feature which caused a video’s view count to freeze at “301” (later “301+”) until the actual count was verified to prevent view count fraud.”[314] YouTube view counts now update in real time.”[315]

3.3.6 Censorship and filtering

Main article: Censorship of YouTube

As of September 2012, countries with standing national bans on YouTube include China, Iran, and Turkmenistan. YouTube is blocked for a variety of reasons, including:

- Limiting public exposure to content that may ignite social or political unrest;
- Preventing criticism of a ruler, government, government officials, religion, or religious leaders;
- Violations of national laws, including:
  - Copyright and intellectual property protection laws;
  - Violations of hate speech, ethics, or morality-based laws; and
  - National security legislation.
- Preventing access to videos judged to be inappropriate for youth;
- Reducing distractions at work or school; and
- Reducing the amount of network bandwidth used.

In some countries, YouTube is completely blocked, either through a long term standing ban or for more limited periods of time such as during periods of unrest, the run-up to an election, or in response to upcoming political anniversaries. In other countries access to the website as a whole remains open, but access to specific videos is blocked. In cases where the entire site is banned due to one particular video, YouTube will often agree to remove or limit access to that video in order to restore service.”[316] Businesses, schools, government agencies, and other private institutions often block social media sites, including YouTube, due to bandwidth limitations and the site’s potential for distraction.”[316] Several countries have blocked access to YouTube:

- Iran temporarily blocked access on December 3, 2006, to YouTube and several other sites, after declaring them as violating social and moral codes of conduct. The YouTube block came after a video was posted online that appeared to show an Iranian soap opera star having sex.”[317] The block was
In November 2011, after the ban was lifted in January 2016 after YouTube launched a Pakistan-specific version.  

- Turkmenistan blocked access on December 25, 2009, for unknown reasons. Other websites, such as LiveJournal were also blocked.  

- Libya blocked access on January 24, 2010, because of videos that featured demonstrations in the city of Benghazi by families of detainees who were killed in Abu Salim prison in 1996, and videos of family members of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi at parties. The blocking was criticized by Human Rights Watch. In November 2011, after the Libyan Civil War, YouTube was once again allowed in Libya.  

- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Russia, and Sudan blocked access in September 2012 following controversy over a 14-minute trailer for the film *Innocence of Muslims* which had been posted on the site.  

- In Libya and Egypt, the *Innocence of Muslims* trailer was blamed for violent protests in September 2012. YouTube stated that “This video—which is widely available on the Web—is clearly within our guidelines and so will stay on YouTube. However, given the very difficult situation in Libya and Egypt we have temporarily restricted access in both countries.”  

**Music Key licensing**

In May 2014, before YouTube’s subscription-based Music Key service was launched, the independent music trade organization Worldwide Independent Network alleged that YouTube was using non-negotiable contracts with independent labels that were “undervalued” in comparison to other streaming services, and that YouTube would block all music content from labels who do not negotiate deals to be included in the paid service. In a statement to the *Financial Times* in June 2014, Robert Kyncl confirmed that YouTube would block the content of labels who do not negotiate deals to be included in the paid service “to ensure that all content on the platform is governed by its new contractual terms.” Stating that 90% of labels had reached deals, he went on to say that “while we wish that we had [a] 100% success rate, we understand that is not likely an achievable goal and therefore it is our responsibility to our users and the industry to launch the enhanced music experience.”  

The *Financial Times* later reported that YouTube had reached an aggregate deal with Merlin Network—a trade
group representing over 20,000 independent labels, for their inclusion in the service. However, YouTube itself has not confirmed the deal."[190]

### 3.3.7 NSA Prism program

Following media reports about PRISM, NSA’s massive electronic surveillance program, in June 2013, several technology companies were identified as participants, including YouTube. According to leaks of said program, YouTube joined the PRISM program in 2010."[362]

### 3.3.8 April Fools

YouTube featured an April Fools prank on the site on April 1 of every year from 2008 to 2016.

In 2008, all the links to the videos on the main page were redirected to Rick Astley’s music video “Never Gonna Give You Up”, a prank known as “Rickrolling”."[363] [364]

In 2009, when clicking on a video on the main page, the whole page turned upside down. YouTube claimed that this was a “new layout”."[365]

In 2010, YouTube temporarily released a “TEXTp” mode, which translated the colors in the videos to random upper case letters. YouTube claimed in a message that this was done in order to reduce bandwidth costs by $1 per second."[366]

In 2011, the site celebrated its “100th anniversary” with a “1911 button” and a range of sepia-toned silent, early 1900s-style films, including “Flugelhorn Feline”, a parody of Keyboard Cat."[367]

In 2012, clicking on the image of a DVD next to the site logo led to a video about “The YouTube Collection”, a purported option to order every YouTube video for home delivery on DVD, videocassette, LaserDisc, or Betamax tapes. The spoof promotional video touted “the complete YouTube experience completely offline.” "[368]

In 2013, YouTube teamed up with satirical newspaper company The Onion to claim that the video sharing website was launched as a contest which had finally come to an end, and would announce a winner of the contest when the site went back up in 2023. A video of two presenters announcing the nominees streamed live for twelve hours."[369]

In 2014, YouTube announced that it was responsible for the creation of all viral video trends, and revealed previews of upcoming memes, such as “Clocking”, “Kissing Dad”, and “Glub Glub Water Dance”. "[370]

In 2015, YouTube added a music button to the video bar that played samples from “Sandstorm” by Darude. Additionally, when users searched for a song title, a message would appear saying “Did you mean: Darude – Sandstorm by Darude”."[371]

In 2016, YouTube announced “SnoopaVision Beta”, telling their users that soon they would have the option to watch every video on the platform in 360-degree mode with Snoop Dogg."[372]

### 3.3.9 See also

- CNN-YouTube presidential debates
- List of most viewed YouTube videos
- List of YouTubers
- BookTube
- Ouellette v. Viacom International Inc.
- Reply Girls
- YouTube Awards
- YouTube Instant
- YouTube Live
- YouTube Multi Channel Network
- YouTube Symphony Orchestra
- Viacom International Inc. v. YouTube, Inc.

### General

- Alternative media
- Comparison of video hosting services
- List of Internet phenomena
- List of video hosting services

### 3.3.10 References

#### Notes


[76] Tinic Uro (August 13, 2005). "The quest for a new video codec in Flash 8". Retrieved January 27, 2011. We went this route before with Sorenson Spark which is an incomplete implementation of H.263 and it bit us badly when trying to implement certain solutions.

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[104] “YouTube embedded video guide”.


[114] “YouTube Mobile”.


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[132] See YouTube localisation list on the bottom of YouTube website.


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[187] “YouTube Red”.


3.3. YOUTUBE


[207] Anderson, Chris (July 2010). “How web video powers global innovation”. TED. Archived from the original on December 25, 2013. (click on “Show transcript” tab) • Corresponding YouTube video from official TED channel was titled “How YouTube is driving innovation.”


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[344] "Pakistan lifts ban on YouTube”. The Times of India, May 27, 2010


Further reading


3.3.11 External links

- Official website (Mobile)
- YouTube on Blogger
- Press room – YouTube
- YouTube – Google Developers
- Are YouTubers Revolutionizing Entertainment? (June 6, 2013), video produced for PBS by Off Book.

3.4 Reddit

For the community in Ontario, see Redditt.

The site prohibits harassment, and moderation requires substantial resources." [4"
As of 2017, Reddit had 542 million monthly visitors (234 million unique users), ranking #4 most visited website in U.S. and #9 in the world."[5] Across 2015, Reddit saw 82.54 billion pageviews, 73.15 million submissions, 725.85 million comments, and 6.89 billion upvotes from its users."[6]

Reddit was founded by University of Virginia roommates Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian in 2005. Condé Nast Publications acquired the site in October 2006. Reddit became a direct subsidiary of Condé Nast's parent company, Advance Publications, in September 2011. As of August 2012, Reddit operates as an independent entity, although Advance is still its largest shareholder."[7] Reddit is based in San Francisco, California. In October 2014, Reddit raised $50 million in a funding round led by Sam Altman and including investors Marc Andreessen, Peter Thiel, Ron Conway, Snoop Dogg, and Jared Leto."[8] Their investment saw the company valued at $500 million at the time."[9][10] In July 2017, Reddit raised an additional round of $200 million at a $1.8 billion valuation, with Advance Publications remaining the majority stakeholder."[11]

3.4.1 Overview

The site is a collection of entries submitted by its registered users, essentially a bulletin board system. The name "Reddit" is a play-on-words with the phrase "read it", i.e., "I read it on Reddit."[12] The site's content is divided into numerous categories, and the most popular posts from these 'subreddits' are visible on the front page to those who browse the site without an account. As of May 2016, there are over 11,400 active subreddits.[13][14][15]

When items (links or text posts) are submitted to a subreddit, the users, called "redditors,"[16] can vote for or against them (upvote/downvote). Each subreddit has a front page that shows newer submissions that have been rated highly. Redditors can also post comments about the submission, and respond back and forth in a conversation-tree of comments; the comments themselves can also be upvoted and downvoted. The front page of the site itself shows a combination of the highest-rated posts out of all the subreddits a user is subscribed to.

Front-page rank – for both the general front page and for individual subreddits – is determined by the age of the submission, positive ( "upvoted") to negative ( "downvoted") feedback ratio and the total vote-count."[17] Dozens of submissions cycle through these front pages daily.

The site's logo and its mascot is a line drawing of an alien nicknamed "Snoo". Subreddits often use themed variants of Snoo relevant to the subject."[18]
Although most of the site functions like a bulletin board or message board, each subreddit has the option of having an associated wiki that can provide supplementary material like instructions, recommended reading, or collaboration for real-life events.

**Users**

Registering an account with Reddit is free and does not require an email address to complete. As of June 2015, there were 36 million user accounts.[19] When logged in, Reddit users (known as redditors) have the ability to vote on submissions and comments to increase or decrease their visibility and submit links and comments. Users can also create their own subreddit on a topic of their choosing, and interested users can add it to their frontpage by subscribing to it. For example, as of May 2015, the Wikipedia subreddit – subtitled “the most interesting pages on Wikipedia” – has over 151,000 subscribers.[20] Reddit comments and submissions are occasionally abbreviated and peppered with terms that are understood within (and in many cases also outside) the Reddit community, ranging from OP (for “original poster” – the user who posted the submission being commented upon) to NSFW (for “not safe for work” – indicating the post has graphic or sexually explicit content).[21] Users earn “post karma” and “comment karma” for submitting text posts, link posts, and comments, which accumulate as point values on their user profile. “Post karma” refers to karma points received from text and link posts, while “comment karma” refers to karma points received from comments. Users may also be gifted “Reddit gold” if another user has well received the comment or post, generally due to humorous or high-quality content; this process is known as “gilding.” Reddit has also created a system of points called “creddits”.[22] Reddit gold “creddits” are like gift certificates: each creddit you have allows you to give one month of Reddit gold to someone else. The points do not lead to a prize as they are meant to stand in as a badge of honor for the user among their peers, although redditors have attempted to redeem their points before.[22]

Reddit also allows submissions that do not link externally. These are called “self posts” or “text submissions”. Many discussion-based subreddits allow only text-only submissions such as “AskReddit” – where users are only allowed to pose broad, discussion based questions to the community at large. Self posts previously did not accumulate karma points for the submitter, but as of July, 2016, these text-only posts generate karma.[23]

Reddit communities occasionally coordinate Reddit-external projects such as skewing polls on other websites, such as in 2007 when Greenpeace allowed web users to decide the name of a humpback whale it was tracking. Reddit users voted en masse to name the whale “Mr. Splasy Pants”, and Reddit administrators further encouraged this by changing the site logo to a whale during the voting. In December of that year, Mister Splashy Pants was announced as the winner of the competition.[24]

Within the site, redditors commemorate their “cake day” once a year, which is the anniversary of the day the user’s account was first created. The “cake day” offers no special benefit, except that a small icon representing a slice of cake appears next to that user’s name for 24 hours.[25] Redditors can “friend” one another, which gives a redditor quick access to posting and comments of their friend list. The commenting system and friend system, along with a certain “Reddit ethos” (called “reddiquette” on Reddit), lend Reddit aspects of a social networking service, though not to the extent of Facebook, Google+, and other websites aimed at providing social networking services. The Reddit community also socializes at meetups held at local parks and bars around the world.[26] and many localized subreddits for local in-person meetings exist.

**Subreddits**

Reddit entries are organized into areas of interest called “subreddits”. Originally, the front page was the “main-reddit”, and other areas were “subreddits”. There is now no longer a single main-reddit. Initially, this was removed in favour of a selection of “default subreddits”. As of June 2017, this has been replaced again with an introductory page prompting users to customize their “subscriptions”.[27] Subscribed subreddits appear on the user’s front page and on a top navigation bar, and can deal with a large range of topics - such as video games, books, discussion, and music.

There are over 11,400 active total subreddits to peruse,[13][14][15] including the former default set of 50 subreddits. The site has a default “Front Page” which contains staff selected popular articles, and also an “All Page” which contains only the very top ranked article/subreddits as ranked by readers themselves, and which page is accessible via an “All” link at the top of the “Front Page.”

In an interview with Memeburn, Reddit GM, Martin noted that the platform’s “approach is to give the community moderators or curators as much control as possible so that they can shape and cultivate the type of communities they want”.[28]

Some subreddits include the following:
• /r/science, a forum for discussing science

• /r/changemyview, a space for conversation among people with opposing viewpoints

• /r/The_Donald, a community supporting the politics of Donald Trump

IAmA and AMA One of the most popular subreddits is IAmA ("I Am A") where a user may post 'AMAs' (for "Ask Me Anything"), or similarly "AMAAs" (for "Ask Me Almost/Absolutely Anything") – prompts for others to ask questions about any topic. AMAs are open to all Reddit users, and use the site's comment system for both questions and answers; it is similar to a press conference but online. This subreddit was founded in May 2009. From 2013 to 2015, Victoria Taylor assisted reddit's volunteer community in presenting interviews.[30][31][32]

A number of notable individuals have participated in the IAmA subreddit or in an AMA, some of whom have appeared multiple times. Notable people who participated in the IAmA subreddit itself include then-United States President Barack Obama (while campaigning for the 2012 election[33]), Bill Gates (multiple times),[34] and Donald Trump (also while campaigning).[35]

As of May 2017, Barack Obama's AMA is the highest rated on the site, followed by those for Victoria Taylor, Reddit's former director of talent; Ken Bone, an Illinois man who went viral during the 2016 U.S. presidential election; Leah Remini, an actress who is a former member of Scientology; and Bill Gates.[36] The increased traffic for Obama's AMA brought down many parts of the website when it occurred on August 29, 2012.[37]

Celebrities participating in IAmAs have seen both positive and negative responses. In 2012, Woody Harrelson's AMA[38] was criticized after Harrelson declined to answer questions that were unrelated to the movie Rampart he was promoting.[39] Similarly, Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra's AMA was criticized for evasiveness when she focused on promoting her upcoming album to the detriment of other questions.[40] By contrast, rapper Snoop Dogg's 2012 AMA[41] attracted 1.6 million page views[42] after he provided several candid responses to the community's questions.[43] A particularly well received AMA of 2014 was that of Peter Dinklage,[44] best known for his role as Tyrion Lannister in the HBO drama series Game of Thrones. Redditors attribute the thread's success to the thoroughness of his responses and the fact that he stayed online much longer than he was expected to so he could spend more time with his fans. The actor departed by commenting:

This feels like being interviewed by a hundred thousand news anchors at once! But much friendlier anchors...who seem to know their material...I really appreciate everyone's enthusiasm and questions. I tried to move another engagement to make more time but it's really hard during shoots. I am going to try to answer a few more short ones now. And remember: If you see me on the street and want a photo, ask! It's just weird when your kid asks for directions.[45]

On July 2, 2015, hundreds of subreddits, including several with over a million subscribers, were set to private by their respective moderators after Victoria Taylor was dismissed.[46][47][48][49] Sources close to Reddit cited an increased focus on commercializing AMAs as the most likely reason.[50][51]

April Fools’ Day Main articles: The Button (Reddit) and Place (Reddit)

On April Fools' Day 2015, a social experiment was launched in the form of a subreddit called /r/thebutton. It featured a button and a 60-second countdown timer. User accounts created before that day were eligible to participate. A user could only ever click the button once, or opt not to click it. If a user clicked the button the timer was globally reset to 60 seconds,[52] and the user's "flair" (an icon next to the user's name) changed color. Colors were assigned based on a gradient from purple to red with purple signifying up to 60 seconds and red as low as 0 seconds. The countdown prematurely reached zero several times due to technical problems but eventually expired without further problems on June 5, 2015, after which the subreddit was archived.[53]

For April Fools’ Day 2016, a similar experiment was launched, centered around the "Robin" chat widget. After clicking a titular button, an IRC-like chat window was initially opened with one other user and gave a certain time to pick between three options, "Grow," "Stay" and "Leave".[54] "Grow" would join the chat with another group, "Stay" would close the group chat and create a subreddit with that group as moderators and "Leave" would close the group chat.

April Fools’ Day 2017 featured another social experiment based around /r/place. The subreddit contained a collaborative pixel art canvas, where a user could place a pixel every five minutes (the timer was temporarily ten and twenty minutes for a few hours on April 1).[55] Many people worked together to create large graphics, such as flags or symbols. Often subreddits would come together as a group to add a graphic from that community to place. Place was closed on April 3, 2017 at 1:00 PM GMT having been active for a full three days.[56]
3.4.2 History

Further information: Timeline of Reddit

In June 2005,[57] Reddit was founded in Medford, Massachusetts by Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian, both 22-year-old graduates of the University of Virginia.[58] The team expanded to include Christopher Slowe in November 2005. Between November 2005 and January 2006 Reddit merged with Aaron Swartz’s company Infogami, and Swartz became an equal owner of the resulting parent company, Not A Bug.[59] [60] Condé Nast Publications, owner of Wired, acquired Reddit on October 31, 2006, and the team moved to San Francisco.[61] In January 2007, Swartz was fired.[62]

By the end of 2008, the team had grown to include Erik Martin, Jeremy Edberg,[63] David King,[64] and Mike Schiraldi.[65] In 2009, Huffman and Ohanian moved on to form Hipmunk, recruiting Slowe[66] and King[67] shortly thereafter. In May 2010, Reddit was named in Lead411’s “2010 Hottest San Francisco Companies” list.[68] In July 2010, after explosive traffic growth, Reddit introduced Reddit Gold, offering new features for a price of $3.99/month or $29.99/year.[69] Reddit Gold adds a number of features to the interface, including the ability to display more comments on a page, access to the private “lounge” subreddit, and notifications whenever one’s username is mentioned in a comment. It’s also possible to endow comments or submissions of other users and thereby give a gold membership to them as an anonymous present.[70]

On September 6, 2011, Reddit became operationally independent of Condé Nast, now operating as a separate subsidiary of its parent company, Advance Publications.[71] On January 11, 2012, Reddit announced that it would be participating in a 12-hour sitewide blackout in protest of the Stop Online Piracy Act.[72] The blackout occurred on January 18 and coincided with the blackouts of Wikipedia and several other websites. In May 2012, Reddit joined the Internet Defense League, a group formed to organize future protests.[73] On February 14, 2013, Reddit began accepting the digital currency bitcoin for its Reddit Gold subscription service through a partnership with bitcoin payment processor Coinbase.[74]

In October 2014, Reddit announced Redditmade, a service which allowed moderators to create merchandise for their subreddits. Redditmade closed in February 2015.[75] In November 2014, Chief Executive Yishan Wong resigned and co-founder Ohanian returned as the full-time executive chairman. Ellen Pao, Reddit’s business and partnerships strategist became the interim chief executive.[76] On July 10, 2015, Pao resigned and was replaced by Steve Huffman as CEO.[77][78]

In October 2015, Reddit announced a news portal called Upvoted, designed to broaden the reach of Reddit as a standalone site featuring editorial content from Reddit users.[79] In April 2016, Reddit launched a new blocking tool in an attempt to curb online harassment. The tool allows a user to hide posts and comments from selected redditors in addition to blocking private messages from those redditors.[80] The option to block a redditor is done by clicking a button in the inbox.

Co-founder Alexis Ohanian speaking in 2009

Technology

Reddit was originally written in Common Lisp but was rewritten in Python in December 2005.[3] The reasons given for the switch were wider access to code libraries and greater development flexibility. The Python web framework that former Reddit employee Swartz developed to run the site, web.py, is now available as an open-source project.[81] On June 18, 2008, Reddit became an open source project.[82] With the exception of the anti-spam/cheating portions, all of the code and libraries written for Reddit became freely available on GitHub.[83] Forming part of the open source approach, users can contribute to translating Reddit into 89 languages using the localization management platform Crowdin.[84] As of November 10, 2009, Reddit uses Pylons as its web framework.[85]

As of November 10, 2009, Reddit has decommissioned their physical servers and migrated to Amazon Web Services.[86] Reddit uses PostgreSQL as their primary datastore and is slowly moving to Apache Cassandra, a column-oriented datastore. It uses RabbitMQ.
for offline processing, HAPProxy for load balancing and memcached for caching. In early 2009, Reddit started using jQuery. On June 7, 2010, Reddit staff launched a revamped mobile interface featuring rewritten CSS, a new color scheme, and a multitude of improvements.

On July 21, 2010, Reddit outsourced the Reddit search engine to Flaport, who used its search product IndexTank. As of July 12, 2012, Reddit uses Amazon CloudSearch. There are several unofficial applications that use the Reddit API in the Google Play store, and F-Droid repository. Examples include: Reddit is Fun, [91] Andreddit, [92] F5, BaconReader, [93] Reddit Sync [94] and an Android tablet specific application called Reddita. [95] There are also several Windows apps used to access Reddit, including unofficial Reddit apps such as ReddHub [96] and Reddit To Go! [97] An unofficial desktop application Reddit [98] exists that is compatible with Windows, OS X, Linux and ChromeOS.

In 2015, Reddit had about 100 employees. In 2017, their number increased from around 140 in January to 230 in July. There are several Reddit applications for iOS. These include Karma, Upvote, iReddit, iPad-specific applications such as Reddzine and Biscuit, and, until April 2016, Alien Blue. [100] In September 2014, an official mobile application for browsing AMA (Ask Me Anything) threads was released for the iOS and Android platforms under the name Ask me Anything. [101] In October 2014, Alien Blue was acquired by Reddit and became the official iOS Reddit app. [102] In April 2016, Reddit released an official application called Reddit: The Official App, which is available on Google Play and the iOS App Store, and Alien Blue was removed from the App Store in favor of the new app.

3.4.3 Community and culture

The website is known for its open nature and diverse user community that generate its content. Its demographics allows for wide-ranging subject areas, or main subreddits, that receive much attention, as well as the ability for smaller subreddits to serve more niche purposes. For example, the University of Reddit, a subreddit that exists to communally teach, emerged from the ability to enter and leave the online forum, the “classroom”, at will, and classes ranging from computer science to music, to fine art theory exist. The unique possibilities that subreddits provide create new opportunities for raising attention and fostering discussion across many areas. In gaining popularity in terms of unique users per day, Reddit has been a platform for many to raise publicity for a number of causes. And with that increased ability to garner attention and a large audience, users can use one of the largest communities on the Internet for new, revolutionary, and influential purposes.

Statistics from Google Ad Planner suggest that 74% of Reddit users are male. In 2016 the Pew Research Center published research showing that 4% of U.S. adults use Reddit, of which 67% are men. 78% of users get news from Reddit. Users tend to be significantly younger than average with less than 1% of users being 65 or over.

Its popularity has enabled users to take unprecedented advantage of such a large community. Its innovative socially ranked rating and sorting system drives a method that is useful for fulfilling certain goals of viewership or simply finding answers to interesting questions. User sentiments about the website’s function and structure include feelings about the breadth and depth of the discussions on Reddit and how the site makes it easy to discover new and interesting items. Almost all of the user reviews on Alexa.com, which rates Reddit’s monthly unique traffic rating 125th in the United States, mention Reddit’s “good content” as a likable quality. However, others raise the negative aspects of the potential for Reddit’s communities to possess a “hive mind” of sorts, embodying some negative aspects of group interaction theories like crowd psychology and collective consciousness.

Philanthropic efforts

Reddit has been known as the instigator of several charity projects, some short and others long-term, in order to benefit others. A selection of major events are outlined below:

- In early October 2010, a story was posted on Reddit about a seven-year-old girl, Kathleen Edward, who was in the advanced stages of Huntington’s disease. The girl’s neighbors were taunting her and her family. Redditors banded together and gave the girl a shopping spree [110] at Tree Town Toys, a toy store local to the story owned by a Reddit user.
- In early December 2010, members of the Christianity subreddit decided to hold a fundraiser [112] and later members of the atheism subreddit decided to give some friendly competition, cross-promoting [113] fundraising drives for Doctors Without Borders and World Vision’s Clean Water Fund, respectively. Later, the Islam subreddit joined in, raising money for Islamic Relief. In less than a week, the three communities (as well as the Reddit community at large) raised over $50,000. Most of this was raised by the atheism subreddit, though the smaller Christianity subreddit had a higher average donation amount per subscriber. A similar donation drive in 2011 saw the atheism subreddit raise over $200,000 for charity.
- Reddit started the largest Secret Santa program in the world, which is still in operation to date.
For the 2010 Holiday season, 92 countries were involved in the Secret Santa program. There were 17,543 participants, and $662,907.60 was collectively spent on gift purchases and shipping costs.[118][119][120] In 2014, about 200,000 users from 188 countries participated.[121] Several celebrities have participated in the program, including Bill Gates[122] and Snoop Dogg.[123] Eventually, the Secret Santa program expanded to various other occasions through Redditgifts.

- Members from Reddit donated over $600,000 to DonorsChoose in support of Stephen Colbert’s March to Keep Fear Alive. The donation spree broke previous records for the most money donated to a single cause by the Reddit community and resulted in an interview with Colbert on Reddit.[124]
- Reddit users donated $185,356 to Direct Relief for Haiti after an earthquake devastated the nation in January 2010.[125]
- Reddit users donated over $70,000 to the Faraja Orphanage in the first 24 hours to help secure the orphanage after intruders robbed and attacked one of the volunteers, who survived a strike to the head from a machete.[126]
- In October 2012, "Shitty Watercolour", a popular Redditor known for posting watercolor paintings on the website,[127][128][129] streamed live a 12-hour painting session on YouTube to raise money for charity: water, a non-profit organization which aims to provide potable drinking water in developing countries. Redditors donated a minimum of $10 to have a photo of their choice painted in a 5 by 5 centimetres (2.0 by 2.0 in) square section of large sheets of paper.[130][131] The paint-a-thon raised $2,700.[132]
- In February 2014, Reddit announced it would be donating 10% of its annual ad revenue to non-profits voted upon by its users.[133]
- Reddit continued this policy for 2015, donating $82,765 each to Electronic Frontier Foundation, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Doctors Without Borders, Erowid Center, Wikimedia Foundation, Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, NPR, Free Software Foundation, Freedom From Religion Foundation, and Tor Project.[134]
- In response to the 2015 Nepal earthquake, redditors raised more than $145,000 for Direct Relief and more than $110,000 for MAP International.[135]

Sociopolitical efforts

See also: Digital citizen, Netizen, and Online social movement

Reddit’s model could be seen as having sociopolitical aspects. It is built upon crowdsourcing, user generated content, sharing, altruism, gamification, social reputation, social relevance (opposed to monetary return), participation, freedom of speech, openness, participatory and/or self-governance, new forms of interaction (e.g. #IAmA and AMA) and collective intelligence. The site has been used for a wide variety of political purposes including the presidential campaigns of Barack Obama and Donald Trump.[138][139][140] It has also been used for self-organizing sociopolitical activism such as protests, communication with politicians and active communities. Reddit has become a prime location for people worldwide to openly discuss politics.[141]

March for Science  Main article: March for Science

The March for Science originated from a discussion on reddit that informed about all references to climate change having been deleted from the White House website about which a user commented that "There needs to be a Scientists' March on Washington".[142][143][144]

Internet privacy, neutrality and anonymity  Many reddit users are highly engaged in the defense of Internet privacy, net neutrality and Internet anonymity. In advance of legislations that endanger these redditors typically set up pages to organize protest, create and curate content (e.g. media), call responsible authorities and inform about their issues and e.g. relevant tools and organizations.

On January 11, 2012, Reddit announced that it would be participating in a 12-hour sitewide blackout in protest of the Stop Online Piracy Act.[72] The blackout occurred on January 18 and coincided with the blackouts of Wikipedia and several other websites. In May 2012, Reddit joined the Internet Defense League, a group formed to organize future protests.[145]

Cannabis legalization  Further information: Drug liberalization

A majority of the site’s users seems to support legalization of marijuana.

The subreddit dedicated to cannabis culture /r/trees is most active in this regard and often organizes, coordinates or supports drug reform campaigns.[146][147][148][149] In 2010, the site ran ads promoting marijuana legalization without charge after Condé Nast stated that they...
do not want to benefit financially from this particular issue.”[150]

Commercial activity

In February 2013, Betabeat published a post that recognized the influx of multi-national corporations like Costco, Taco Bell, Subaru, and McDonald’s posting branded content on Reddit that was made to appear as if it was original content from legitimate Reddit users.[151] Reddit’s former Director of Communications noted that while a large number of Chief Marketing Officers want to “infiltrate the reddit community on behalf of their brand,” she emphasized that “self-promotion is frowned upon” and the site is “100 percent organic.”[152][153][154][155] She recommended that advertisers design promotions that “spark conversations and feedback.”[156] She recommended that businesses use AMAs to get attention for public figures but cautioned “It is important to approach AMAs carefully and be aware that this may not be a fit for every project or client.”[157] Nissan ran a successful Branded content promotion offering users free gifts to publicize a new car.[158][159] though the company was later ridiculed for suspected astroturfing when the CEO only answered puff piece questions on the site.[160][161] Taylor described these situations as “high risk” noting “We try hard to educate people that they have to treat questions that may seem irreverent or out of left field the same as they would questions about the specific project they are promoting.”[162]

Reddit’s users are more privacy-conscious than on other websites, using tools like AdBlock and proxies,[163] and they hate “feeling manipulated by brands” but respond well to “content that begs for intelligent viewers and participants.”[164] Lauren Orsini writes in ReadWrite that “Reddit’s huge community is the perfect hype machine for promoting a new movie, a product release, or a lagging political campaign” but “very specific set of etiquette. Redditors don’t want to advertise for you, they want to talk to you.”[165] Journalists have used the site as a basis for stories, though they are advised by the site’s policies to respect that “reddit’s communities belong to their members’ and to seek proper attribution for people’s contributions.”[166]

Reddit announced that they would begin using VigLink to redirect affiliate links in June 2016.[167]

Reddit effect

Main article: Slashdot effect

Also known as the “Slashdot effect”, the Reddit effect occurs when a smaller website has a high influx of traffic after being linked to on Reddit.[168] It is also called the “Reddit Hug of Death” among the website’s users. Because Reddit is such a large site, the traffic is immense and can easily crash smaller sites. In order for users to see crashed websites, several Reddit bots have been created that take a snapshot of the website before large amounts of traffic flood the affected website.

“Restoring Truthiness” campaign

As a response to Glenn Beck’s August 28, 2010, Restoring Honor rally (heavily promoted by him in his Fox News broadcasts during the summer), in September 2010 Reddit users started a movement to persuade satirist Stephen Colbert to have a counter-rally in Washington, D.C.[169] The movement, which came to be called “Restoring Truthiness”, was started by user rr-sammercnder, in a post where he described waking up from a dream in which Stephen Colbert was holding a satirical rally in D.C.[170] He writes, “This would be the high water mark of American satire. Half a million people pretending to suspend all rational thought in unison. Perfect harmony. It’ll feel like San Francisco in the late 60s, only we won’t be able to get any acid.”

The idea resonated with the Reddit community, which launched a campaign to bring the event to life. Over $600,000[171] was raised for charity to gain the attention of Colbert. The campaign was mentioned on-air several times, and when the Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear was held in Washington, D.C. on October 30, 2010, thousands of redditors made the journey.[172]

During a post-rally press conference, Reddit co-founder Ohanian asked, “What role did the Internet campaign play in convincing you to hold this rally?” Jon Stewart responded by saying that, though it was a very nice gesture, the two had already thought of the idea prior and the deposit on using the National Mall was already paid during the summer, so it acted mostly as a “validation of what we were thinking about attempting”. [173] In a message to the Reddit community, Colbert later added, “I have no doubt that your efforts to organize and the joy you clearly brought to your part of the story contributed greatly to the turnout and success.”[174]

3.4.4 Controversies

See also: Controversial Reddit communities and Michael Brutsch

The website generally lets moderators on individual subreddits make editorial decisions about what content to allow, and has a history of permitting some subreddits dedicated to controversial content.[175] Many of the default pages are highly moderated, with the “science” subreddit banning climate change denialism,[176] and the “news” subreddit banning opinion pieces and columns.[177] Reddit has changed its site-wide editorial policies several times, sometimes in reaction to
controversies."[178][179][180][181] Reddit has had a history of giving a platform to objectionable but legal content, and in 2011, news media covered the way that jailbait was being shared on the site before the site changed their policies to explicitly ban "suggestive or sexual content featuring minors".[182] Following some controversial incidents of Internet vigilantism, Reddit introduced a strict rule against the publication of non-public personally-identifying information via the site (colloquially known as doxxing). Those who break the rule are subject to a site-wide ban, and their posts and even entire communities may be removed for breaking the rule.

2010

On December 16, 2010, a redditor named Matt posted a link describing how he has donated a kidney, and included a JustGive link to encourage users to give donations to the American Cancer Society.[183] After an initially positive reaction, Reddit users began to become suspicious of Matt’s intentions, and suggested that he was keeping the donations for himself. Users telephonened his home and he received death threats. Matt eventually proved that he was genuine by uploading his doctor’s records.[184]

2011

On October 18, 2011, an IT manager submitted a post to the subreddit ”gameswap” offering Redditors to trade one of 312 codes he had been given for the game Deus Ex: Human Revolution.[185] A group of users obtained his personal details, and began to blackmail him for the codes.[186] The Monday after uploading the post, he received 138 threatening phone calls both at home and at his job, and by the end of the day he had been fired.[187]

2013

Following the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, Reddit faced criticism after users wrongly identified a number of people as suspects.[188] Notable among misidentified bombing suspects was Sunil Tripathi, a student reported missing before the bombings took place. A body reported to be Sunil’s was found in Providence River in Rhode Island on April 25, 2013, according to Rhode Island Health Department. The cause of death was not immediately known, but authorities said they did not suspect foul play.[189] The family later confirmed Tripathi’s death was a result of suicide.[190] Reddit general manager Martin later issued an apology for this behavior, criticizing the ”online witch hunts and dangerous speculation” that took place on the website.[191] The incident was later referenced in the season 5 episode of the CBS TV series The Good Wife titled "Whack-a-Mole,"[192] as well as The Newsroom.[193][194]

In late October 2013, the moderators of the “politics” subreddit banned a large group of websites. Many were left-wing opinion websites, such as Mother Jones, The Huffington Post, Salon, Alternet, Rawstory, The Daily Kos, Truthout, Media Matters, and ThinkProgress as well as some popular progressive blog sites, such as Democratic Underground and Crooks and Liars. They also banned a number of right-wing sites—Drudge Report, Breitbart, The Daily Caller, Dailypaul, Power Line, and Reason. Salon reported that “the section’s moderators explained in a post on Tuesday, the goal is to reduce the number of blogspam submissions and sensationalist titles.” The purge, the moderators explained, is also aimed at sites that provide lots of “bad journalism.”[195] The December 2013 list of banned websites has been modified since late October, and sites with original content, such as Mother Jones and The Huffington Post, are allowed.[196] Moderators also banned RT, which moderators stated was due to vote manipulation and spam, though one moderator stated that he wanted RT banned because it is Kremlin backed.[197][198]

2014

In August 2014, photos from the 2014 celebrity photo hack were widely disseminated across the site.[199][200] A dedicated subreddit, "ThFappening," was created for this purpose,[201] and contained links to most if not all of the criminally obtained explicit images.[202][203][204][205][206] Some images of Liz Lee and McKayla Maroney from the leak were identified by redditors and outside commentators as child pornography because the photos were taken when the women were underage.[207] The subreddit was banned on September 6.[208] The scandal led to wider criticisms concerning the website’s administration from The verge and The Daily Dot.[209][210]

Also in August 2014, moderators and administrators removed a sizeable amount of content related to the Gamergate controversy; one thread in the ”gaming” subreddit lost almost 24,000 comments.[211] This included the subreddit "ZoeQuinnDiscussion", which moderators stated was due to violating the Reddit rules.[212] Administrators attributed the bans to 4chan for raiding threads and causing harm, the accuracy of which was debated by some redditors.[213]

On December 18, 2014, Reddit took the unusual step of banning a subreddit, “SonyGOP,” that was being used to distribute hacked Sony files.[214]

2015

After Ellen Pao became CEO, she was initially a target of criticism by users who objected to her lawsuit.[215] Later on June 10, 2015, Reddit shut down the 150,000-subscriber ”fatpeoplehate” subreddit and four others cit-
ing issues related to harassment."

This move was seen as very controversial; some commenters said that the bans went too far, while others said that the bans did not go far enough. One of the latter complaints concerned a subreddit that was “expressing support” for the perpetrator of the Charleston church shooting. Responding to the accusations of “skewed enforcement”, Reddit reaffirmed their commitment to free expression and stated that “There are some subreddits with very little viewership that get highlighted repeatedly for their content, but those are a tiny fraction of the content on the site.”

On July 2, 2015, Reddit began experiencing a series of blackouts as moderators set popular subreddit communities to private, in an event dubbed “AMAgeddon,” a portmanteau of AMA (“ask me anything”) and Armageddon. This was done in protest of the recent firing of Victoria Taylor, an administrator who helped organize citizen-led interviews with famous people on the popular “Ask me Anything” subreddit. Organizers of the blackout also expressed resentment about the recent severance of the communication between Reddit and the moderators of subreddits. The blackout intensified on July 3 when former community manager David Croach gave an AMA about being fired. Before deleting his posts, he stated that Ellen Pao dismissed him with one year of health coverage when he had cancer and did not recover quickly enough.

Following this, a Change.org petition to remove Pao as CEO of Reddit Inc. reached over 200,000 signatures. Pao posted a response on July 3 as well as an extended response on July 4 when former page of the Pizzagate subreddit. Organizers of AMAgeddon also expressed resentment about the recent severance of the communication between Reddit and the moderators of subreddits. The blackout intensified on July 3 when former community manager David Croach gave an AMA about being fired. Before deleting his posts, he stated that Ellen Pao dismissed him with one year of health coverage when he had cancer and did not recover quickly enough. Following this, a Change.org petition to remove Pao as CEO of Reddit Inc. reached over 200,000 signatures.

Pao posted a response on July 3 as well as an extended version of it on July 6 in which she apologized for bad communication and not delivering on promises. She also apologized on behalf of the other administrators and noted that problems already existed over the past several years.

On July 10, Pao resigned as CEO and was replaced by former CEO and co-founder Steve Huffman.

In August 2015, Steve Huffman introduced a policy which led to the banning of several offensive and sexual communities. Included in the ban was lolicon which Reddit referred to as “animated CP”. Some subreddits had also been quarantined due to having “highly-offensive or upsetting content”, such as /r/European, /r/swedenyes, /r/drawpeople, /r/kikutown, /r/blackfathers, /r/greatapes, and /r/whitesarecriminals.

2016

In May 2016, Reddit CEO Steve Huffman said on an interview at the TNW Conference that, unlike Facebook, which “only knows what [its users are] willing to declare publicly”, Reddit knows its users’ “dark secrets”. At the same time that the website’s “values” page was updated in regards to its “privacy” section, the video reached the top of the website’s main feed. Shortly thereafter, announcements concerning new advertisement content drew criticism on the website.

In September 2016, a Redditor named mormondocuments released thousands of administrative documents belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an action driven by the ex-Mormon and atheist communities of that site. Previously, on April 22 of that year, the same Redditor had announced his plans to do so. Church officials commented that the documents did not contain anything confidential.

On November 23, 2016, Steve Huffman admitted to modifying the contents of many public user comments on Reddit that he disliked. He did so by changing insulting comments made towards him and made it appear as if the insult were directed at the moderators of the /r/The_Donald.

On November 24, 2016, the Washington Post reported Reddit had banned the “Pizzagate” conspiracy board from their site stating it violated their policy of posting personal information of others, triggering a wave of criticism from users on /r/The_Donald, who felt the ban amounted to censorship. The Reddit forum “Pizzagate” was devoted to a conspiracy theory derived from the John Podesta leaked emails, a theory that alleged the D.C. Pizzeria Comet Ping Pong “is at the center of a child-abuse ring tied to John Podesta, Mrs. Clinton’s former campaign manager”. After the forum was banned from Reddit, the wording “We don’t want witchhunts on our site” now appears on the former page of the Pizzagate subreddit.

On November 30, 2016 CEO Steve Huffman announced changes to the algorithm of their /r/all page to block ‘stickied’ posts from a number of subreddits, such as /r/The_Donald. In the announcement, the CEO also apologized for personally editing posts by users from /r/The_Donald, and declared intentions to take actions against “hundreds of the most toxic users” of Reddit and “communities whose users continually cross the line”.

2017

In February 2017, Reddit banned the alt-right forum for violating its terms of service, more specifically for attempting to share personal information about the man who attacked alt-right figure Richard B. Spencer. The forum’s users and moderators accused Reddit administrators of having political motivations for the ban.

3.4.5 Other

Imgur is an online image sharing community and image host started in 2009 that was designed to be a gift to the
3.4. REDDIT

online community of Reddit,"[252] that jumped from a thousand hits per day to a million total page views in the first five months."[253]

3.4.6 See also

3.4.7 References


[15] “Active” is defined as “subreddits that had at least 5 posts or comments in the past day”, according to /u/chromakode who is an admin

[16] Redditor - definition of Redditor Oxford Dictionaries Online


[18] "blog.reddit -- what's new on reddit: What's Snoo?".

[19] Happy 10th birthday to us celebrating Reddit


[34] Michelle Castillo (27 February 2017). “Bill Gates is ‘concerned’ about U.S. influence overseas and political divide online”. CNBC. Gates participated in an “ask me anything” feature on Reddit that allows notable people to answer questions from users. This is the fifth time Gates has participated.


[38] "I’m Woody Harrelson, AMA". *Reddit*.


[40] "I’m Priyanka Chopra, AMA". *Reddit*.

[41] "I’m Snoop Lion! Ask me anything!!". *Reddit*.


[45] "This feels like being interviewed by a hundred thousand news anchors at once!". *Reddit*.

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[101] "Announcing the official reddit AMA app".


[103] Reddit scraps Alien Blue in favor of in-house built iOS and Android apps April 2016

[104] AMA how a weird internet thing became a mainstream delight The Atlantic January 2014


[112] "If every member of r/Christianity donates just $4.45, we can build a health clinic in an impoverished area that desperately needs one. Let’s do it!". December 9, 2010.

[113] "OK, Battle stations everybody. Tonight we show r/Christianity what we are made of...". December 9, 2010.

[114] "Dogs and cats living together! Mass hysteria! r/atheism and r/Christianity have a friendly competition up for a holiday charity drive that is spilling over into other subreddits". Reddit. December 10, 2010. Retrieved December 4, 2011.

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[153] "On Reddit, Unlike Other Social Sites, It's About the Topic, Not the Brand". PR News. October 28, 2013. Brands that are mentioned on the site are in a casual context, similar to being in a local bar or coffee shop, rather than a mall, which is much more of a commercial space
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[154] “To Learn About reddit, Listen First” . September 3, 2014. Victoria Taylor, director of communications at reddit, said the point of posting to reddit is not to have content go viral; it is to build credibility.

[155] “Social Media and Journalism: An Intrinsically Linked Organism” . Brandwatch. May 20, 2014. The communities on Reddit don’t want to feel used or exploited. That’s where listening comes in.


[158] “Nissan Buys Gifts for Redditors – and Some Love for Itself” . Digiday. November 21, 2013. Victoria Taylor, reddit’s director of communications, told Digiday that Nissan’s reddit adventure was one of the best campaigns the site has seen in a long time. “The community really responded well to the two community managers.”

[159] “Cheatsheet: How brands can win reddit” . Digiday. February 3, 2014. “Going into it, we are honest with advertisers that redditors are opinionated,” said Victoria Taylor, reddit’s director of communications. “Anywhere you have opinions, people are going to have a dialog and disagree.” Advertisers have to be willing to engage honestly—and cleverly—with the reddit community to win their trust.

[160] “Nissan, Reddit defend authenticity of questions in Ghosn AMA” . PR Week. January 14, 2015. While Taylor said it’s a positive that users demand authenticity, transparency, and accountability on Reddit, she noted that “it’s unfortunate that people tend to try to look for negative examples.” She admitted that the AMA with Nissan was not the most successful edition the platform has had... Reddit, she said, will always be “open and transparent if something doesn’t seem genuine.”


[176] “Critics blast Reddit over climate-change skeptic ban” . Fox News. December 19, 2013. Reddit’s director of communications told FoxNews.com that while it was Allen’s prerogative to ban climate-change skeptics from “/r/science” , his statements “do not reflect the views of Reddit as a whole, or other science or climate-oriented subreddits. Each subreddit community is entitled to its own views, and anyone who wants to start their own subreddit is welcome to do so devoted to their views, opinions or interests”

[177] Sam Kirkland (November 25, 2014). “How to get your news site banned from Reddit” . Poynter. If you don’t like how a moderator is managing a subreddit, the best solution is to start your own subreddit and moderate it with different rules, said Victoria Taylor, director of communications for Reddit.

[178] “blog.reddit -- what's new on reddit: reddit, we need to talk...” . redditblog.com.

[179] “A necessary change in policy : blog” . reddit.


[181] Rob Price. “Reddit's old CEO rewrites the history of Reddit and says 'the purge' of users will begin” . Business Insider Australia.


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[219] “Reddit in uproar after staff sacking”. BBC News. BBC. July 3, 2015. Retrieved July 3, 2015. About 100 chat sections, or sub-reddits, that together have millions of readers are believed to have been shut. Reddit's only comment about the issue has been to say that it did not talk about 'individual employee matters'. The protests were led by the volunteer moderators of the AMA section, which said in an explanatory posting that they needed Ms Taylor to keep the sub-reddit functioning. Ms Taylor helped organise guests for AMAs and worked to verify that people due to answer questions were who they said they were. There had been no explanation of why she was suddenly sacked, said the administrators.


[225] Reddit CEO Ellen Pao apologizes: ‘We screwed up’ By Laurie Segall and Chris Isidore CNN.com July 6, 2015

[226] Reddit CEO Ellen Pao Issues an Apology for the Direction of the Site by Laura Entis FoxNews.com July 6, 2015


[232] Boris van Zanten (30 May 2016). "Reddit CEO Steve Huffman: ‘We know your dark secrets. We know everything.’". The Next Web (TNW).

[233] Jessica Haworth (30 May 2016). "Reddit CEO tells users ‘we know your dark secrets’ as he strikes fear into web surfers". Mirror.

[234] "Reddit CEO Steve Huffman says, ‘We know your dark secrets’". Daily News and Analysis. 31 May 2016.

[235] "CEO of Reddit, Steve Huffman, about advertising on Reddit: ‘We know all of your interests. Not only just your interests you are willing to declare publicly on Facebook - we know your dark secrets, we know everything’" (TNW Conference, 26 May) (27,500 votes)”. Reddit. 29 May 2016.


[237] "Sponsored headline tests: placement and design". Reddit (official announcement).


3.5.1 History

The website was co-founded in 2008–2009 by University of Hong Kong student Ray Chan, his brother Chris Chan, and others, with the intention of creating an alternative online platform to email on which users could easily share humorous photos or videos. In a 2012 interview, Ray Chan declined to explain where the name “9GAG” is derived from. *[8]

Starting the company under a “Just for Fun” mentality, 9GAG’s co-founders began using 9GAG as a résumé-builder for the 500 Startups accelerator program. During the summer program, the 9GAG team worked on other startup ideas, including StartupQuote and Songboard. *[9] Following the 500 Startups accelerator program, 9GAG participated in Y Combinator’s incubator and its user-base increased to 70 million global unique visitors per month. *[10] The 9GAG co-founding team discontinued all other projects and shifted their focus exclusively on 9GAG. 500 Startups was given equity for their aid and mentorship.

In July 2012, 9GAG raised an additional US$2.8 million in funding from Silicon Valley-based venture capital, *[11] including True Ventures and Greyrock Partners. In August 2012, 9GAG received another US$2.8 million in funding from Silicon Valley venture capitalists, including True Ventures and Greyrock Partners, as well as individual investors like Christopher Sacca, Kevin Rose, and Naval Ravikant. This funding was able to support 9GAG’s engineering team growth both in Hong Kong and in Silicon Valley. *[12]

3.5.2 Authorship

9GAG users and admins may also re-post content (usually without any consent from its respective authors) from other websites (e.g. 4chan, Newgrounds, Reddit, SomethingAwful, FunnyJunk, YTMND, Instagram, etc.), replacing the source site’s watermark with their own. In 2011, 9GAG and 4chan disputed authorship of internet memes published on both websites, whereby each company claimed the memes originated from their own website. As stated by 9GAG co-founder Ray Chan, “9GAG does not create memes or rage comics, but helps spread them.” *[17] [18] In a 2015 Slate article, writer Amanda Hess described 9GAG’s reposting of content from Instagram as part of an “online ecosystem of joke stealing”. *[19]
3.5.3 References


3.5.4 External links

- Official website
Chapter 4

Impact On The Mainstream

4.1 Bitcoin

Not to be confused with Bitcoin Cash.

Bitcoin is a worldwide cryptocurrency and digital payment system invented by an unknown programmer, or a group of programmers, under the name Satoshi Nakamoto. It was released as open-source software in 2009.

The system is peer-to-peer, and transactions take place between users directly, without an intermediary. These transactions are verified by network nodes and recorded in a public distributed ledger called a blockchain. Since the system works without a central repository or single administrator, bitcoin is called the first decentralized digital currency.

Besides being created as a reward for mining, bitcoin can be exchanged for other currencies, products, and services in legal or black markets. As of February 2015, over 100,000 merchants and vendors accepted bitcoin as payment.

According to research produced by Cambridge University in 2017, there are 2.9 to 5.8 million unique users using a cryptocurrency wallet, most of them using bitcoin.

4.1.1 Terminology

The word bitcoin occurred in the white paper that defined bitcoin published on 31 October 2008. It is a compound of the words bit and coin. The white paper frequently uses the shorter coin.

There is no uniform convention for bitcoin capitalization. Some sources use Bitcoin, capitalized, to refer to the technology and network and bitcoin, lowercase, to refer to the unit of account. The Wall Street Journal, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and the Oxford English Dictionary advocate use of lowercase bitcoin in all cases, which this article follows.

4.1.2 Design

Blockchain

For a broader coverage related to this topic, see Blockchain.

The blockchain is a public ledger that records bit-

Units

The unit of account of the bitcoin system is bitcoin. As of 2014, symbols used to represent bitcoin are BTC,[note 1] XBT,[note 2] and (U+20BF, ฿).[note 3][28]:2 Small amounts of bitcoin used as alternative units are millibitcoin (mBTC),[1] microbitcoin (µBTC, sometimes referred to as bit), and satoshi. Named in homage to bitcoin's creator, a satoshi is the smallest amount within bitcoin representing 0.00000001 bitcoin, one hundred millionth of a bitcoin.[3] A millibitcoin equals to 0.001 bitcoin, one thousandth of a bitcoin.[29] One microbitcoin equals to 0.000001 bitcoin, one millionth of a bitcoin.

Number of unspent transaction outputs

A novel solution accomplishes this without any trusted central authority: maintenance of the blockchain is performed by a network of communicating nodes running bitcoin software.[13] Transactions of the form payer X sends Y bitcoins to payee Z are broadcast to this network using readily available software applications.[31] Network nodes can validate transactions, add them to their copy of the ledger, and then broadcast these ledger additions to other nodes. The
blockchain is a distributed database – to achieve independent verification of the chain of ownership of any and every bitcoin amount, each network node stores its own copy of the blockchain." [32] Approximately six times per hour, a new group of accepted transactions, a block, is created, added to the blockchain, and quickly published to all nodes. This allows bitcoin software to determine when a particular bitcoin amount has been spent, which is necessary in order to prevent double-spending in an environment without central oversight. Whereas a conventional ledger records the transfers of actual bills or promissory notes that exist apart from it, the blockchain is the only place that bitcoins can be said to exist in the form of unspent outputs of transactions." [9]".ch. 5

Transactions

See also: Bitcoin network

Transactions are defined using a Forth-like scripting language."[33]

A valid transaction must have one or more inputs."[34] Every input must be an unspent output of a previous transaction. The transaction must carry the digital signature of every input owner. The use of multiple inputs corresponds to the use of multiple coins in a cash transaction. A transaction can also have multiple outputs, allowing one to make multiple payments in one go. A transaction output can be specified as an arbitrary multiple of satoshi. As in a cash transaction, the sum of inputs (coins used to pay) can exceed the intended sum of payments. In such a case, an additional output is used, returning the change back to the payer."[34] Any input satoshis not accounted for in the transaction outputs become the transaction fee."[34]

Transaction fees

Paying a transaction fee is optional."[34] Miners can choose which transactions to process"[34] and prioritize those that pay higher fees. Fees are based on the storage size of the transaction generated, which in turn is dependent on the number of inputs used to create the transaction. Furthermore, priority is given to older unspent inputs."[9]".ch. 8

Mining

Mining is a record-keeping service."[note 4]" Miners keep the blockchain consistent, complete, and unalterable by repeatedly verifying and collecting newly broadcast transactions into a new group of transactions called a block."[30] Each block contains a cryptographic hash of the previous block."[30] using the SHA-256 hashing algorithm."[9]".ch. 7 which links it to the previous block,"[30] thus giving the blockchain its name.

In order to be accepted by the rest of the network, a new block must contain a so-called proof-of-work."[30] The proof-of-work requires miners to find a number called a nonce, such that when the block content is hashed along with the nonce, the result is numerically smaller than the network’s difficulty target."[9]".ch. 8 This proof is easy for any node in the network to verify, but extremely time-consuming to generate, as for a secure cryptographic hash, miners must try many different nonce values (usually the sequence of tested values is 0, 1, 2, 3, ..."[9]:ch. 8) before meeting the difficulty target.

Every 2016 blocks (approximately 14 days at roughly 10 min per block), the difficulty target is adjusted based on the network’s recent performance, with the aim of keeping the average time between new blocks at ten minutes. In this way the system automatically adapts to the total amount of mining power on the network."[9]".ch. 8 Between 1 March 2014 and 1 March 2015, the average number of nonces miners had to try before creating a new block increased from 16.4 quintillion to 200.5 quintillion."[36]

The proof-of-work system, alongside the chaining of blocks, makes modifications of the blockchain extremely hard, as an attacker must modify all subsequent blocks in order for the modifications of one block to be accepted."[37] As new blocks are mined all the time, the difficulty of modifying a block increases as time passes and the number of subsequent blocks (also called confirmations of the given block) increases."[30]
CHAPTER 4. IMPACT ON THE MAINSTREAM

SuppL

The successful miner finding the new block is rewarded with newly created bitcoins and transaction fees.[38] As of 9 July 2016,[39] the reward amounted to 12.5 newly created bitcoins per block added to the blockchain. To claim the reward, a special transaction called a coinbase is included with the processed payments.[9]:ch. 8 All bitcoins in existence have been created in such coinbase transactions. The bitcoin protocol specifies that the reward for adding a block will be halved every 210,000 blocks (approximately every four years). Eventually, the reward will decrease to zero, and the limit of 21 million bitcoins[note 6] will be reached c. 2140; the record keeping will then be rewarded by transaction fees solely.[40]

In other words, bitcoin’s inventor Nakamoto set a monetary policy based on artificial scarcity at bitcoin’s inception that there would only ever be 21 million bitcoins in total. Their numbers are being released roughly every ten minutes and the rate at which they are generated would drop by half every four years until all were in circulation.[41]

Wallets

See also: Digital wallet
A wallet stores the information necessary to transact bitcoins. While wallets are often described as a place to hold[42] or store bitcoins,[43] due to the nature of the system, bitcoins are inseparable from the blockchain transaction ledger. A better way to describe a wallet is something that “stores the digital credentials for your bitcoin holdings”[43] and allows one to access (and spend) them. Bitcoin uses public-key cryptography, in which two cryptographic keys, one public and one private, are generated.[44] At its most basic, a wallet is a collection of these keys.

There are several types of wallets. Software wallets connect to the network and allow spending bitcoins in addition to holding the credentials that prove ownership.[45] Software wallets can be split further in two categories: full clients and lightweight clients.

- **Full clients** verify transactions directly on a local copy of the blockchain (over 110 GB as of May 2017[46]), or a subset of the blockchain (around 2 GB[47]). Because of its size and complexity, the entire blockchain is not suitable for all computing devices.

- **Lightweight clients** on the other hand consult a full client to send and receive transactions without requiring a local copy of the entire blockchain (see simplified payment verification – SPV). This makes lightweight clients much faster to set up and allows them to be used on low-power, low-bandwidth devices such as smartphones. When using a lightweight wallet however, the user must trust the server to a certain degree. When using a lightweight client, the server can not steal bitcoins, but it can report faulty values back to the user. With
both types of software wallets, the users are responsible for keeping their private keys in a secure place."[48]

Besides software wallets, Internet services called online wallets offer similar functionality but may be easier to use. In this case, credentials to access funds are stored with the online wallet provider rather than on the user’s hardware."[49] [50] As a result, the user must have complete trust in the wallet provider. A malicious provider or a breach in server security may cause entrusted bitcoins to be stolen. An example of such security breach occurred with Mt. Gox in 2011."[51]

Physical wallets store the credentials necessary to spend bitcoins offline."[43] Examples combine a novelty coin with these credentials printed on metal."[52] Others are simply paper printouts. Another type of wallet called a hardware wallet keeps credentials offline while facilitating transactions."[53]

Reference implementation

The first wallet program was released in 2009 by Satoshi Nakamoto as open-source code."[15] Sometimes referred to as the "Satoshi client", this is also known as the reference client because it serves to define the bitcoin protocol and acts as a standard for other implementations."[45] In version 0.5 the client moved from the wxWidgets user interface toolkit to Qt, and the whole bundle was referred to as Bitcoin-Qt."[45] After the release of version 0.9, the software bundle was renamed Bitcoin Core to distinguish it from the network."[54] [55] Today, other forks of Bitcoin Core exist such as Bitcoin XT, Bitcoin Classic, Bitcoin Unlimited,"[56] [57] and Parity Bitcoin."[58]

Ownership

Ownership of bitcoins implies that a user can spend bitcoins associated with a specific address. To do so, a payer must digitally sign the transaction using the corresponding private key. Without knowledge of the private key, the transaction cannot be signed and bitcoins cannot be spent. The network verifies the signature using the public key."[9] ch. 5

If the private key is lost, the bitcoin network will not recognize any other evidence of ownership;"[13] the coins are then unusable, and effectively lost. For example, in 2013 one user claimed to have lost 7,500 bitcoins, worth $7.5 million at the time, when he accidentally discarded a hard drive containing his private key."[59]

Decentralization


Privacy

Bitcoin is pseudonymous, meaning that funds are not tied to real-world entities but rather bitcoin addresses. Owners of bitcoin addresses are not explicitly identified, but all transactions on the blockchain are public. In addition, transactions can be linked to individuals and companies through "idioms of use" (e.g., transactions that spend coins from multiple inputs indicate that the inputs may have a common owner) and corroborating public transaction data with known information on owners of certain addresses."[62] Additionally, bitcoin exchanges, where bitcoins are traded for traditional currencies, may be required by law to collect personal information."[63]

To heighten financial privacy, a new bitcoin address can be generated for each transaction."[64] For example, hierarchical deterministic wallets generate pseudorandom "rolling addresses" for every transaction from a single seed, while only requiring a single passphrase to be remembered to recover all corresponding private keys."[65] Additionally, "mixing" and CoinJoin services aggregate multiple users' coins and output them to fresh addresses to increase privacy."[66] Researchers at Stanford University and Concordia University have also shown that bitcoin exchanges and other entities can prove assets, liabilities, and solvency without revealing their addresses using zero-knowledge proofs."[67]

According to Dan Blystone, “Ultimately, bitcoin resembles cash as much as it does credit cards.”"[68]

Fungibility

Wallets and similar software technically handle all bitcoins as equivalent, establishing the basic level of
fungibility. Researchers have pointed out that the history of each bitcoin is registered and publicly available in the blockchain ledger, and that some users may refuse to accept bitcoins coming from controversial transactions, which would harm bitcoin's fungibility."[69] Projects such as CryptoNote, Zerocoin, and Dark Wallet aim to address these privacy and fungibility issues."[70][71]

**Governance**

Bitcoin was initially led by Satoshi Nakamoto. Nakamoto stepped back in 2010 and handed the network alert key to Gavin Andresen."[72] Andresen stated he subsequently sought to decentralize control stating: “As soon as Satoshi stepped back and threw the project onto my shoulders, one of the first things I did was try to decentralize that. So, if I get hit by a bus, it would be clear that the project would go on.”"[72] This left opportunity for controversy to develop over the future development path of bitcoin. The reference implementation of the bitcoin protocol called Bitcoin Core obtained competing versions that propose to solve various governance and blocksize debates; as of July 2016, the alternatives were called Bitcoin XT, Bitcoin Classic, and Bitcoin Unlimited."[73]

**Scalability**

Main article: Bitcoin scalability problem

The blocks in the blockchain are limited to one megabyte in size, which has created problems for bitcoin transaction processing, such as increasing transaction fees and delayed processing of transactions that cannot be fit into a block."[74] Contenders to solve the scalability problem are referred to as Bitcoin Cash, Bitcoin Classic,"[75] Bitcoin Unlimited,"[76] and SegWit2x."[77] On 21 July 2017 miners locked-in a software upgrade referred to as Bitcoin Improvement Proposal (BIP) 91, meaning that the controversial Segregated Witness upgrade will activate at block # 477,120."[78]

**4.1.3 History**

Main article: History of bitcoin


In January 2009, the bitcoin network came into existence with the release of the first open source bitcoin client and the issuance of the first bitcoins,"[79][80][81][82] with Satoshi Nakamoto mining the first block of bitcoins ever (known as the genesis block), which had a reward of 50 bitcoins.

One of the first supporters, adopters, contributor to bitcoin and receiver of the first bitcoin transaction was programmer Hal Finney. Finney downloaded the bitcoin software the day it was released, and received 10 bitcoins from Nakamoto in the world's first bitcoin transaction."[83][84] Other early supporters were Wei Dai, creator of bitcoin predecessor b-money, and Nick Szabo, creator of bitcoin predecessor bit gold."[85]

In the early days, Nakamoto is estimated to have mined 1 million bitcoins."[86] Before disappearing from any involvement in bitcoin, Nakamoto in a sense handed over the reins to developer Gavin Andresen, who then became the bitcoin lead developer at the Bitcoin Foundation, the ‘anarchic’ bitcoin community's closest thing to an official public face."[87]

The value of the first bitcoin transactions were negotiated by individuals on the bitcointalk forums with one notable transaction of 10,000 BTC used to indirectly purchase two pizzas delivered by Papa John’s."[79]

On 6 August 2010, a major vulnerability in the bitcoin protocol was spotted. Transactions were not properly verified before they were included in the blockchain, which let users bypass bitcoin's economic restrictions and create an indefinite number of bitcoins."[88][89] On 15 August, the vulnerability was exploited; over 184 billion bitcoins were generated in a transaction, and sent to two addresses on the network. Within hours, the transaction was spotted and erased from the transaction log after the bug was fixed and the network forked to an updated version of the bitcoin protocol."[90][88][89]

**4.1.4 Economics**

Main article: Economics of bitcoin

**Classification**

Bitcoin is a digital asset"[91] designed by its inventor, Satoshi Nakamoto, to work as a currency."[22][92] It is commonly referred to with terms like digital currency,"[13]:1 digital cash,"[93] virtual currency,"[3] electronic currency,"[25] or cryptocurrency."[94]

The question whether bitcoin is a currency or not is still disputed."[94] Bitcoins have three useful qualities in a currency, according to The Economist in January 2015: they are “hard to earn, limited in supply and easy to verify”.[95] Economists define money as a store of value, a medium of exchange, and a unit of account and agree that bitcoin has some way to go to meet all these criteria."[96] It does best as a medium of exchange; as of
February 2015 the number of merchants accepting bitcoin had passed 100,000.\textsuperscript{[20]} As of March 2014, the bitcoin market suffered from volatility, limiting the ability of bitcoin to act as a stable store of value, and retailers accepting bitcoin use other currencies as their principal unit of account.\textsuperscript{[96]}

### General use

According to research produced by Cambridge University in 2017, there are between 2.9 million and 5.8 million unique users using a cryptocurrency wallet, most of them using bitcoin. The number of users has grown significantly since 2013, when there were 0.3 to 1.3 million users.\textsuperscript{[21]}

### Acceptance by merchants

In 2015, the number of merchants accepting bitcoin exceeded 100,000.\textsuperscript{[20]} Instead of 2–3% typically imposed by credit card processors, merchants accepting bitcoins often pay fees in the range from 0% to less than 2%.\textsuperscript{[97]} Firms that accepted payments in bitcoin as of December 2014 included PayPal,\textsuperscript{[98]} Microsoft,\textsuperscript{[99]} Dell,\textsuperscript{[100]} and Newegg.\textsuperscript{[101]}

### Payment service providers

Merchants accepting bitcoin ordinarily use the services of bitcoin payment service providers such as BitPay or Coinbase. When a customer pays in bitcoin, the payment service provider accepts the bitcoin on behalf of the merchant, converts it to the local currency, and sends the obtained amount to merchant’s bank account, charging a fee for the service.\textsuperscript{[102]}

### Financial institutions

Bitcoin companies have had difficulty opening traditional bank accounts because lenders have been leery of bitcoin’s links to illicit activity.\textsuperscript{[103]} According to Antonio Gallippi, a co-founder of BitPay, "banks are scared to deal with bitcoin companies, even if they really want to.\textsuperscript{[104]}"

In 2014, the National Australia Bank closed accounts of businesses with ties to bitcoin,\textsuperscript{[105]} and HSBC refused to serve a hedge fund with links to bitcoin.\textsuperscript{[106]} Australian banks in general have been reported as closing down bank accounts of operators of businesses involving the currency;\textsuperscript{[107]} this has become the subject of an investigation by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.\textsuperscript{[107]} Nonetheless, Australian banks have keenly adopted the blockchain technology on which bitcoin is based.\textsuperscript{[108]}

In a 2013 report, Bank of America Merrill Lynch stated that “we believe bitcoin can become a major means of payment for e-commerce and may emerge as a serious competitor to traditional money-transfer providers.” \textsuperscript{[109]} In June 2014, the first bank that converts deposits in currencies instantly to bitcoin without any fees was opened in Boston.\textsuperscript{[110]}

### As an investment

Some Argentinians have bought bitcoins to protect their savings against high inflation or the possibility that governments could confiscate savings accounts.\textsuperscript{[63]} During the 2012–2013 Cypriot financial crisis, bitcoin purchases in Cyprus rose due to fears that savings accounts would be confiscated or taxed.\textsuperscript{[111]} The Winklevoss twins have invested into bitcoins and they claim to own 1% of all the bitcoins in the world that is worth more than $40 million.\textsuperscript{[112]}

Other methods of investment are bitcoin funds. The first regulated bitcoin fund was established in Jersey in July 2014 and approved by the Jersey Financial Services Commission.\textsuperscript{[113]} Forbes started publishing arguments in favor of investing in December 2015.\textsuperscript{[114]}

In 2013 and 2014, the European Banking Authority\textsuperscript{[115]} and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), a United States self-regulatory organization,\textsuperscript{[116]} warned that investing in bitcoins carries significant risks. Forbes named bitcoin the best investment of 2013.\textsuperscript{[117]} In 2014, Bloomberg named bitcoin one of its worst investments of the year.\textsuperscript{[118]} In 2015, bitcoin topped Bloomberg’s currency tables.\textsuperscript{[119]}

According to Bloomberg, in 2013 there were about 250 bitcoin wallets with more than $1 million worth of bitcoins. The number of bitcoin millionaires is uncertain as people can have more than one wallet.\textsuperscript{[120]}

### Venture capital

Venture capitalists, such as Peter Thiel’s Founders Fund, which invested US$3 million in BitPay, do not purchase bitcoins themselves, instead funding bitcoin infrastructure like companies that provide payment systems to merchants, exchanges, wallet services, etc.\textsuperscript{[121]} In 2012, an
incubator for bitcoin-focused start-ups was founded by Adam Draper, with financing help from his father, venture capitalist Tim Draper, one of the largest bitcoin holders after winning an auction of 30,000 bitcoins.[122] at the time called `mystery buyer.'[123] The company’s goal is to fund 100 bitcoin businesses within 2–3 years with $10,000 to $20,000 for a 6% stake.[122] Investors also invest in bitcoin mining.[124] According to a 2015 study by Paolo Tasca, bitcoin startups raised almost $1 billion in three years (Q1 2012 – Q1 2015).[125]

Price and volatility

Price[note 7] (left vertical axis, logarithmic scale) and volatility[note 8] (right vertical axis).[133]

According to Mark T. Williams, as of 2014, bitcoin has volatility seven times greater than gold, eight times greater than the S&P 500, and 18 times greater than the U.S. dollar.[126] According to Forbes, there are uses where volatility does not matter, such as online gambling, tipping, and international remittances.[127]

The price of bitcoins has gone through various cycles of appreciation and depreciation referred to by some as bubbles and busts.[128][129] In 2011, the value of one bitcoin rapidly rose from about US$0.30 to US$32 before returning to US$2.130 In the latter half of 2012 and during the 2012–13 Cypriot financial crisis, the bitcoin price began to rise,[131] reaching a high of US$266 on 10 April 2013, before crashing to around US$50.[132] On 29 November 2013, the cost of one bitcoin rose to a peak of US$1,242.[133] In 2014, the price fell sharply, and as of April remained depressed at little more than half 2013 prices. As of August 2014 it was under US$600.[134] In January 2015, noting that the bitcoin price had dropped to its lowest level since spring 2013 – around US$224 – *The New York Times* suggested that “[w]ith no signs of a rally in the offing, the industry is bracing for the effects of a prolonged decline in prices. In particular, bitcoin mining companies, which are essential to the currency’s underlying technology, are flashing warning signs.”[135] Also in January 2015, *Business Insider* reported that deep web drug dealers were “freaking out” as they lost profits through being unable to convert bitcoin revenue to cash quickly enough as the price declined – and that there was a danger that dealers selling reserves to stay in business might force the bitcoin price down further.[136]

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, as of April 2016, bitcoin is starting to look slightly more stable than gold.[137] On 3 March 2017, the price of a bitcoin surpassed the market value of an ounce of gold for the first time as its price surged to an all-time high.[138][139] A study in *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, going back through the network’s historical data, showed the value of the bitcoin network as measured by the price of bitcoins, to be roughly proportional to the square of the number of daily unique users participating on the network. This is a form of Metcalfe’s law and suggests that the network was demonstrating network effects proportional to its level of user adoption.[140]

### 4.1.5 Legal status, tax and regulation

Main article: Legality of bitcoin by country or territory

The legal status of bitcoin varies substantially from country to country and is still undefined or changing in many of them. While some countries have explicitly allowed its use and trade, others have banned or restricted it. Regulations and bans that apply to bitcoin probably extend to similar cryptocurrency systems.[141]

### 4.1.6 Criminal activity

See also: Bitcoin network § Criminal activity

The use of bitcoin by criminals has attracted the attention of financial regulators, legislative bodies, law enforcement, and the media.[142] The FBI prepared an intelligence assessment,[143] the SEC has issued a pointed warning about investment schemes using virtual currencies,[142] and the U.S. Senate held a hearing on virtual currencies in November 2013.[19]

Several news outlets have asserted that the popularity of bitcoins hinges on the ability to use them to purchase illegal goods.[92][144] In 2014, researchers at the University of Kentucky found “robust evidence that computer programming enthusiasts and illegal activity drive interest in bitcoin, and find limited or no support for political and investment motives.”[145]

### 4.1.7 In academia

#### Journals

Main article: Ledger (journal)

In September 2015, the establishment of the peer-reviewed academic journal *Ledger* (ISSN 2379-5980)
was announced. It will cover studies of cryptocurrencies and related technologies, and is published by the University of Pittsburgh.[146][147] The journal encourages authors to digitally sign a file hash of submitted papers, which will then be timestamped into the bitcoin blockchain. Authors are also asked to include a personal bitcoin address in the first page of their papers.[148][149]

### Other

In the fall of 2014, undergraduate students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) each received bitcoins worth $100 “to better understand this emerging technology”. The bitcoins were not provided by MIT but rather the MIT Bitcoin Club, a student-run club.[150][151]

In 2016, Stanford University launched a lab course on building bitcoin-enabled applications.[152]

### 4.1.8 In art, entertainment, and media

#### Films

The documentary film, *The Rise and Rise of Bitcoin* (late 2014), features interviews with people who use bitcoin, such as a computer programmer and a drug dealer.[153]

#### Music

Several lighthearted songs celebrating bitcoin have been released.[154]

#### Literature

In Charles Stross’ science fiction novel, *Neptune’s Brood* (2013), a modification of bitcoin is used as the universal interstellar payment system.[155]

### 4.1.9 See also

- Alternative currency
- Base58
- Crypto-anarchism
- Digital asset
- List of bitcoin companies
- List of bitcoin organizations

### 4.1.10 Notes

[1] As of 2014, BTC is a commonly used code.[4] It does not conform to ISO 4217 as BT is the country code of Bhutan, and ISO 4217 requires the first letter used in global commodities to be ‘X’.

[2] As of 2014, XBT, a code that conforms to ISO 4217 though is not officially part of it, is used by Bloomberg L.P.,[5] CNNMoney,[6] and xe.com.[7]

[3] The symbol was encoded in Unicode version 10.0 at position U+20BF (₿) in the Currency Symbols block in June 2017.[8]

[4] Relative mining difficulty is defined as the ratio of the difficulty target on 9 January 2009 to the current difficulty target.

[5] It is misleading to think that there is an analogy between gold mining and bitcoin mining. The fact is that gold miners are rewarded for producing gold, while bitcoin miners are not rewarded for producing bitcoins; they are rewarded for their record-keeping services.[35]

[6] The exact number is 20,999,999.9769 bitcoins.[9].ch. 8


[8] Volatility is calculated on a yearly basis.

### 4.1.11 References


CHAPTER 4. IMPACT ON THE MAINSTREAM


[25] Bustillos, Maria (2 April 2013). "The Bitcoin Boom". The New Yorker. Condé Nast. Retrieved 22 December 2013. Standards vary, but there seems to be a consensus forming around Bitcoin, capitalized, for the system, the software, and the network it runs on, and bitcoin, lowercase, for the currency itself.


[36] "Difficulty History" (The ratio of all hashes over valid hashes is D x 4295032833, where D is the published “Difficulty” figure.). Blockchain.info. Retrieved 26 March 2015.


4.1. BITCOIN


[61] Joshua Kopstein (12 December 2013). “The Mission to Decentralize the Internet”. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved 30 December 2014. The network's 'nodes' – users running the bitcoin software on their computers – collectively check the integrity of other nodes to ensure that no one spends the same coins twice. All transactions are published on a shared public ledger, called the 'blockchain'.


"Bitcoin: is Circle the world’s first crypto-currency bank?". *The week.co.uk*. 16 May 2014. Retrieved 13 June 2014.


Online chat may refer to any kind of communication over the Internet that offers a real-time transmission of text messages from sender to receiver. Chat messages are generally short in order to enable other participants to respond quickly. Thereby, a feeling similar to a spoken conversation is created, which distinguishes chatting from other text-based online communication forms such as Internet forums and email. Online chat may address point-to-point communications as well as multicast communications from one sender to many receivers and voice and video chat, or may be a feature of a web conferencing service.

Online chat in a less stringent definition may be primarily any direct text-based or video-based (webcams), one-on-one chat or one-to-many group chat (formally also known as synchronous conferencing), using tools such as instant messengers, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), talkers and possibly MUDs. The expression online chat comes from the word chat which means "informal conversation". Online chat includes web-based applications that allow communication – often directly addressed, but anonymous between users in a multi-user environment. Web conferencing is a more specific online service, that is often sold as a service, hosted on a web server controlled by the vendor.

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#### 4.2.1 History

The first online chat system was called Talkomatic, created by Doug Brown and David R. Woolley in 1973 on the PLATO System at the University of Illinois. It offered several channels, each of which could accommodate up to five people, with messages appearing on all users' screens character-by-character as they were typed. Talkomatic was very popular among PLATO users into the mid-1980s. In 2014, Brown and Woolley released a web-based version of Talkomatic.

The first online chat system to use the actual command “chat” was created for The Source in 1979 by Tom Walker and Fritz Thane of Dialcom, Inc.
4.2. ONLINE CHAT

The first transatlantic Internet chat took place between Oulu, Finland and Corvallis, Oregon in February 1989. [1]

The first dedicated online chat service that was widely available to the public was the CompuServe CB Simulator in 1980, [2] [3] created by CompuServe executive Alexander "Sandy" Trevor in Columbus, Ohio. Ancestors include network chat software such as UNIX “talk” used in the 1970s.

4.2.2 Chatiquette

The term chatiquette (chat etiquette) is a variation of netiquette (Internet etiquette) and describes basic rules of online communication. [4] [5] [6] These conventions or guidelines have been created to avoid misunderstandings and to simplify the communication between users. Chatiquette varies from community to community and generally describes basic courtesy. As an example, it is considered rude to write only in upper case, because it appears as if the user is shouting. The word “chatiquette” has been used in connection with various chat systems (e.g. Internet Relay Chat) since 1995. [7] [8]

Chatrooms can produce a strong sense of online identity leading to impression of subculture. [9]

Chats are valuable sources of various types of information, the automatic processing of which is the object of chat/text mining technologies. [10]

4.2.3 Social criticism

Criticism of online chatting and text messaging include concern that they replace proper English with shorthand or with an almost completely new hybrid language. [11] [12] [13]

Writing is changing as it takes on some of the functions and features of speech. Internet chat rooms and rapid real-time teleconferencing allow users to interact with whoever happens to coexist in cyberspace. These virtual interactions involve us in ‘talking’ more freely and more widely than ever before. [14] With chatrooms replacing many face-to-face conversations, it is necessary to be able to have quick conversation as if the person were present, so many people learn to type as quickly as they would normally speak. Some critics are wary that this casual form of speech is being used so much that it will slowly take over common grammar; however, such a change has yet to be seen.

With the increasing population of online chatrooms there has been a massive growth [15] of new words created or slang words, many of them documented on the website Urban Dictionary. Sven Birkerts wrote:

“as new electronic modes of communication provoke similar anxieties amongst critics who express concern that young people are at risk, endangered by a rising tide of information over which the traditional controls of print media and the guardians of knowledge have no control on it”. [16]

In Guy Merchant’s journal article Teenagers in Cyberspace: An Investigation of Language Use and Language Change in Internet Chatrooms; Merchant says

“that teenagers and young people are in the leading the movement of change as they take advantage of the possibilities of digital technology, drastically changing the face of literacy in a variety of media through their uses of mobile phone text messages, e-mails, web-pages and on-line chatrooms. This new literacy develops skills that may well be important to the labor market but are currently viewed with suspicion in the media and by educationalists.” [14]

Merchant also says “Younger people tend to be more adaptable than other sectors of society and, in general, quicker to adapt to new technology. To some extent they are the innovators, the forces of change in the new communication landscape.” [14] In this article he is saying that young people are merely adapting to what they were given.

4.2.4 Software and protocols

The following are common chat programs and protocols:

- AOL Instant Messenger (AIM)
- Apple Messages
- Camfrog
- Campfire
- Gadu-Gadu
- Google Talk
- I2P-Messenger (anonymous, end-to-end encrypted im for the I2P network)
- Internet Citizen’s Band (ICB)
- ICQ (OSCAR)
- Internet Relay Chat (IRC)
- MUD
- Paltalk
- RetroShare (encrypted, decentralized)
- QQ
• SILC
• Slack
• Skype
• Talk
• Talkerymail also
• TeamSpeak (TS)
• The Palace (encrypted, decentralized)
• WebChat Broadcasting System (WBS)
• WeChat
• WhatsApp
• Windows Live Messenger
• XMPP
• Yahoo! Messenger No longer available

Chat programs supporting multiple protocols:

• Adium
• Google+ Hangouts
• Kopete
• IBM Sametime
• Miranda IM
• Pidgin
• Quiet Internet Pager
• Trillian
• Windows Live Messenger

Web sites with browser-based chat services (also see web chat):

• Chat-Avenue
• Chat Television No longer available
• Convore No longer available
• Cryptocat
• eBuddy
• eXo Platform (Open Source)
• Facebook
• FilmOn
• Gmail
• Google+
• Hall.com
• MeBeam
• Meebo No longer available
• Mibbit No longer available
• Omegle
• Talkomatic
• Tokbox No longer available
• Tinychat
• Trillian
• Userplane No Longer Available
• Woo Media No longer available
• Zumbl No longer available

4.2.5 See also

• Chat room
• Collaborative software
• Instant messaging
• Internet forum
• List of virtual communities with more than 100 million active users
• Online dating service
• Real-time text
• Videotelephony
• Voice chat

4.2.6 References

4.3 Social networking service

This article is about the type of service. For the social science theoretical concept of relationships between people, see Social network. For a list of services, see List of social networking websites.

A social networking service (also social networking site, SNS or social media) is an online platform which people use to build social networks or social relations with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social networking services currently available online introduces challenges of definition; however, there are some common features:

1. social networking services are Internet-based applications
2. user-generated content (UGC) is the lifeblood of SNS organisations
3. users create service-specific profiles for the site or app that are designed and maintained by the SNS organization

4. social networking services facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a user's profile with those of other individuals or groups.

Most social-network services are web-based and provide means for users to interact over the Internet, such as by e-mail, by instant messaging and through online forums. Social networking sites are varied. They can incorporate a range of information and communication tools, operating on desktop and laptops, mobile devices such as tablet computers and smartphones, and featuring digital photo/video/sharing and “web logging” diary entries online (blogging).

Online community services are sometimes considered social-network services, though in a broader sense, a social-network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, digital photos and videos, posts, and to inform others about online or real-world activities and events with people in their network. While in-person social networking, such as gathering in a village market to talk about events has existed since the earliest development of towns, the Web enables people to connect with others who live in different locations, ranging from across a city to across the world. Depending on the social media platform, members may be able to contact any other member. In other cases, members can contact anyone they have a connection to, and subsequently anyone that contact has a connection to, and so on. LinkedIn, a career social-networking service, generally requires that a member personally know another member in real life before they contact them online. Some services require members to have a preexisting connection to contact other members.

The main types of social networking services contain category places (such as former school-year or classmates), means to connect with friends (usually with self-description pages), and a recommendation system linked to trust. One can categorize scial-network services into three types:

- socializing with existing friends (e.g., Facebook)
- networking with existing friends
- social navigation (e.g., LinkedIn, a career- and employment-oriented site)

There have been attempts to standardize these services to avoid the need to duplicate efforts and interests (see the FOAF standard). A study reveals that India recorded the world’s largest growth in terms of social media users in 2013.
4.3.1 Definition

A challenge of definition

The variety and evolving range of stand-alone and built-in social networking services in the online space introduces a challenge of definition. [1] Furthermore, the idea that these services are defined by their ability to bring people together provides too broad a definition. Such a broad definition would suggest that the telegraph and telephone were social networking services – not the Internet technologies scholars are intending to describe. [8] The terminology is also unclear, with some referring to social networking services as social media. [3]

Attempting definition

A recent attempt [1] at providing a clear definition reviewed the prominent literature in the area and identified four commonalities unique to current social networking services:

(1) social networking services are interactive Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, [1][2]
(2) user-generated content (UGC), such as user-submitted digital photos, text posts, “tagging,” online comments, and diary-style “web logs” (blogs), is the lifeblood of the SNS organism, [1][2]
(3) users create service-specific profiles for the site or app that are designed and maintained by the SNS organization, [1][3] and
(4) social networking services facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting a user’s profile with those of other individuals or groups. [1][3]

4.3.2 History

![Image of world map showing social networking services distribution]

The potential for computer networking to facilitate newly improved forms of computer-mediated social interaction was suggested early on. [9] Efforts to support social networks via computer-mediated communication were made in many early online services, including Usenet, [10] ARPANET, LISTSERV, and bulletin board services (BBS). Many prototypical features of social networking sites were also present in online services such as America Online, Prodigy, CompuServe, ChatNet, and The WELL. [11]

Early social networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as Theglobe.com (1995), [12] Geocities (1994) and Tripod.com (1995). Many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with each other through chat rooms, and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal webpages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive webspace. Some communities – such as Classmates.com – took a different approach by simply having people link to each other via email addresses. PlanetAll started in 1996.

In the late 1990s, user profiles became a central feature of social networking sites, allowing users to compile lists of “friends” and search for other users with similar interests. New social networking methods were developed by the end of the 1990s, and many sites began to develop more advanced features for users to find and manage friends. [13] This newer generation of social networking sites began to flourish with the emergence of SixDegrees.com in 1997, [14] followed by Makeoutclub in 2000, [15] [16] Hub Culture and Friendster in 2002, [17] and soon became part of the Internet mainstream. However, thanks to the nation’s high Internet penetration rate, the first mass social networking site was the South Korean service, Cyworld, launched as a blog-based site in 1999 and social networking features added in 2001. [18] It also became one of the first companies to profit from the sale of virtual goods. [19] [20] Friendster was followed by MySpace and LinkedIn a year later, and eventually Bebo. Friendster became very popular in the Pacific Islands. Orkut became the first popular social networking service in Brazil (although most of its very first users were from the United States) and quickly grew in popularity in India (Madhavan, 2007). [21] Attesting to the rapid increase in social networking sites’ popularity, by 2005, it was reported that MySpace was getting more page views than Google. Facebook, [22] launched in 2004, became the largest social networking site in the world [23] in early 2009. [24] Facebook was first introduced as a Harvard social networking site, [21] expanding to other universities and eventually, anyone. The term social media was introduced and soon became widespread. [25]

4.3.3 Social impact

Main article: Social impact of the Internet § Social networking and entertainment
4.3. SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICE

Web-based social networking services make it possible to connect people who share interests and activities across political, economic, and geographic borders.*[26] Through e-mail and instant messaging, online communities are created where a gift economy and reciprocal altruism are encouraged through cooperation. Information is suited to a gift economy, as information is a nonrival good and can be gifted at practically no cost.*[27][28] Scholars*[29] have noted that the term “social” cannot account for technological features of the social networking platforms alone. Hence, the level of network sociability should determine by the actual performances of its users. According to the communication theory of uses and gratifications, an increasing amount of individuals are looking to the Internet and social media to fulfill cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension free needs. With Internet technology as a supplement to fulfill needs, it is in turn affecting every day life, including relationships, school, church, entertainment, and family.*[30] Companies are using social media as a way to learn about potential employees’ personalities and behavior. In numerous situations a candidate who might otherwise have been hired has been rejected due to offensive or otherwise unseemly photos or comments posted to social networks or appearing on a newsfeed.

Facebook and other social networking tools are increasingly the aim scholarly research. Scholars in many fields have begun to investigate the impact of social networking sites, investigating how such sites may play into issues of identity, privacy,*[31] social capital, youth culture, and education.*[32] Research has also suggested that individuals add offline friends on Facebook to maintain contact and often this blurs the lines between work and home lives.*[33] According to a study in 2015, 63% of the users of Facebook or Twitter in the USA consider these networks to be their main source of news, with entertainment news being the most seen. In the times of breaking news, Twitter users are more likely to stay invested in the story. In some cases when the news story is more political, users may be more likely to voice their opinion on a linked Facebook story with a comment or like, while Twitter users will just follow the sites feed and/or retweet the article.*[34]

A 2015 study shows that 85% of people aged 18 to 34 use social networking sites for their purchase decision making. While over 65% of people aged 55 and over rely on word of mouth.*[35] Several websites are beginning to tap into the power of the social networking model for philanthropy. Such models provide a means for connecting otherwise fragmented industries and small organizations without the resources to reach a broader audience with interested users.*[36] Social networks are providing a different way for individuals to communicate digitally. These communities of hypertexts allow for the sharing of information and ideas, an old concept placed in a digital environment. In 2011, HCL Technologies conducted research that showed that 50% of British employers had banned the use of social networking sites/services during office hours.*[37][38]

Research has provided us with mixed results as to whether or not a person’s involvement in social networking can affect their feelings of loneliness. Studies have indicated that how a person chooses to use social networking can change their feelings of loneliness in either a negative or positive way. Some companies with mobile workers have encouraged their workers to use social networking to feel connected, educators are using it to keep connected with their students and individuals are benefiting from social networking to keep connect with already close relationships that they’ve developed under circumstances that would otherwise make it difficult to do so.*[39] Each social networking user is able to create a community that centers around a personal identity they choose to create online.*[40] In his book Digital Identities: Creating and Communicating the Online Self,*[41] Rob Cover argues that social networking’s foundation in Web 2.0, high-speed networking shifts online representation to one which is both visual and relational to other people, complexifying the identity process for younger people and creating new forms of anxiety.*[41] In 2016, news reports stated that excessive usage of SNS sites may be associated with an increase in the rates of depression, to almost triple the rate for non-SNS users. Experts worldwide have said that 2030 people who use SNS more have higher levels of depression than those who use SNS less.*[42]

4.3.4 Features

Typical features

According to Boyd and Ellison’s (2007) article, “Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life”, social networking sites share a variety of technical features that allow individuals to: construct a public/semi-public profile, articulate a list of other users that they share a connection with, and view their list of connections within the system. The most basic of these are visible profiles with a list of “friends” who are also users of the site. In an article entitled “Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship,” Boyd and Ellison adopt Sunden’s (2003) description of profiles as unique pages where one can “type oneself into being”. *[3] A profile is generated from answers to questions, such as age, location, interests, etc. Some sites allow users to upload pictures, add multimedia content or modify the look and feel of the profile. Others, e.g., Facebook, allow users to enhance their profile by adding modules or “Applications”. *[3] Many sites allow users to post blog entries, search for others with similar interests and compile and share lists of contacts. User profiles often have a section dedicated to comments from friends and other users. To protect user privacy, social networks typically have controls that allow
users to choose who can view their profile, contact them, add them to their list of contacts, and so on.

**Additional features**

There is a trend towards more interoperability between social networks led by technologies such as OpenID and OpenSocial. In most mobile communities, mobile phone users can now create their own profiles, make friends, participate in chat rooms, create chat rooms, hold private conversations, share photos and videos, and share blogs by using their mobile phone. Some companies provide wireless services that allow their customers to build their own mobile community and brand it; one of the most popular wireless services for social networking in North America and Nepal is Facebook Mobile.

### 4.3.5 Emerging trends

While the popularity of social networking consistently rises, new uses for the technology are frequently being observed. At the forefront of emerging trends in social networking sites is the concept of "real-time web" and "location-based." Real-time allows users to contribute contents, which is then broadcast as it is being uploaded - the concept is analogous to live radio and television broadcasts. Twitter set the trend for "real-time" services, wherein users can broadcast to the world what they are doing, or what is on their minds within a 140-character limit. Facebook followed suit with their "Live Feed" where users’ activities are streamed as soon as it happens. While Twitter focuses on words, Clixtr, another real-time service, focuses on group photo sharing wherein users can update their photo streams with photos while at an event. Facebook, however, remains the largest photo sharing site - Facebook application and photo aggregator Fixable estimates that Facebook will have 100 billion photos by Summer 2012. In April, 2012, the image-based social media network Pinterest had become the third largest social network in the United States.

Companies have begun to merge business technologies and solutions, such as cloud computing, with social networking concepts. Instead of connecting individuals based on social interest, companies are developing interactive communities that connect individuals based on shared business needs or experiences. Many provide specialized networking tools and applications that can be accessed via their websites, such as LinkedIn. Others companies, such as Monster.com, have been steadily developing a more "socialized" feel to their career center sites to harness some of the power of social networking sites. These more business related sites have their own nomenclature for the most part but the most common naming conventions are "Vocational Networking Sites" or "Vocational Media Networks", with the former more closely tied to individual networking relationships based on social networking principles.

Foursquare gained popularity as it allowed for users to check into places that they are frequenting at that moment. Gowalla is another such service that functions in much the same way that Foursquare does, leveraging the GPS in phones to create a location-based user experience. Clixtr, though in the real-time space, is also a location-based social networking site, since events created by users are automatically geotagged, and users can view events occurring nearby through the Clixtr iPhone app. Recently, Yelp announced its entrance into the location-based social networking space through check-ins with their mobile app; whether or not this becomes detrimental to Foursquare or Gowalla is yet to be seen, as it is still considered a new space in the Internet technology industry.

One popular use for this new technology is social networking between businesses. Companies have found that social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are great ways to build their brand image. According to Jody Nimetz, author of Marketing Jive, there are five major uses for businesses and social media: to create brand awareness, as an online reputation management tool, for recruiting, to learn about new technologies and competitors, and as a lead generation tool to intercept potential prospects. These companies are able to drive traffic to their own online sites while encouraging their consumers and clients to have discussions on how to improve or change products or services. As of September 2013, 71% of online adults use Facebook, 17% use Instagram, 21% use Pinterest, and 22% use LinkedIn.

**Niche networks**

In 2012, it was reported that in the past few years, the niche social network has steadily grown in popularity, thanks to better levels of user interaction and engagement. In 2012, a survey by Reuters and research firm Ipsos found that one in three users were getting bored with Facebook and in 2014 the GlobalWebIndex found that this figured had risen to almost 50%. The niche social network offers a specialized space that’s designed to appeal to a very specific market with a clearly defined set of needs. Where once the streams of social minutia on networks such as Facebook and Twitter were the ultimate in online voyeurism, now users are looking for connections, community and shared experiences. Social networks that tap directly into specific activities, hobbies, tastes and lifestyles are seeing a consistent rise in popularity. Niche social networks such as Fishbrain for fishing and Strava for cycling. These social platforms offer brands a rich space in which to engage with their target market and build awareness.
4.3. SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICE

Science

One other use that is being discussed is the use of social networks in the science communities. Julia Porter Liebeskind et al. have published a study on how new biotechnology firms are using social networking sites to share exchanges in scientific knowledge. [51] They state in their study that by sharing information and knowledge with one another, they are able to "increase both their learning and their flexibility in ways that would not be possible within a self-contained hierarchical organization." Social networking is allowing scientific groups to expand their knowledge base and share ideas, and without these new means of communicating their theories might become "isolated and irrelevant." Researchers use social networks frequently to maintain and develop professional relationships. [52] They are interested in consolidating social ties and professional contact, keeping in touch with friends and colleagues and seeing what their own contacts are doing. This can be related to their need to keep updated on the activities and events of their friends and colleagues in order to establish collaborations on common fields of interest and knowledge sharing. [53] Social Networks are used also to communicate scientists research results [54] and as a public communication tool and to connect people who share the same professional interests, their benefits can vary according to the discipline. [55] The most interesting aspects of social networks for professional purposes are their potentialities in terms of dissemination of information and the ability to reach and multiply professional contacts exponentially. Social networks like Academia.edu, LinkedIn, Facebook, and ResearchGate give the possibility to join professional groups and pages, to share papers and results, publicize events, to discuss issues and create debates. [53] Academia.edu is extensively used by researchers, where they follow a combination of social networking and scholarly norms. [56] ResearchGate is also widely used by researchers, especially to disseminate and discuss their publications. [57] where it seems to attract an audience that it wider than just other scientists. [58]

Education

The advent of social networking platforms may also be impacting the way(s) in which they engage with technology in general. For a number of years, Prensky's (2001) dichotomy between Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants has been considered a relatively accurate representation of the ease with which people of a certain age range—in particular those born before and after 1980—use technology. Prensky's theory has been largely disproved, however, and not least on account of the burgeoning popularity of social networking sites and other metaphors such as White and Le Cornu's "Visitors" and "Residents" (2011) are greater currency. The use of online social networks by school libraries is also increasingly prevalent and they are being used to communicate with potential library users, as well as extending the services provided by individual school libraries. Social networks and their educational uses are of interest to many researchers. According to Livingstone and Brake (2010), "Social networking sites, like much else on the Internet, represent a moving target for researchers and policy makers." [60] Pew Research Center project, called Pew Internet, did a USA-wide survey in 2009 and in 2010 February published that 47% of American adults use a social networking website. [61] Same survey found that 73% of online teenagers use SNS, which is an increase from 65% in 2008, 55% in 2006. [61] Recent studies have shown that social network services provide opportunities within professional education, curriculum education, and learning. However, there are constraints in this area. Researchers, especially in Africa, have disclosed that the use of social networks among students have been known to negatively affect their academic life. This is buttressed by the fact that their use constitutes distractions, as well as that the students tend to invest a good deal of time in the use of such technologies.

Albayrak and Yildirim (2015) examined the educational use of social networking sites. They investigated students' involvement in Facebook as a Course Management System (CMS) and the findings of their study support that Facebook as a CMS has the potential to increase student involvement in discussions and out-of-class communication among instructors and students. [62]

Professional use

Professional use of social networking services refers to the employment of a network site to connect with other professionals within a given field of interest. SNSs like LinkedIn, a social networking website geared towards companies and industry professionals looking to make new business contacts or keep in touch with previous co-workers, affiliates, and clients. Not only does LinkedIn provide a professional social use, but it also encourages people to inject their personality into their profile—making it more personal than a resume. [63] Other network sites are now being used in this manner, Twitter has become [a] mainstay for professional devel-
opment as well as promotion"[64] and online SNSs support both the maintenance of existing social ties and the formation of new connections. Much of the early research on online communities assume that individuals using these systems would be connecting with others outside their preexisting social group or location, liberating them to form communities around shared interests, as opposed to shared geography. '[65] Other researchers have suggested that the professional use of network sites produce “social capital.” For individuals, social capital allows a person to draw on resources from other members of the networks to which he or she belongs. ’[66] These resources can take the form of useful information, personal relationships, or the capacity to organize groups. As well, networks within these services also can be established or built by joining special interest groups that others have made, or creating one and asking others to join.’[67]

Curriculum use According to Doering, Beach and O’Brien, a future English curriculum needs to recognize a major shift in how adolescents are communicating with each other. ’[68] Curriculum uses of social networking services also can include sharing curriculum-related resources. Educators tap into user-generated content to find and discuss curriculum-related content for students. Responding to the popularity of social networking services among many students, teachers are increasingly using social networks to supplement teaching and learning in traditional classroom environments as they can provide new opportunities for enriching existing curriculum through creative, authentic and flexible, non-linear learning experiences.’[69] Some social networks, such as English, baby! and LiveMocha, are explicitly education-focused and couple instructional content with an educational peer environment.’[70] The new Web 2.0 technologies built into most social networking services promote conferencing, interaction, creation, research on a global scale, enabling educators to share, remix, and repurpose curriculum resources. In short, social networking services can become research networks as well as learning networks.’[71]

Learning use Educators and advocates of new digital literacies are confident that social networking encourages the development of transferable, technical, and social skills of value in formal and informal learning. ’[60] In a formal learning environment, goals or objectives are determined by an outside department or agency. Tweeting, instant messaging, or blogging enhances student involvement. Students who would not normally participate in class are more apt to partake through social network services. Networking allows participants the opportunity for just-in-time learning and higher levels of engagement.’[72] The use of SNSs allow educators to enhance the prescribed curriculum. When learning experiences are infused into a website students utilize everyday for fun, students realize that learning can and should be a part of everyday life. It does not have to be separate and unattached.’[73] Informal learning consists of the learner setting the goals and objectives. It has been claimed that media no longer just influence human culture; they are human culture.’[74] With such a high number of users between the ages of 13–18, a number of skills are developed. Participants hone technical skills in choosing to navigate through social networking services. This includes elementary items such as sending an instant message or updating a status. The development of new media skills are paramount in helping youth navigate the digital world with confidence. Social networking services foster learning through what Jenkins (2006) describes as a “participatory culture.” ’[75] A participatory culture consists of a space that allows engagement, sharing, mentoring, and an opportunity for social interaction. Participants of social network services avail of this opportunity. Informal learning, in the forms of participatory and social learning online, is an excellent tool for teachers to sneak in material and ideas that students will identify with and therefore, in a secondary manner, students will learn skills that would normally be taught in a formal setting in the more interesting and engaging environment of social learning.’[76] Sites like Twitter provide students with the opportunity to converse and collaborate with others in real time. Social networking services provide a virtual “space” for learners. James Gee (2004) suggests that affinity spaces instantiate participation, collaboration, distribution, dispersion of expertise, and relatedness.’[77] Registered users share and search for knowledge which contributes to informal learning.

Constraints In the past, social networking services were viewed as a distraction and offered no educational benefit. Blocking these social networks was a form of protection for students against wasting time, bullying, and invasions of privacy. In an educational setting, Facebook, for example, is seen by many instructors and educators as a frivolous, time-wasting distraction from schoolwork, and it is not uncommon to be banned in junior high or high school computer labs.’[73] Cyberbullying has become an issue of concern with social networking services. According to the UK Children Go Online survey of 9- to 19-year-olds, it was found that a third have received bullying comments online.’[78] To avoid this problem, many school districts/boards have blocked access to social networking services such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter within the school environment. Social networking services often include a lot of personal information posted publicly, and many believe that sharing personal information is a window into privacy theft. Schools have taken action to protect students from this. It is believed that this outpouring of identifiable information and the easy communication vehicle that social networking services opens the door to sexual predators, cyberbullying, and cyberstalking.’[79] In contrast, however, 70% of social media using teens and 85% of adults believe that
people are mostly kind to one another on social network sites.⁻⁶¹ Recent research suggests that there has been a shift in blocking the use of social networking services. In many cases, the opposite is occurring as the potential of online networking services is being realized. It has been suggested that if schools block them [social networking services], they’re preventing students from learning the skills they need.⁻⁸⁰ Banning social networking […] is not only inappropriate but also borderline irresponsible when it comes to providing the best educational experiences for students.⁻⁸¹ Schools and school districts have the option of educating safe media usage as well as incorporating digital media into the classroom experience, thus preparing students for the literacy they will encounter in the future.

Positive correlates
A cyberpsychology research study conducted by Australian researchers demonstrated that a number of positive psychological outcomes are related to Facebook use.⁻⁸² ⁻⁸³ These researchers established that people can derive a sense of social connectedness and belongingness in the online environment. Importantly, this online social connectedness was associated with lower levels of depression and anxiety, and greater levels of subjective well-being. These findings suggest that the nature of online social networking determines the outcomes of online social network use.

Grassroots organizing
Social networks are being used by activists as a means of low-cost grassroots organizing. Extensive use of an array of social networking sites enabled organizers of the 2009 National Equality March to mobilize an estimated 200,000 participants to march on Washington with a cost savings of up to 85% per participant over previous methods.⁻⁸⁴ The August 2011 England riots were similarly considered to have escalated and been fuelled by this type of grassroots organization.

Employment
A rise in social network use is being driven by college students using the services to network with professionals for internship and job opportunities. Many studies have been done on the effectiveness of networking online in a college setting, and one notable one is by Phipps Arabie and Yoram Wind published in Advances in Social Network Analysis.⁻⁸⁵ Many schools have implemented online alumni directories which serve as makeshift social networks that current and former students can turn to for career advice. However, these alumni directories tend to suffer from an oversupply of advice-seekers and an undersupply of advice providers. One new social networking service, Ask-a-peer, aims to solve this problem by enabling advice seekers to offer modest compensation to advisers for their time. LinkedIn is also another great resource. It helps alumni, students and unemployed individuals look for work. They are also able to connect with others professionally and network with companies.

In addition, employers have been found to use social networking sites to screen job candidates.⁻⁸⁶

Hosting service
A social network hosting service is a web hosting service that specifically hosts the user creation of web-based social networking services, alongside related applications.

Trading networks
A social trade network is a service that allows traders of financial derivatives such as contracts for difference or foreign exchange contracts to share their trading activity via trading profiles online. There services are created by financial brokers.

Business model
Few social networks charge money for membership. In part, this may be because social networking is a relatively new service, and the value of using them has not been firmly established in customers’ minds. Companies such as Myspace and Facebook sell online advertising on their site. Their business model is based upon large membership count, and charging for membership would be counterproductive.⁻⁸⁷ Some believe that the deeper information that the sites have on each user will allow much better targeted advertising than any other site can currently provide.⁻⁸⁸ In recent times, Apple has been critical of the Google and Facebook model, in which users are defined as product and a commodity, and their data being sold for marketing revenue.⁻⁸⁹ Social networks operate under an autonomous business model, in which a social network’s members serve dual roles as both the suppliers and the consumers of content. This is in contrast to a traditional business model, where the suppliers and consumers are distinct agents. Revenue is typically gained in the autonomous business model via advertisements, but subscription-based revenue is possible when membership and content levels are sufficiently high.⁻⁹⁰

Social interaction
People use social networking sites for meeting new friends, finding old friends, or locating people who have the same problems or interests they have, called niche networking. More and more relationships and friendships
are being formed online and then carried to an offline setting. Psychologist and University of Hamburg professor Erich H. Witte says that relationships which start online are much more likely to succeed. In this regard, there are studies which predict tie strength among the friends’ [91] on social networking websites. Witte has said that in less than 10 years, online dating will be the predominant way for people to start a relationship."[92] One online dating site claims that 2% of all marriages begin at its site, the equivalent of 236 marriages a day. Other sites claim one in five relationships begin online. Users do not necessarily share with others the content which is of most interest to them, but rather that which projects a good impression of themselves."[43] While everyone agrees that social networking has had a significant impact on social interaction, there remains a substantial disagreement as to whether the nature of this impact is completely positive. A number of scholars have done research on the negative effects of Internet communication as well. These researchers have contended that this form of communication is an impoverished version of conventional face-to-face social interactions, and therefore produce negative outcomes such as loneliness and depression for users who rely on social networking entirely. By engaging solely in online communication, interactions between communities, families, and other social groups are weakened."

4.3.6 Issues

Spamming

Spamming on online social networks is quite prevalent. Primary motivation to spam arises from the fact that user advertising a brand would like others to see them and they typically publicize their brand over social network. Detecting such spamming activity has been well studied by developing a semi-automated model to detect spams."[94] For instance, text mining techniques are leveraged"[95] to detect regular activity of spamming which reduces the viewership and brings down the reputation (or credibility) of a public pages"[96] maintained over Facebook. In some online social networks like Twitter, users have evolved mechanisms to report spammers' [97] which has been studied and analyzed.

Privacy

Privacy concerns with social networking services have been raised growing concerns among users on the dangers of giving out too much personal information and the threat of sexual predators. Users of these services also need to be aware of data theft or viruses. However, large services, such as Myspace and Netlog, often work with law enforcement to try to prevent such incidents. In addition, there is a perceived privacy threat in relation to placing too much personal information in the hands of large corporations or governmental bodies, allowing a profile to be produced on an individual's behavior on which decisions, detrimental to an individual, may be taken. Furthermore, there is an issue over the control of data and information that was altered or removed by the user may in fact be retained and passed to third parties. This danger was highlighted when the controversial social networking site Quechup harvested e-mail addresses from users' e-mail accounts for use in a spamming operation."[98]

In medical and scientific research, asking subjects for information about their behaviors is normally strictly scrutinized by institutional review boards, for example, to ensure that adolescents and their parents have informed consent. It is not clear whether the same rules apply to researchers who collect data from social networking sites. These sites often contain a great deal of data that is hard to obtain via traditional means. Even though the data are public, republishing it in a research paper might be considered invasion of privacy."[99]

Privacy on social networking sites can be undermined by many factors. For example, users may disclose personal information, sites may not take adequate steps to protect user privacy, and third parties frequently use information posted on social networks for a variety of purposes. "For the Net generation, social networking sites have become the preferred forum for social interactions, from posturing and role playing to simply sounding off. However, because such forums are relatively easy to access, posted content can be reviewed by anyone with an interest in the users' personal information".[100][101][102][103][104] The UK government has plans to monitor traffic on social networks."[105]

As well, schemes similar to e-mail jamming have been proposed for networks such as Twitter and Facebook. These would involve " friending " and " following " large numbers of random people to thwart attempts at network analysis. Privacy concerns have been found to differ between users according to gender and personality. Women are less likely to publish information that reveals methods of contacting them. Personality measures openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness were found to positively affect the willingness to disclose data, while neuroticism decreases the willingness to disclose personal information."[106]

Data mining

Through data mining, companies are able to improve their sales and profitability. With this data, companies create customer profiles that contain customer demographics and online behavior. A recent strategy has been the purchase and production of " network analysis software ". This software is able to sort out through the influx of social networking data for any specific company."[107] Facebook has been especially important to marketing strategists. Facebook's controversial " Social Ads " program gives companies access to the millions of profiles in order to tailor their ads to a Facebook user's
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Notifications

There has been a trend for social networking sites to send out only “positive” notifications to users. For example, sites such as Bebo, Facebook, and MySpace will not send notifications to users when they are removed from a person’s friends list. Likewise, Bebo will send out a notification if a user is moved to the top of another user’s friends list but no notification is sent if they are moved down the list. This allows users to purge undesirables from their list extremely easily and often without confrontation since a user will rarely notice if one person disappears from their friends list. It also enforces the general positive atmosphere of the website without drawing attention to unpleasant happenings such as friends falling out, rejection and failed relationships.

Access to information

See also: Unauthorized access in online social networks

Many social networking services, such as Facebook, provide the user with a choice of who can view their profile. This is supposed to prevent unauthorized users from accessing their information.”[109] Parents who want to access their child’s MySpace or Facebook account have become a big problem for teenagers if they do not want their profile seen by their parents. By making their profile private, teens can select who may see their page, allowing only people added as “friends” to view their profile and preventing unwanted viewing of the profile by parents. Most teens are constantly trying to create a structural barrier between their private life and their parents.”[110] To edit information on a certain social networking service account, the social networking sites require you to log in or provide a password. This is designed to prevent unauthorized users from adding, changing, or removing personal information, pictures, or other data.

Impact on employability

Social networking sites have created issues among getting hired for jobs and losing jobs because of exposing inappropriate content, posting photos of embarrassing situations or posting comments that contain potentially offensive comments (e.g., racist, homophobic or defamatory comments), or even political comments that are contrary to those of the employer. There are works which recommend friends to social networking users based on their political opinions.”[111] Many people use social networking sites to express their personal opinions about current events and news issues to their friends. If a potential applicant expresses personal opinions on political issues or makes potentially embarrassing posts online on a publicly available social networking platform, employers can access their employees’ and applicants’ profiles, and judge them based on their social behavior or political views. According to Silicone Republic’s statistics, 17,000 young people in six countries were interviewed in a survey. 1 in 10 people aged 16 to 34 have been rejected for a job because of comments made on an online profile.”[112] This shows the effects that social networks have had on people’s lives. There have been numerous cases where employees have lost jobs because their opinions represented their companies negatively. In September 2013, a woman got fired over Facebook because she posted disruptive information about her company stating that military patrons should not receive special treatment or discounts. A manager of the company found her opinion online, disagreed with it, and fired her because it went against the company’s mission statement.”[113] In November 2012, a woman posted a racist remark about the President of the United States and mentioned a possible assassination. She lost her job, and was put under investigation by the Secret Service.”[114]

Not only have employees lost their jobs in the United States, but it has happened with social network users internationally. In April 2011, a Lloyd’s banking group employee in the United Kingdom was fired for making a sarcastic post about the higher salary of her boss in relation to hers.”[115] In February 2013 there was another case where a flight attendant working for a Russian airline lost her job because she posted a photo of herself giving the middle finger to a plane full of passengers. The photo went viral exposing it all over the Internet.”[116] In November 2009, a woman working for IBM in Quebec, Canada, lost her company’s health insurance benefits because she posted photos displaying her mental health problem. The company decided to cut her benefits because it was costing them additional funds.”[117]

Cases like these have created some privacy implications as to whether or not companies should have the right to look at employees’ social network profiles. In March 2012, Facebook decided they might take legal action against employers for gaining access to employee’s profiles through their passwords.”[118] According to Facebook Chief Privacy Officer for policy, Erin Egan, the company has worked hard to give its users the tools to control who sees their information. He also said users shouldn’t be forced to share private information and communications just to get a job. According to the network’s Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, sharing or soliciting a password is a violation to Facebook. Employees may still give their password information out to get a job, but according to Erin Egan, Facebook will continue to do their part to protect the privacy and security of their users.”[119]
**Potential for misuse**

The relative freedom afforded by social networking services has caused concern regarding the potential of its misuse by individual patrons. In October 2006, a fake MySpace profile created in the name of Josh Evans by Lori Janine Drew led to the suicide of Megan Meier.\[120]\[121\] The event incited global concern regarding the use of social networking services for bullying purposes. In July 2008, a Briton and a former friend was ordered to pay a total of GBP £22,000 (about USD $44,000) for libel and breach of privacy. He had posted a fake page on Facebook purporting to be that of a former school friend Matthew Firsht, with whom he had fallen out in 2000. The page falsely claimed that Firsht was homosexual and that he was dishonest.

At the same time, genuine use of social networking services has been treated with suspicion on the ground of the services' misuse. In September 2008, the profile of Australian Facebook user Elmo Keep was banned by the site's administrators on the grounds that it violated the site's terms of use. Keep is one of several users of Facebook who were banned from the site on the presumption that their names aren't real, as they bear resemblance to the names of characters like Sesame Street's Elmo.\[122\]

Online social networks have also become a platform for spread of rumors, one such study has analyzed rumors in retrospect.\[123\] One of the approaches to detect rumors (or misinformation)\[124\] is to compare the spread of topic over social network (say Twitter) with those spread by reliable and authorized news agencies.

**Unauthorized access**

There are different forms where user data in social networks are accessed and updated without a user's permission. One study\[125\] highlighted that the most common incidents included inappropriate comments posted on social networking sites (43%), messages sent to contacts that were never authored (25%) and change of personal details (24%). The most incidents\[126\] are carried out by the victim's friends (36%) or partners (21%) and one in ten victims say their ex-partner has logged into their account without prior consent.\[127\]\[128\] The survey found that online social network accounts had been subject to unauthorized access in 60 million cases in 2011.\[129\]

**Risk for child safety**

Citizens and governments have been concerned with misuse of social networking services by children and teenagers, in particular in relation to online sexual predators. For instance, there is a study which suggests the children are not too far from inappropriate content on YouTube.\[130\] Overuse of social networking may also make children more susceptible to depression and anxiety.\[131\] Governments are taking action to better understand the problem and find some solutions. A 2008 panel concluded that technological fixes such as age verification and scans are relatively ineffective means of apprehending online predators.\[132\] In May 2010, a child pornography social networking site with hundreds of members was dismantled by law enforcement. It was deemed "the largest crimes against children case brought anywhere by anyone".\[133\] Girls in particular are also known to be at more of a risk online using social networks than boys. According to the article, High Tech or High Risks: Moral Panics About Girls Online, it suggests that young girls are more at risks because they are often represented through "products of play" in transgressive poses because they often manipulate other users online by making themselves look older than what they actually appear which can attract sexual predators. Many parents of teenage girls worry about their safety online because of the many manipulations there are online and on social networking sites.\[134\]

Social networking can also be a risk to child safety in another way; parents can get addicted to games and neglect their children. One instance in South Korea resulted in the death of a child from starvation.\[135\] Law enforcement agencies have published articles with their recommendations to parents about their children's use of social networking sites.\[136\]\[137\]

**Trolling**

Main article: Troll (Internet)

Social networking sites such as Facebook are occasionally used to emotionally abuse, harass or bully individuals, either by posting defamatory statements or by forwarding private digital photos or videos that can have an adverse impact on the individuals depicted in the videos. Such actions are often referred to as "trolling". Confrontations in the real world can also be transferred to the online world. Trolling can occur in many different forms, such as (but not limited to) defacement of deceased person(s) tribute pages, name-calling, playing online pranks on individuals and making controversial or inflammatory comments with the intention to cause anger and cause arguments. Individuals troll for many reasons. The psychology behind why people troll according to Psychology Today is due to anonymity, perceived obscurity, and a perceived lack of consequences for online misbehavior. Trolls may also do their activities due to a perceived majority status, social identity salience and due to a sense by the troll that she or he is surrounded by online 'friends'. Trolls may also engage in harmful acts due to desensitization or negative personality traits (Fox, 2014).\[138\] As these eight reasons behind the thought processes of trolls suggest individuals thrive behind being able to create a false identity or pseudonym to hide behind and the premise
that they have ‘friends’ on social networks that agree with their outlook on certain topics, thus join in on trolling. The idea behind the perceived lack of consequences is because they believe they have created an identity in which they can not be seen as a real life human and more of a persona/avatar that they have created, which leads them to feel that they will not face the consequences of being an online troll.

Trolling is a prominent issue in the 2010s, as the Internet and social media is consistently expanding and more individuals sign up to social networking sites, more people come under fire and become the target of trolls. As more people sign up to social networking sites, more celebrities are also becoming more prominent on these sites. With a variety of celebrities joining social networking sites, trolls tend to target abuse towards them. With some famous people gaining an influx of negative comments and slue of abuse from trolls it causes them to ‘quit’ social media. One prime example of a celebrity quitting social media is Stephen Fry. He left Twitter due to “too much aggression and unkindness around” emphasizing how trolls can negatively impact people’s lives (Cohen, 2014).”[139] As celebrities face trolls and backlash on social media forcing them to quit, it can mean that they become less in touch with their fans, potentially losing a fan base, as they are not as relevant as people enjoy interacting with celebrities and makes them feel as though they are valued. As trolling can lead to celebrities deleting their social networks such as Twitter, it emphasizes how trolls can win, and can ruin people’s lives.

While trolls believe that they do not face consequences and can troll others on the Internet without repercussions, in the 2000s, due to high-profile cases where cyberbullies have allegedly been factors in suicides attributed to bullying, more laws have been put in place by governments. Trolls can face going to prison for certain actions that they take on the Internet, such as spreading hate speech such as racist messages. One of the highest profile cases is racist trolling. Racist trolling has seen individuals been sent to prison for Tweets they have sent that to them may have been harmless and not racist. One case of this in recent years is Liam Stacey who was jailed for fifty-six days in the 2000s, due to high-profile cases where cyberbullies have allegedly been factors in suicides attributed to bullying, more laws have been put in place by governments.

**Online bullying**

Online bullying, also called cyberbullying, is a relatively common occurrence and it can often result in emotional trauma for the victim. Depending on the networking outlet, up to 39% of users admit to being “cyber-bullied”.

**Interpersonal communication**

Interpersonal communication has been a growing issue as more and more people have turned to social networking as a means of communication. “Benniger (1987) describes how mass media has gradually replaced interpersonal communication as a socializing force. Further, social networking sites have become popular sites for youth culture to explore themselves, relationships, and share cultural artifacts”. [143] Many teens and social networking users may be harming their interpersonal communication by using sites such as Facebook and MySpace. Stated by Baroness Greenfield, an Oxford University neuroscientist, “My fear is that these technologies are infantilizing the brain into the state of small children who are attracted by buzzing noises and bright lights, who have a small attention span and who live for the moment”. [144] The convenience that social network sites give users to communicate with one another can also damage their interpersonal communication. Sherry Turkle, the founder and director of the MIT Initiative on Technology and
Self, stated, “Networked, we are together, but so lessened are our expectations of each other that we feel utterly alone. And there is the risk that we come to see others as objects to be accessed—and only for the parts we find useful, comforting, or amusing” .[145] Furthermore, social network sites can create insincere friendships, Turkle also noted, “They nurture friendships on social-networking sites and then wonder if they are among friends. They become confused about companionship” .[146]

Psychological effects of social networking

As social networking sites have risen in popularity over the past years, people have been spending an excessive amount of time on the Internet in general and social networking sites in specific. This has led researchers to debate the establishment of Internet addiction as an actual clinical disorder. [147] Social networking can also affect the extent to which a person feels lonely. In a Newsweek article, Johannah Cornblatt explains “Social-networking sites like Facebook and MySpace may provide people with a false sense of connection that ultimately increases loneliness in people who feel alone.” John T. Cacioppo, a neuroscientist at the University of Chicago, claims that social networking can foster feelings of sensitivity to disconnection, which can lead to loneliness.[148] Fabio Sabatini and Francesco Sarracino found that if an individual tends to (a) trust people and (b) have a significant number of face-to-face interactions, the individual is likely to assess their own well-being as relatively high. The researchers found that online social networking plays a positive role in subjective well-being when the networking is used to facilitate physical interactions, but networking activities that do not facilitate face-to-face interactions tend to erode trust, and this erosion can then negatively affect subjective well-being (independent of the online social interaction itself). Sabatini and Sarracino conclude that “The overall effect of networking on individual welfare is significantly negative.”[149] However, some scholars have expressed that concerns about social networking are often exaggerated and poorly researched.”[150]

Patents

There has been rapid growth in the number of U.S. patent applications that cover new technologies related to social networking. The number of published applications has been growing rapidly since 2003. There are now over 3,500 published applications. As many as 7,000 applications may be currently on file including those that haven’t been published yet.’[151] Only about 400 of these applications have issued as patents,’[152] however, due largely to the multi-year backlog in examination of business method patents and the difficulty in getting these patent applications allowed.”[153]

It has been reported that social networking patents are important for the establishment of new start-up companies.”[154] It has also been reported, however, that social networking patents inhibit innovation.”[155] On June 15, 2010, the United States Patent and Trademark Office awarded Amazon.com a patent for a “Social Networking System” based on its ownership of PlanetAll.”[156] The patent describes a Social Networking System as a networked computer system provides various services for assisting users in locating, and establishing contact relationships with, other users. For example, in one embodiment, users can identify other users based on their affiliations with particular schools or other organizations. The system also provides a mechanism for a user to selectively establish contact relationships or connections with other users, and to grant permissions for such other users to view personal information of the user. The system may also include features for enabling users to identify contacts of their respective contacts. In addition, the system may automatically notify users of personal information updates made by their respective contacts.”[157]

The patent has garnered attention due to its similarity to the popular social networking site Facebook.”[158]

Worker’s rights

What types of speech workers are protected from being fired for on social networking websites has been an issue for American companies with over 100 complaints as of 2011 on this topic having been made to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).[159] The National Labor Relations Act protects workers from being fired for “protected concerted activity”, which prevents workers from being fired for collective action, while allowing companies the right to fire workers for individual actions.
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they take against the company."[159] Companies are concerned with the potential damage comments online can do to public image due to their visibility and accessibility, but despite over 100 cases being presented thus far to NLRB only one has led to a formal ruling, leaving uncertainty as to the boundaries of what types of speech the NLRB will ultimately protect or condemn. [159]

Decentralized architecture

Most of the existing SNS sites use one or multiple dedicated data centers to serve all its users. Such infrastructure-based systems faces over-provisioning during non-peak hours, while may encounter service outage during peak hours, due to the highly dynamic of SNS users’ activities. There are several proposals, leveraging a decentralized architecture to ensure the scalability of SNS sites with low infrastructure cost. These proposals include Fethr,*[160] unOSN,*[161] and Cuckoo.*[162]

Virtual identity suicide

There is a growing number of social network users who decide to quit their user account by committing a so-called virtual identity suicide or Web 2.0 suicide. A 2013 study in the journal Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking investigated this phenomenon from the perspective of Facebook users. The number one reason for these users was privacy concerns (48%), being followed by a general dissatisfaction with the social networking website (14%), negative aspects regarding social network friends (13%) and the feeling of getting addicted to the social networking website (6%). Facebook quitters were found to be more concerned about privacy, more addicted to the Internet and more conscientious.*[163]

Breaking up

Sites such as Facebook are becoming increasingly popular tools for methods of ending relationships and friendships, proving that although new media is being used as a tool for connecting with individuals, it is now creating new problems associated with disconnecting from others.*[164] Instead of the traditional phone call or face-to-face interaction between individuals, people are now starting to end relationships by simply changing their relationship status, knowing full well that their significant other will see it shortly. The problem with that is that you are left with no closure and the entire online world now knows you are no longer in a relationship.*[165] In a 2010 study conducted online, nearly one-quarter of the 1,000 individuals surveyed found out that their own relationship was over by seeing it on Facebook. *[166] New media websites have made our private lives much more public, especially when it comes to breaking up, since updates are able to be immediately viewed by everyone in our network (which tend to be more people than we would normally tell personally); for example, having friends comment on your newly changed "single" relationship status, and having to explain what happened can be distressing. This creates further problems, as it is even more crucial to ‘save face’ after one’s relationship has been broken when one is connected to new media technologies. Erving Goffman argues that all social life boils down to face-to-face interactions. These interpersonal interactions are mediated by what Goffman terms as "face-work", which are the actions undertaken to maintain consistency with one’s face, and to uphold the expressive order of social situations. Individuals attempt to keep a positive image of the self when interacting with others, and in order to do so, they may have to alter their appearance or manner in some way.*[167] Such face-work can also be seen in new technologies, especially social media websites such as Facebook. If someone breaks up with you, you can actively choose what “face” you want to present to your friends, including your ex. You can choose to either post sad updates, which is the most natural thing you would want to do, or you can “save face” by posting happy updates and pictures of you going out with your friends. Even though you may be absolutely heartbroken within, Facebook allows you to hide your true feelings from the online world, and from your ex, by manipulating your profile. New media is being utilized as a tool for helping users present a desirable image of themselves, enabling them to save face in difficult situations. Nearly 35% of respondents in a study admitted to using their Facebook status to make someone think that they had plans, even if they did not.*[166]

Many people find that the only way to really move on from a past relationship is to cut the person out of their life completely. Social media has made this process much more complicated and difficult. In a 2012 study, 48% of the participants stated they had remained friends with their ex on Facebook, and of these people, 88% stated they ‘creeped’ their ex after the breakup. Many digital social networking sites leave behind a trail of a user’s interactions,*[168] so deleting content may be an arduous process, more difficult than simply burning or throwing away an entire box of letters, photos, and mementos.*[169] Additionally, this content can still remain online.

Social overload

The increasing number of messages and social relationships embedded in SNS also increases the amount of social information demanding a reaction from SNS users. Consequently, SNS users perceive they are giving too much social support to other SNS friends. This dark side of SNS usage is called ‘social overload’. *[170] It is caused by the extent of usage, number of friends, subjective social support norms, and type of relationship (online-only vs offline friends) while age has only an indirect effect.
The psychological and behavioral consequences of social overload include perceptions of SNS exhaustion, low user satisfaction, and high intentions to reduce or stop using SNS.\cite{170}

### Social anxiety

Smart phones and social networking services enable us to stay connected continuously with people around us or far away from us, which however is sometimes the root of our anxiety in social life. The eager to know what everyone was saying and the tendency to see if anyone shared new things are typical "symptoms" of this anxiety called FoMO. There is a study that examined possible connections between FOMO and social media engagement indicating that FoMO was associated with lower need satisfaction, mood and life satisfaction.\cite{171}

Another type of social anxiety is the FoBM (fear of being missed).\cite{172} It comes from the situation that we can’t produce share-content for people to consume. The FoBM is a counterpart of FoMO; however, compared to FoMO it may have a more serious impact since the exclusion from the conversation can result in continuous exclusion later.\cite{173}

### Effects on personal relationships and social capital

The number of contacts on a social platform is sometimes considered an indicator of social capital. However, studies\cite{174}\cite{175} show it is rather an indicator of low self-esteem and of a form of social compensation. Indeed, people tend to add friends to compensate low self-esteem and there is a high correlation between the number of "friends" on social media platforms and feeling social anxiety, leading to symptoms of major depression and dysthymia. If we consider this aspect with regards to the relationships maintained through social media platforms, we can easily point out a change in our understanding of friendship. As a matter of fact, online platforms and social media services altered the old definition of friendship. Indeed, friendship "redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves" as stated by Francis Bacon.\cite{176} However, nowadays we see that Facebook friends for instance encourage negative feelings, such as envy, revenge and sadness.

When it comes to friendship, we can wonder whether friendship on online platforms is a real form of friendship, or it is just a sort of metaphor to compensate for social communication problems. Actually, a lot of changes can be spotted in its old definition compared to the one in the era of social media. Friendship used to relate to the public sphere as explained in Nicomachean Ethics, however nowadays friendship is rather exposed publicly on different social media platforms.

Moreover, a study\cite{177} shows that Facebook users only know a bit more than two thirds of their "friends" on the platform, meaning that they didn’t know one third of the individuals in their friend-lists. This raises security and privacy issues and the project researchers alerted participants that they would better unfriend people they didn’t recognize.

### 4.3.7 Investigations

Main article: Use of social network websites in investigations

Social networking services are increasingly being used in legal and criminal investigations. Information posted on sites such as MySpace and Facebook has been used by police (forensic profiling), probation, and university officials to prosecute users of said sites. In some situations, content posted on MySpace has been used in court.\cite{178} Facebook is increasingly being used by school administrations and law enforcement agencies as a source of evidence against student users. This site being the number one online destination for college students, allows users to create profile pages with personal details. These pages can be viewed by other registered users from the same school, which often include resident assistants and campus police who have signed up for the service.\cite{179} One UK police force has sifted pictures from Facebook and arrested some people who had been photographed in a public place holding a weapon such as a knife (having a weapon in a public place is illegal).\cite{180}

### 4.3.8 Application domains

#### Government applications

Social networking is more recently being used by various government agencies. Social networking tools serve as a quick and easy way for the government to get the
opinion of the public and to keep the public updated on their activity, however this comes with a significant risk of abuse, for example to cultivate a culture of fear such as that outlined in Nineteen Eighty-Four or THX-1138.

The Centers for Disease Control demonstrated the importance of vaccinations on the popular children’s site Whyville and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has a virtual island on Second Life where people can explore underground caves or explore the effects of global warming.[181] Likewise, NASA has taken advantage of a few social networking tools, including Twitter and Flickr. The NSA is taking advantage of them all.[182] NASA is using such tools to aid the Review of U.S. Human Space Flight Plans Committee, whose goal it is to ensure that the nation is on a vigorous and sustainable path to achieving its boldest aspirations in space.[183]

Business applications

The use of social networking services in an enterprise context presents the potential of having a major impact on the world of business and work (Fraser & Dutta 2008). Social networks connect people at low cost; this can be beneficial for entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to expand their contact bases. These networks often act as a customer relationship management tool for companies selling products and services. Companies can also use social networks for advertising in the form of banners and text ads. Since businesses operate globally, social networks can make it easier to keep in touch with contacts around the world. Applications for social networking sites have extended toward businesses and brands are creating their own, high functioning sites, a sector known as brand networking. It is the idea that a brand can build its consumer relationship by connecting its consumers to the brand image on a platform that provides them relative content, elements of participation, and a ranking or score system. Brand networking is a new way to capitalize on social trends as a marketing tool. The power of social networks it beginning to permeate into internal culture of businesses where they are finding uses for collaboration, file sharing and knowledge transfer. The term "enterprise social software" is becoming increasingly popular for these types of applications.

Educational applications

The National School Boards Association reports that almost 60% of students who use social networking talk about education topics online, and more than 50% talk specifically about schoolwork. Yet the vast majority of school districts have stringent rules against nearly all forms of social networking during the school day—even though students and parents report few problem behaviors online. Social networks focused on supporting relationships between teachers and their students are now used for learning, educator professional development, and content sharing. HASTAC is a collaborative social network space for new modes of learning and research in higher education, K-12, and lifelong learning. Ning supports teachers; TermWiki, Learn Central,[190] TeachStreet and other sites are being built to foster relationships that include educational blogs, eportfolios, formal and ad hoc communities, as well as communication such as chats, discussion threads, and synchronous forums. These sites also have content sharing and rating features. Social networks are also emerging as online yearbooks, both public and private. One such service is MyYearbook, which allows anyone from the general public to register and connect. A new trend emerging is private label yearbooks accessible only by students, parents, and teachers of a particular

Dating applications

See also: Online dating service

Many social networks provide an online environment for people to communicate and exchange personal information for dating purposes. Intentions can vary from looking for a one time date, short-term relationships, and long-term relationships.[184] Most of these social networks, just like online dating services, require users to give out certain pieces of information. This usually includes a user’s age, gender, location, interests, and perhaps a picture. Releasing very personal information is usually discouraged for safety reasons.[185] This allows other users to search or be searched by some sort of criteria, but at the same time people can maintain a degree of anonymity similar to most online dating services. Online dating sites are similar to social networks in the sense that users create profiles to meet and communicate with others, but their activities on such sites are for the sole purpose of finding a person of interest to date. Social networks do not necessarily have to be for dating; many users simply use it for keeping in touch with friends, and colleagues.[186]

However, an important difference between social networks and online dating services is the fact that online dating sites usually require a fee, where social networks are free.[187] This difference is one of the reasons the online dating industry is seeing a massive decrease in revenue due to many users opting to use social networking services instead. Many popular online dating services such as Match.com, Yahoo Personals, and eHarmony.com are seeing a decrease in users, where social networks like MySpace and Facebook are experiencing an increase in users.[188] The number of Internet users in the United States that visit online dating sites has fallen from a peak of 21% in 2003 to 10% in 2006.[189] Whether it is the cost of the services, the variety of users with different intentions, or any other reason, it is undeniable that social networking sites are quickly becoming the new way to find dates online.
school, similar to Facebook’s beginning within Harvard.

**Finance applications**

The use of virtual currency systems inside social networks create new opportunities for global finance. Hub Culture operates a virtual currency Ven used for global transactions among members, product sales[191] and financial trades in commodities and carbon credits.[192][193] In May 2010, carbon pricing contracts were introduced to the weighted basket of currencies and commodities that determine the floating exchange value of Ven. The introduction of carbon to the calculation price of the currency made Ven the first and only currency that is linked to the environment.[194]

**Medical and health applications**

Social networks are beginning to be adopted by healthcare professionals as a means to manage institutional knowledge, disseminate peer to peer knowledge and to highlight individual physicians and institutions. The advantage of using a dedicated medical social networking site is that all the members are screened against the state licensing board list of practitioners.[195] A new trend is emerging with social networks created to help its members with various physical and mental ailments.[196] For people suffering from life altering diseases, PatientsLikeMe offers its members the chance to connect with others dealing with similar issues and research patient data related to their condition. For alcoholics and addicts, SoberCircle gives people in recovery the ability to communicate with one another and strengthen their recovery through the encouragement of others who can relate to their situation. DailyStrength is also a website that offers support groups for a wide array of topics and conditions, including the support topics offered by PatientsLikeMe and SoberCircle. Some social networks aim to encourage healthy lifestyles in their users. SparkPeople offers community and social networking tools for peer support during weight loss. Fitocracy and QUENTIQ are focused on exercise, enabling users to share their own workouts and comment on those of other users.

**Social and political applications**

Social networking sites have recently showed a value in social and political movements.[197] In the Egyptian revolution, Facebook and Twitter both played an allegedly pivotal role in keeping people connected to the revolt. Egyptian activists have credited social networking sites with providing a platform for planning protest and sharing news from Tahrir Square in real time. By presenting a platform for thousands of people to instantaneously share videos of mainly events featuring brutality, social networking can be a vital tool in revolutions.[198] On the flip side, social networks enable government authorities to easily identify, and repress, protestors and dissidents. Another thing that social media helps with in political applications is getting the younger generations involved in politics and ongoing political issues.[199] Perhaps the most significant political application of social media is Barack Obama’s election campaign in 2008. It was the first of its kind, as it successfully incorporated social media into its campaign winning strategy, evolving the way of political campaigns forever more in the ever-changing technological world we find ourselves in today. His campaign won by engaging everyday people and empowering volunteers, donors and advocates, through social networks, text messaging, email messaging and online videos.[200] Obama’s social media campaign was vast, with his campaign boasting 5 million ‘friends’ on over 15 social networking sites, with over 3 million friends just on Facebook.[201] Another significant success of the campaign was online videos, with nearly 2,000 YouTube videos being put online, receiving over 80 million views.[201]

In 2007, when Obama first announced his candidacy, there was no such thing as an iPhone or Twitter. However, a year later, Obama was sending out voting reminders to thousands of people through Twitter, showing just how fast social media moves. Obama’s campaign was current and needed to be successful incorporating social media, as social media acts best and is most effective in real time.

Building up to the 2012 presidential election, it was interesting to see how strong the influence of social media would be following the 2008 campaigns, where Obama’s winning campaign had been social media-heavy, whereas McCain’s campaign did not really grasp social media. JFK was the first president who really understood television, and similarly, Obama is the first president to fully understand the power of social media.[202] Obama has recognized social media is about creating relationships and connections and therefore used social media to the advantage of presidential election campaigns, in which Obama has dominated his opponents in terms of social media space.

Other political campaigns have followed on from Obama’s successful social media campaigns, recognizing the power of social media and incorporating it as a key factor embedded within their political campaigns, for example Donald Trump’s presidential electoral campaign, 2016. Dan Pfeiffer, Obama’s former digital and social media guru, commented that Donald Trump is “way better at the internet than anyone else in the GOP which is partly why he is winning”.[203]

Research has shown that 66% of social media users actively engage in political activity online, and like many other behaviors, online activities translate into offline ones.[202] With research from the ‘MacArthur Re-
search Network on Youth and Participatory Politics’ stating that young people who are politically active online are double as likely to vote than those who are not politically active online.\[202\] Therefore, political applications of social networking sites are crucial, particularly to engage with the youth, who perhaps are the least educated in politics and the most in social networking sites. Social media is therefore a very effective way in which politicians can connect with a younger audience through their political campaigns.

Crowdsourcing applications

Main article: Crowdsourcing creative work

Crowdsourcing social media platform, such as Design Contest, Archbazar, Tongal, combined group of professional freelancers, such as designers, and help them communicate with business owners interested in their suggestion. This process is often used to subdivide tedious work or to fund-raise startup companies and charities, and can also occur offline.\[204\]

4.3.9 Open source software

Main article: Comparison of software and protocols for distributed social networking

There are a number of projects that aim to develop free and open source software to use for social networking services. The projects include Anahita,\[205\] Applesseed Project,\[206\] Diaspora, Friendica, GNU social, Kune, Minds\[207\] and OneSocialWeb.\[208\] These technologies are often referred to as Social engine or Social networking engine software.

4.3.10 Market share

Social networks has been so well established, that there are now a core ‘top 5’ social networks which don’t change much from year-to-year. But the most popular social media sites vary a lot by level of usage in different countries and demographics. According to Smart Insights, reviewed by active account usage in January 2017, the following top social networking service with listed number of active users:\[209\]

4.3.11 In the media

- In December 2010, Time Magazine named Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg as person of the year.
- Released in 2010, The Social Network is a film dramatizing the origin of Facebook.

4.3.12 See also

- Anonymous social media
- Collective intelligence
- Comparison of research networking tools and research profiling systems
- Distributed social network
- Enterprise bookmarking
- Gender differences in social network service use
- Geosocial networking
- Internet
- Internet forum
- Internet think tanks
- Lateral diffusion
- List of social networking websites
- List of virtual communities with more than 100 million users
- Mass collaboration
- Mobile social network
- Personal network
- Professional network service
- Online volunteering
- Social aspects of television
- Social bookmark link generator
- Social identity
- Social media
- Social network aggregation
- Social software
- Social television
- Virtual community

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4.3.15 External links

Media related to Social networking service at Wikimedia Commons

4.4 Microblogging

Microblogging is a broadcast medium that exists in the form of blogging. A microblog differs from a traditional blog in that its content is typically smaller in both actual and aggregated file size. Microblogs allow users to exchange small elements of content such as short sentences, individual images, or video links, which may be the major reason for their popularity. These small messages are sometimes called microposts. As with traditional blogging, microbloggers post about topics ranging from the simple, such as what I’m doing right now, to the thematic, such as ‘sports cars.’ Commercial microblogs also exist to promote websites, services and products, and to promote collaboration within an organization.

Some microblogging services offer features such as privacy settings, which allow users to control who can read their microblogs, or alternative ways of publishing entries besides the web-based interface. These may include text messaging, instant messaging, E-mail, digital audio or digital video.

4.4.1 Origin

The first microblogs were known as tumblelogs. The term was coined by why the lucky stiff in a blog post on April 12, 2005, while describing Christian Neukirchen's Anarchia. Jason Kottke described tumblelogs on October 19, 2005.

However, by 2006 and 2007, the term microblog was used more widely for services provided by established sites like Tumblr and Twitter. Twitter for one is especially popular in China, with over 35 million users tweeting in 2012, according to a survey by GlobalWebIndex.

As of May 2007, there were 111 microblogging sites in various countries. Among the most notable services are Twitter, Tumblr, FriendFeed, Plurk, Jaiku and identi.ca. Different versions of services and software with microblogging features have been developed. Plurk has a timeline view that integrates video and picture sharing.
Fliper uses microblogging as a platform for people to post topics and gather audience’s opinions. PingGadget is a location-based microblogging service. Pownce, developed by Digg founder Kevin Rose among others, integrated microblogging with file sharing and event invitations.[7] Pownce was merged into SixApart in December 2008.[8]

Other leading social networking websites Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Diaspora*, JudgIt, Yahoo Pulse, Google Buzz, Google+ and XING, also have their own microblogging feature, better known as “status updates”. Although status updates are usually more restricted than actual microblogging in terms of writing, it seems any kind of activity involving posting, be it on a social network site or a microblogging site, can be classified as microblogging.

Services such as Lifestream and SnapChat will aggregate microblogs from multiple social networks into a single list, while other services, such as Ping.fm, will send out your microblog to multiple social networks.

Internet users in China are facing a different situation. Foreign microblogging services like Twitter, Facebook, Plurk, and Google+ are censored in China. The users use Chinese weibo services such as Sina Weibo and Tencent Weibo. Tailored to Chinese people, these weibos are like hybrids of Twitter and Facebook. They implement basic features of Twitter and allow users to comment to others’ posts, as well as post with graphical emoticons, attach an image, music and video files. A survey by the Data Center of China Internet from 2010 showed that Chinese microblog users most often pursued content created by friends, experts in a specific field or related to celebrities.

4.4.2 Usage

Several studies, most notably by the Harvard Business School and Sysomos, have tried to analyze the user behavior on microblogging services.[9][10] Several of these studies show that for services such as Twitter, there is a small group of active users contributing to most of the activity.[11] Sysomos’ Inside Twitter[10] survey, based on more than 11 million users, shows that 10% of Twitter users account for 86% of all activity.

Twitter, Facebook, and other microblogging services are also becoming a platform for marketing and public relations,[12] with a sharp growth in the number of social media marketers. The Sysomos study shows that this specific group of marketers on Twitter is much more active than the general user population, with 15% of marketers following over 2,000 people and only .29% of the Twitter public following more than 2,000 people.[10]

Microblogging has also become an important source of real-time news updates during socio-political revolutions and crisis situations, such as the Mumbai terror attacks or Iran protests.[13][14] The short nature of updates allow users to post news items quickly, reaching its audience in seconds. Clay Shirky argues that these services have the potential to result in an information cascade, prompting fence-sitters to turn activist.[15]

Microblogging has noticeably revolutionized the way information is consumed. It has empowered citizens themselves to act as sensors or sources of information that could lead to consequences and influence, or even cause, media coverage. People now share what they observe in their surroundings, information about events, and their opinions about topics from a wide range of fields. Moreover, these services store various metadata from these posts, such as location and time. Aggregated analysis of this data includes different dimensions like space, time, theme, sentiment, network structure etc., and gives researchers an opportunity to understand social perceptions of people in the context of certain events of interest.[16][17] Microblogging also promotes authorship. On the microblogging platform Tumblr, the reblogging feature links the post back to the original creator.

The findings of a study by Emily Pronin of Princeton University and Harvard University’s Daniel Wegner have been cited as a possible explanation for the rapid growth of microblogging. The study suggests a link between short bursts of activity and feelings of elation, power and creativity.[18]

While the general appeal and influence of microblogging seem to be growing continuously, mobile microblogging is still moving at a slower pace. Among the most popular activities carried out by mobile internet users on their devices in 2012, mobile blogging or tweeting was last on the list, with only 27% of users engaging in it.[19]

4.4.3 Organizational usage

Users and organizations often set up their own microblogging service – free and open source software is available for this purpose.[20] Hosted microblogging platforms are also available for commercial and organizational use.

Considering the smaller amount of time and effort to make a post this way or share an update, microblogging has the potential to become a new, informal communication medium, especially for collaborative work within organizations.[21][22] Over the last few years communication patterns have shifted primarily from face-to-face to online in email, IM, text messaging, and other tools. However, some argue that email is now a slow and inefficient way to communicate.[23] For instance, time-consuming “email chains” can develop, whereby two or more people are involved in lengthy communications for simple matters, such as arranging a meeting.[24] The one-to-many broadcasting offered by microblogs is thought to increase productivity by circumventing this.

Another implication of remote collaboration is that there are fewer opportunities for face-to-face informal conver-
Microblogging is therefore expected to improve the social and emotional welfare of the workforce, as well as streamline the information flow within an organization.\textsuperscript{21} It can increase opportunities to share information,\textsuperscript{22,25} help realize and utilize expertise within the workforce,\textsuperscript{22} and help build and maintain common ground between coworkers.\textsuperscript{21} As microblogging use continues to grow every year, it is quickly becoming a core component of Enterprise Social Software.

Dr. Gregory D. Saxton and Kristen Lovejoy at the University at Buffalo, SUNY have done a study on how nonprofit organizations use microblogging to meet their company needs and missions, with an emphasis on Twitter use. Their sample included 100 nonprofit organizations, 73 of which had Twitter accounts, and 59 that were considered “active,” or sent out a tweet at least three times a week. In a one-month time period 4,655 tweets were collected for analysis from these organizations.

They developed three categories with a total of 12 sub categories in which to place tweets based on their functions, and classify organizations based on the purpose of the majority of their tweets. The three head categories include information, community, and action. Information includes one-way interactions that inform the public of the organization’s activities, events, and news. The community head category can also be broken down into two sub categories of community building and dialogue intended tweets. Community building tweets are meant to strengthen ties and create an online community, such as tweets giving thanks or showing acknowledgement of current events. Tweets meant to create dialogue are often interactive responses to other Twitter users or tweets invoking a response from users. Action tweets are used to promote events, ask people for donations, selling products, asking for volunteers, lobbying, or requests to join another cite.

Through their analysis, Saxton and Lovejoy were able to identify nonprofit organizations’ main purpose in using the microblogging site, Twitter, and break down organizations into three categories based on purpose of tweets: 1. “Information Sources,” 2. “Community Builders,” and 3. “Promoters & Mobilizers.” In their discussion of the study, they stated that they believe their findings are generalizable to other microblogging and social media sites.\textsuperscript{26}

### 4.4.4 Issues

Microblogging is not without issues, such as privacy, security, and integration.\textsuperscript{21}

Privacy is arguably a major issue because users may broadcast sensitive personal information to anyone who views their public feed. Microblog platform providers can also cause privacy issues through altering or presetting users’ privacy options in a way users feel compromises their personal information. An example would be Google’s Buzz platform which incited controversy in 2010 by automatically publicizing users’ email contacts as ‘followers’.\textsuperscript{27} Google later amended these settings.

On centralized services, where all of the Microblog’s information flows through one point (e.g. servers operated by Twitter), privacy has been a concern in that user information has sometimes been exposed to governments and courts without the prior consent of the user who generated such supposedly private information, usually through subpoenas or court orders. Examples can be found in recent WikiLeaks related Twitter subpoenas,\textsuperscript{28,29,30} as well as various other cases.\textsuperscript{32,33,34,35}

Security concerns have been voiced within the business world, since there is potential for sensitive work information to be publicized on microblogging sites such as Twitter.\textsuperscript{36,37} This includes information which may be subject to a superinjunction.\textsuperscript{38}

Integration could be the hardest issue to overcome, since it can be argued that corporate culture must change to accommodate microblogging.

### 4.4.5 Related concepts

**Live Blogging** is a derivative of microblogging that generates a continuous feed on a specific web page.

**Instant messaging** and IRC display status, but generally only one of a few choices, such as: available, off-line, away, busy. Away messages (messages displayed when the user is away) form a kind of microblogging.

In the Finger protocol, the .project and .plan files are sometimes used for status updates similar to microblogging.\textsuperscript{39}

### 4.4.6 See also

**Articles**

- Blogging
- Comparison of microblogging services
- Emoticon
- Geosocial networking
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- Microblogging in China
- Microblogging novel
- Online Journalism
- Social networking service

Platforms
- GNU social

Services
- Google+
- ImaHima
- MeetMe
- micro.blog
- Plurk
- Solaborate
- Soup
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- Twister
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- Weibo
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Chapter 5

Internet Language

5.1 Internet slang

This article is about slang used on the Internet. For jargon related to the Internet, see Glossary of Internet-related terms. For a list of terms, see Wiktionary:Appendix:English internet slang.

Internet slang (Internet shorthand, cyber-slang, netspeak, or chatspeak) refers to a variety of slang languages used by different people on the Internet. An example of Internet slang is “LOL” meaning “laugh out loud”. It is difficult to provide a standardized definition of Internet slang due to the constant changes made to its nature. However, it can be understood to be a type of slang that Internet users have popularized, and in many cases, have coined. Such terms often originate with the purpose of saving keystrokes or to compensate for small character limits. Many people use the same abbreviations in texting and instant messaging, and social networking websites. Acronyms, keyboard symbols and abbreviations are common types of Internet slang. New dialects of slang, such as leet or Lolspeak, develop as ingroup internet memes rather than time savers.

5.1.1 Creation and evolution

Origins

Internet slang originated in the early days of the Internet with some terms predating the Internet. Internet slang is used in chat rooms, social networking services, online games, video games and in the online community. Since 1979, users of communications networks like Usenet created their own shorthand.

5.1.2 In pop culture

In Japanese, the term moe has come into common use among slang users to mean something extremely cute and appealing.

Aside from the more frequent abbreviations, acronyms, and emoticons, Internet slang also uses archaic words or the lesser-known meanings of mainstream terms. Regular words can also be altered into something with a similar pronunciation but altogether different meaning, or attributed new meanings altogether. Phonetic transcriptions of foreign words, such as the transformation of “impossible” into “impossibru” in Japanese and then [the transliteration of that] back to [the character set used for] English, also occur. In places where logographic languages are used, such as China, a visual Internet slang exists, giving characters dual meanings, one direct and one implied.

Motivations

The primary motivation for using a slang unique to the Internet is to ease communication. However, while Internet slang shortcuts save time for the writer, they take two times as long for the reader to understand, according to a study by the University of Tasmania. On the other hand, similar to the use of slang in traditional face-to-face speech or written language, slang on the Internet is often a way of indicating group membership.

Internet slang provides a channel which facilitates and constrains our ability to communicate in ways that are fundamentally different from those found in other semi-otic situations. Many of the expectations and practices which we associate with spoken and written language are no longer applicable. The Internet itself is ideal for new slang to emerge because of the richness of the medium and the availability of information. Slang is also thus motivated for the “creation and sustenance of online communities”. These communities in turn play a role in solidarity or identification or an exclusive or common cause.

David Crystal distinguishes among five areas of the Internet where slang is used- The Web itself, email, asynchronous chat (for example, mailing lists), synchronous chat (for example, Internet Relay Chat), and virtual worlds. The electronic character of the channel has a fundamental influence on the language of the medium. Options for communication are constrained by the nature of the hardware needed in order to gain Internet access. Thus, productive linguistic capacity (the
type of information that can be sent) is determined by the preassigned characters on a keyboard, and receptive linguistic capacity (the type of information that can be seen) is determined by the size and configuration of the screen. Additionally, both sender and receiver are constrained linguistically by the properties of the internet software, computer hardware, and networking hardware linking them. Electronic discourse refers to writing that is “very often reads as if it were being spoken – that is, as if the sender were writing talking”.[10]

5.1.3 Types of slang

Internet slang does not constitute a homogeneous language variety. Rather, it differs according to the user and type of Internet situation.[11] However, within the language of Internet slang, there is still an element of prescriptivism, as seen in style guides, for example Wired Style.[12] which are specifically aimed at usage on the Internet. Even so, few users consciously heed these prescriptive recommendations on CMC, but rather adapt their styles based on what they encounter online.[13] Although it is difficult to produce a clear definition of Internet slang, the following types of slang may be observed. This list is not exhaustive.

5.1.4 Views on Internet slang

There have been ongoing debates about how the use of slang on the Internet influences language usage outside of technology. Even though the direct causal relationship between the Internet and language has yet to be proven by any scientific research,[20] Internet slang has invited split views on its influence on the standard of language use in non-computer-mediated communications.

Prescriptivists tend to have the widespread belief that the Internet has a negative influence on the future of language, and that it would lead to a degradation of standard.[9] Some would even attribute any declination of standard formal English to the increase in usage of electronic communication.[20] It has also been suggested that the linguistic differences between Standard English and CMC can have implications for literacy education.[21] This is illustrated by the widely reported example of a school essay submitted by a Scottish teenager, which contained many abbreviations and acronyms likened to SMS language. There was great condemnation of this style by the mass media as well as educators, who expressed that this showed diminishing literacy or linguistic abilities.[22]

On the other hand, descriptivists have counter-argued that the Internet allows better expressions of a language.[20] Rather than established linguistic conventions, linguistic choices sometimes reflect personal taste.[23] It has also been suggested that as opposed to intentionally flowing language conventions, Internet slang is a result of a lack of motivation to monitor speech online.[24] Hale and Scanlon describe language in Emails as being derived from “writing the way people talk” , and that there is no need to insist on 'Standard' English.[12] English users, in particular, have an extensive tradition of etiquette guides, instead of traditional prescriptive treatises, that offer pointers on linguistic appropriateness.[23] Using and spreading Internet slang also adds onto the cultural currency of a language.[25] It is important to the speakers of the language due to the foundation it provides for identifying within a group, and also for defining a person’s individual linguistic and communicative competence.[25] The result is a specialized subculture based on its use of slang.[26]

In scholarly research, attention has, for example, been drawn to the effect of the use of Internet slang in ethnography, and more importantly to how conversational relationships online change structurally because slang is used.[25]

In German, there is already considerable controversy regarding the use of anglicisms outside of CMC.[27] This situation is even more problematic within CMC, since the jargon of the medium is dominated by English terms.[11] An extreme example of an anti-anglicisms perspective can be observed from the chatroom rules of a Christian site,[28] which bans all anglicisms (”Das Verwenden von Anglizismen ist strengstens untersagt!” [Using anglicisms is strictly prohibited!]), and also translates even fundamental terms into German equivalents.[11]

Journalism

In April 2014, Gawker’s editor-in-chief Max Read instituted new writing style guidelines banning internet slang for his writing staff.[29][30][31][32][33][34]

5.1.5 Use beyond computer-mediated communication

Internet slang has crossed from being mediated by the computer into other non-physical domains.[35] Here, these domains are taken to refer to any domain of interaction where interlocutors need not be geographically proximate to one another, and where the Internet is not primarily used. Internet slang is now prevalent in telephony, mainly through short messages (SMS) communication. Abbreviations and interjections, especially, have been popularized in this medium, perhaps due to the limited character space for writing messages on mobile phones. Another possible reason for this spread is the convenience of transferring the existing mappings between expression and meaning into a similar space of interaction.[36]

At the same time, Internet slang has also taken a place as part of everyday offline language, among those with digi-
5.1. INTERNET SLANG

The nature and content of online conversation is brought forward to direct offline communication through the telephone and direct talking, as well as through written language, such as in writing notes or letters. In the case of interjections, such as numerically based and abbreviated Internet slang, are not pronounced as they are written physically or replaced by any actual action. Rather, they become lexicalized and spoken like non-slang words in a "stage direction" like fashion, where the actual action is not carried out but substituted with a verbal signal. The notions of flaming and trolling have also extended outside of the computer, and are used in the same circumstances of deliberate or unintentional implications. [6]

The expansion of Internet slang has been furthered through codification and the promotion of digital literacy. The subsequently existing and growing popularity of such references among those online as well as offline has thus advanced Internet slang literacy and globalized it. [37] Awareness and proficiency in manipulating Internet slang in both online and offline communication indicates digital literacy and teaching materials have even been developed to further this knowledge. [38] A South Korean publisher, for example, has published a textbook that details the meaning and context of use for common Internet slang instances and is targeted at young children who will soon be using the Internet. [39] Similarly, Internet slang has been recommended as language teaching material in second language classrooms in order to raise communicative competence by imparting some of the cultural value attached to a language that is available only in slang. [40]

Meanwhile, well-known dictionaries such as the OED [41] and Merriam-Webster have been updated with a significant and growing body of slang jargon. Besides the all too common examples, lesser known slang and slang with a non-English etymology have also found place in standardized linguistic references. Along with these instances, literature in user-contributed dictionaries such as Urban Dictionary has also been added on to. Codification seems to be qualified through frequency of use, and novel creations are often not accepted by other users of slang. [42]

Internet slang today

Although Internet slang began as a means of "opposition" to mainstream language, its popularity with today's globalized digitally literate population has shifted it into a part of everyday language, where it also leaves a profound impact. [43]

Frequently used slang also have become conventionalised into memetic "unit[s]s of cultural information". [6] These memes in turn are further spread through their use on the Internet, prominently through websites. The Internet as an "information superhighway" is also catalysed through slang. [26] The evolution of slang has also created a 'slang union' [1] as part of a unique, specialised subculture. [26] Such impacts are, however, limited and requires further discussion especially from the non-English world. This is because Internet slang is prevalent in languages more actively used on the Internet, like English, which is the Internet’s lingua franca. [44] [45]

5.1.6 Around the world

Chinese seal carving work. The character is a combination of three characters, which is done by Chinese netizens. This is a satire of Chinese Internet censorship. See Grass Mud Horse.

The Internet has helped people from all over the world to become connected to one another, enabling "global" relationships to be formed. [46] As such, it is important for the various types of slang used online to be recognizable for everyone. It is also important to do so because of how other languages are quickly catching up with English on the Internet, following the increase in Internet usage in countries predominantly non-English speaking. In fact, as of May 31, 2011, only approximately 27% of the online population is made up of English speakers. [47]

Different cultures tend to have different motivations behind their choice of slang, on top of the difference in language used. For example, in China, because of the tough Internet regulations imposed, users tend to use certain slang to talk about issues deemed as sensitive to the government. These include using symbols to separate the characters of a word to avoid detection from manual or automated text pattern scanning and consequential censorship. [48] An outstanding example is the use of the term river crab to denote censorship. River crab (hexie) is pronounced the same as "harmony"—the official term used to justify political discipline and censorship. As such Chinese netizens reappropriate the official terms in a sarcastic way. [49]
Abbreviations are popular across different cultures, including countries like Japan, China, France, Portugal, etc., and are used according to the particular language the Internet users speak. Significantly, this same style of slang creation is also found in non-alphabetical languages.\footnote{Yin Yan (2006) World Wide Web and the Formation of the Chinese and English “Internet Slang Union”. Computer-Assisted Foreign Language Education. Vol. 1. ISSN 1001-5795} as, for example, a form of “e gao” or alternative political discourse.\footnote{Davis, B.H. & Brewer, J. P. (1997). Electronic discourse: linguistic individuals in virtual space. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.}

The difference in language often results in miscommunication, as seen in an onomatopoeic example, “555”, which sounds like “crying” in Chinese, and “laughing” in Thai.\footnote{Hohenhaus, Peter (2005). Elements of traditional and “reverse” purism in relation to computer-mediated communication. In Langer, Nils and Winifred V. Davies (eds.), Linguistic Purism in the Germanic Languages. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 203-220.} A similar example is between the English “haha” and the Spanish “jaja”, where both are onomatopoeic expressions of laughter, but the difference in language also meant a different consonant for the same sound to be produced. For more examples of how other languages express “laughing out loud”, see also: LOL

In terms of culture, in Chinese, the numerically based onomatopoeia “770880” (simplified Chinese: 亲亲你抱抱你; pinyin: qīn qīn nǐ bào bào nǐ), which means to ‘kiss and hug you’, is used.\footnote{Meng Bingchun (2011) ”From Steamed Bun to Grass Mud Horse: E Gao as alternative political discourse on the Chinese Internet.” Global Media and Communication April 2011 vol. 7 no. 1 33–51} This is comparable to “XOXO”, which many Internet users use. In French, “pkoi” is used in the place of pourquoi, which means why. This is an example of a combination of onomatopoeia and shortening of the original word for convenience when writing online.

In conclusion, every different country has their own language background and cultural differences and hence they tend to have their own rules and motivations for their own Internet slang. However, at present, there is still a lack of studies done by researchers on some differences between the countries.

On the whole, the popular use of Internet slang has resulted in a unique online and offline community as well as a couple sub-categories of special internet slang which is different from other slang spread in the whole internet...similar to jargon...usually decided by the sharing community”.\footnote{Crystal, David. (2001). Language and the Internet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.} It has also led to virtual communities marked by the specific slang they use\footnote{Crystal, David (1997). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language (Second ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.} and led to a more homogenized yet diverse online culture.\footnote{[Hale, C. and Scanlon, J (1999). Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age. New York: Broadway Books]}

5.1.7 See also
- Computer-mediated communication
- Cybertalk: social culture contained and created within cyberspace
- English language spelling reform
- Internet linguistics
- Internet meme
- Jargon File
- Languages used on the Internet
- List of acronyms

5.1.8 References


5.1. INTERNET SLANG


[23] Baron, Naomi S. (2002). Who sets email style: Prescriptivism, coping strategies, and democratizing communication access. The Information Society 18, 403-413


[44] “Learn English online: How the internet is changing language”.

[45] “English - the universal language on the Internet?”: English essentially is the universal language of the Internet


5.2 Internet meme

Not to be confused with Image macro.

An Internet meme (/miːm/ MEEM[1])[2] is an activity, concept, catchphrase or piece of media which spreads, often as mimicry or for humorous purposes, from person to person via the Internet.[3] An Internet meme may also take the form of an image (typically an image macro), hyperlink, video, website, or hashtag. It may be just a word or phrase, sometimes including an intentional misspelling. These small movements tend to spread from person to person via social networks, blogs, direct email, or news sources. They may relate to various existing Internet cultures or subcultures, often created or spread on various websites, or by Usenet boards and other such early-internet communications facilities. Fads and sensations tend to grow rapidly on the Internet, because the instant communication facilitates word-of-mouth transmission. Some examples include posting a photo of people lying down in public places (called "planking") and uploading a short video of people dancing to the Harlem Shake.[4]

The word meme was coined by Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book The Selfish Gene, as an attempt to explain the way cultural information spreads;[5] Internet memes are a subset of this general meme concept specific to the culture and environment of the Internet. The concept of the Internet meme was first proposed by Mike Godwin in the June 1993 issue of Wired. In 2013 Dawkins characterized an Internet meme as being a meme deliberately altered by human creativity—distinguished from biological genes and Dawkins’ pre-Internet concept of a meme which involved mutation by random change and spreading through accurate replication as in Darwinian selection.[6] Dawkins explained that Internet memes are thus a "hijacking of the original idea", the very idea of a meme having mutated and evolved in this new direction.[7] Further, Internet memes carry an additional property that ordinary memes do not—Internet memes leave a footprint in the media through which they propagate (for example, social networks) that renders them traceable and analyzable.[8]

5.2.1 History

In the early days of the Internet, such content was primarily spread via email or Usenet discussion communities. Messageboards and newsgroups were also popular because they allowed a simple method for people to share information or memes with a diverse population of internet users in a short period. They encourage communication between people, and thus between meme sets, that do not normally come in contact. Furthermore, they actively promote meme-sharing within the messageboard or newsgroup population by asking for feedback, comments,
opinions, etc. This format is what gave rise to early internet memes, like the Hampster Dance. Another factor in the increased meme transmission observed over the internet is its interactive nature. Print matter, radio, and television are all essentially passive experiences requiring the reader, listener, or viewer to perform all necessary cognitive processing; in contrast the social nature of the Internet allows phenomena to propagate more readily. Many phenomena are also spread via web search engines, internet forums, social networking services, social news sites, and video hosting services. Much of the Internet’s ability to spread information is assisted from results found through search engines, which can allow users to find memes even with obscure information.⁹¹⁰

5.2.2 Evolution and propagation

An Internet meme may stay the same or may evolve over time, by chance or through commentary, imitations, parody, or by incorporating news accounts about itself. Internet memes can evolve and spread extremely rapidly, sometimes reaching worldwide popularity within a few days. Internet memes usually are formed from some social interaction, pop culture reference, or situations people often find themselves in. Their rapid growth and impact has caught the attention of both researchers and industry.¹¹ Academically, researchers model how they evolve and predict which memes will survive and spread throughout the Web. Commercially, they are used in viral marketing where they are an inexpensive form of mass advertising.

One empirical approach studied meme characteristics and behavior independently from the networks in which they propagated, and reached a set of conclusions concerning successful meme propagation.⁸ For example, the study asserted that Internet memes not only compete for viewer attention generally resulting in a shorter life, but also, through user creativity, memes can collaborate with each other and achieve greater survival.⁸ Also, paradoxically, an individual meme that experiences a popularity peak significantly higher than its average popularity is not generally expected to survive unless it is unique, whereas a meme with no such popularity peak keeps being used together with other memes and thus has greater survivability.⁸

Multiple opposing studies on media psychology and communication have aimed to characterise and analyse the concept and representations in order to make it accessible for the academic research.¹²¹³ Thus, Internet memes can be regarded as a unit of information which replicates via internet. This unit can replicate or mutate. This mutation instead of being generational⁵ follows more a viral pattern,¹⁴ giving the Internet memes generally a short life. Other theoretical problems with the Internet memes are their behaviour, their type of change, and their teleology.¹²

Writing for The Washington Post in 2013, Dominic Basulto asserted that with the growth of the Internet and the practices of the marketing and advertising industries, memes have come to transmit fewer snippets of human culture that could survive for centuries as originally envisioned by Dawkins, and instead transmit banality at the expense of big ideas.¹⁵

5.2.3 Image macros

Main article: Image macro

An image macro meme is an Internet meme consisting of:

1. Text, typically bolded font Impact with white text on black border, is centered on the top and bottom of the image. These texts are generally referred to as “Top Text” and “Bottom Text”.¹⁶

2. Image to be placed behind the text. These are typically drawn from a set of “known images” that are understood by many Internet users, such as Bad Luck Brian. However, by using the aforementioned typographic style, any image can take on the context or aesthetic of an image macro.¹⁷

5.2.4 Marketing

Public relations, advertising, and marketing professionals have embraced Internet memes as a form of viral marketing and guerrilla marketing to create marketing “buzz” for their product or service. The practice of using memes to market products or services is known as memetic marketing.¹⁸ Internet memes are seen as cost-effective, and because they are a (sometimes self-conscious) fad, they
are therefore used as a way to create an image of awareness or trendiness. Marketers, for example, use Internet memes to create interest in films that would otherwise not generate positive publicity among critics. The 2006 film Snakes on a Plane generated much publicity via this method.\[19\] Used in the context of public relations, the term would be more of an advertising buzzword than a proper Internet meme, although there is still an implication that the interest in the content is for purposes of trivia, ephemera, or frivolity rather than straightforward advertising and news.

Examples of memetic marketing include the FreeCreditReport.com singing ad campaign,\[20\] the "Nope, Chuck Testa" meme from an advertisement for taxidermist Chuck Testa, Wilford Brimley saying "Diabeetus" from Liberty Medical\[21\] and the Dumb Ways to Die public announcement ad campaign by Metro Trains Melbourne.

5.2.5 See also

- Cliché
- List of Internet phenomena
- Remix culture

5.2.6 References


[5] Dawkins, Richard (1989), The Selfish Gene (2 ed.), Oxford University Press, p. 192, ISBN 0-19-286092-5, We need a name for the new replicator, a noun that conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation. 'Mimeme' comes from a suitable Greek root, but I want a monosyllable that sounds a bit like 'gene'. I hope my classicist friends will forgive me if I abbreviate mimeme to meme. If it is any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory', or to the French word même. It should be pronounced to rhyme with 'cream'.


[18] Flor, Nick (December 11, 2000). "Is it any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory', or to the French word même. It should be pronounced to rhyme with 'cream'".


5.2.7 Further reading


5.2.8 External links
• Gary Marshall, The Internet and Memetics – academic article about Internet and memes.

5.3 Doge (meme)

Doge (often pronounced /ˈdɒg/ or /ˈdoʊɡ/) is an Internet meme that became popular in 2013. The meme typically consists of a picture of a Shiba Inu accompanied by multicolored text in Comic Sans font in the foreground. The text, representing a kind of internal monologue, is deliberately written in a form of broken English. [1]

The meme is based on a 2010 photograph, and became popular in late 2013, being named as Know Your Meme’s “top meme” of that year. A cryptocurrency based on Doge, the Dogecoin, was launched in December 2013, and the Shiba Inu has been featured on Josh Wise’s NASCAR car as part of a sponsorship deal. Doge has also been referenced by members of the United States Congress, a safety video for Delta Air Lines, a Google Easter egg, and the video for the song “Word Crimes” by Weird Al Yankovic.

5.3.1 Structure

Doge uses two-word phrases in which the first word is almost always one of five modifiers (“so”, “such”, “many”, “much”, and “very”), and the departure from correct English is to use the modifier with a word that it cannot properly modify. [3] For example, “Much respect. So noble.” uses the doge modifiers but is not “proper” doge because the modifiers are used in a formally correct fashion; the doge version would be “Much noble, so respect.” [3] In addition to these phrases, a doge utterance often ends with a single word, most often “wow” but with “amaze” and “excite” also being used. [3]

5.3.2 Origin and pronunciation

Kabosu (Japanese: かぼす), the female Shiba Inu featured in the original meme, was a pedigree puppy who was sent to an animal shelter when her puppy mill shut down. She was adopted in 2008 by Japanese kindergarten teacher Atsuko Satō, and named after the citrus fruit Kabosu because Sato thought she had a round face. [4] Another Shiba Inu featured in the meme is Suki, a female belonging to photographer Jonathan Fleming from San Francisco. His wife had accidentally put a scarf in the wash, making it shrink. He took a photograph of Suki wearing the scarf outside on a cold night in February 2010. [5]

Kabosu was first pictured in a 2010 blog post by Sato; afterwards, variations of the pictures using overlaid Comic Sans text were posted from a Tumblr blog, Shiba Confessions. [5] [6] [7] [8] However, the use of the intentionally misspelled “doge” dates back to June 2005, when it was mentioned in an episode of Homestar Runner’s puppet series. [2]

The most common pronunciations of “doige” are /ˈdɒgə/ and /ˈdoʊɡə/. In non-English speaking countries, “doige” is occasionally pronounced /ˈdɒdʒ/. Those unfamiliar or unacquainted with the meme also use the pronunciations /ˈdɒɡə/, /ˈdɒhə/, or simply /ˈdɒg/.[2]

5.3.3 Spread

In August 2013, images of the meme were spammed on Reddit’s r/MURICA subreddit by 4chan’s random imageboard, /b/. [9] Online searches for the meme began to increase in July 2013. [5] Google later created a Doge Easter egg: when doge meme was entered into the YouTube search bar, all the site’s text would be displayed in colorful Comic Sans, similar to the kind used by the meme. [10]

The meme was ranked at No. 12 on MTV’s list of “50 Things Pop Culture Had Us Giving Thanks For”.
CHAPTER 5. INTERNET LANGUAGE

Doge meme relating to Wikipedia

**WOW.**

**many edits**

**so Internet meme**

**much wiki**

**how to article?**

**very readers**

**such neutral**

Io9 compared the internal dialog of the Shiba Inu dogs to lolspeak. On December 13, Doge was named the “top meme” of 2013 by Know Your Meme. In late December 2013, members of the U.S. Congress produced material in the meme’s style. The Huffington Post commented that Doge was “killed” because of the Congress members’ usage of the meme.

In December 2013, the Dogecoin was introduced as a new cryptocurrency, making it the first cryptocurrency to be based on an Internet meme, along with usage of the Comic Sans MS typeface, gave it “the Internet density of a large star” according to Medium writer Quinn Norton. By early 2014, Doge’s popularity was sustained by internet communities on social media, accompanied by the rapid growth and acceptance of Dogecoin. In April 2014, Doge experienced a second major media resurgence due to revelations of the Dogecoin community’s intent to sponsor Josh Wise in NASCAR and place a picture of the Shiba Inu on his vehicle. The car features in downloadable content for the video game NASCAR ’14. Media outlets have embraced the meme while reporting on the cryptocurrency and the car, with titles featuring phrases such as “so wow” and “very vroom.” In January 2014, Sydney-based web developers Katia Eirin and Bennett Wong created Doge Weather, a weather website and mobile app incorporating the meme. Doge Weather reports the temperature and weather conditions based on the user’s geographic location.

In mid-2014, the advertisement agency DDB Stockholm had Doge feature prominently in an advertising campaign for the public transport company SL in Stockholm, Sweden. The advertisement concerned the company’s special summer tickets, and featured Doge holding a public transport ticket in his mouth, with phrases such as “many summer”, “such cheap” and “very buy.” Doge was also one of 25 Internet memes featured in a Delta Air Lines safety video released in May 2015. In the video for “Weird Al” Yankovic’s 2014 song “Word Crimes”, a song about bad grammar, a Doge tweet is used to illustrate the types of bad grammar referenced in that part of the song.

“Doge” was one of several additions to Dictionary.com in November 2015. The website defines it as not just the image macro and its variants, but also the form of “language” that it utilizes. The Japanese perception is remarkably different; Satō and Kabosu are rather known as a pet and owner rather than a meme, and her blog is the fourth-most popular pet-related blog in the country as of December 2013. Reacting to the meme, she explained, “To be honest, some pictures are strange for me, but it’s still funny! I’m very impressed with their skills and taste. Around me, nobody knows about the doge meme. Maybe I don’t understand memes very well, because I’m living a such an analog life.” Satō

Cosplayer at WonderCon wearing a Doge mask with anime-style eyes
has also expressed that she had learned that “the risk of the internet is that anyone in the world can see my life on my blog.” Fleming stated that in his experience, the Shiba Inus breed has become more recognised due to the meme.”[5]

In the 2015 video game The Legend of Zelda: Tri Force Heroes, a reference to the meme can be found in the North American version only. When examining one of the ancient bookshelves, the text reads “Still, coming here has at least afforded me the rare chance to explore these ancient ruins. So ancient. Such ruin.” The reference was met with negative responses from fans of the series.”[33][34]

5.3.4 See also
- List of Internet phenomena

5.3.5 References


5.3.6 External links

- Original blog post featuring Kabosu
Chapter 6

Internet Celebrity

6.1 15 minutes of fame

15 minutes of fame is short-lived media publicity or celebrity of an individual or phenomenon. The expression was inspired by Andy Warhol’s words “In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes,” which appeared in the program for a 1968 exhibition of his work at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden. [*1] Photographer Nat Finkelstein claims credit for the expression, stating that he was photographing Warhol in 1966 for a proposed book. A crowd gathered trying to get into the pictures and Warhol supposedly remarked that everyone wants to be famous, to which Finkelstein replied, “Yeah, for about fifteen minutes, Andy.” [*2] The phenomenon is often used in reference to figures in the entertainment industry or other areas of popular culture, such as reality television and YouTube.

An older version of the same concept in English is the expression “nine days’ wonder,” which dates at least as far back as the Elizabethan era.

6.1.1 Interpretation

German art historian Benjamin H. D. Buchloh suggests that the core tenet of Warhol’s aesthetic, being “the systematic invalidation of the hierarchies of representational functions and techniques” of art, corresponds directly to the belief that the “hierarchy of subjects worthy to be represented will someday be abolished,” hence anybody, and therefore “everybody,” can be famous once that hierarchy dissipates, “in the future,” and by logical extension of that, “in the future, everybody will be famous,” and not merely those individuals worthy of fame.” [*3]

On the other hand, wide proliferation of the adapted idiom “my fifteen minutes” [*4] [*5] [*6] [*7] and its entrance into common parlance have led to a slightly different application, having to do with both the ephemerality of fame in the information age and, more recently, the democratization of media outlets brought about by the advent of the internet. [*8] In this formulation, Warhol’s quote has been taken to mean: “At the present, because there are so many channels by which an individual might attain fame, albeit not enduring fame, virtually anyone can become famous for a brief period of time.”

There is a third and even more remote interpretation of the term, as used by an individual who has been legitimately famous or skirted celebrity for a brief period of time, that period of time being his or her “fifteen minutes.” [*9]

John Langer suggests that 15 minutes of fame is an enduring concept because it permits everyday activities to become “great effects.” [*10] Tabloid journalism and the paparazzi have accelerated this trend, turning what may have before been isolated coverage into continuing media coverage even after the initial reason for media interest has passed.” [*10]

6.1.2 Derivative phrases

In the song “I Can’t Read”, released by David Bowie’s Tin Machine in their 1989 debut album and re-released by Bowie in 1997 for the soundtrack of the movie The Ice Storm, the phrase is used in direct reference to Andy Warhol: “Andy, where’s my 15 minutes?” The age of reality television has seen the comment wryly updated as: “In the future, everyone will be obscure for 15 minutes.” [*11] The British artist Banksy has made a sculpture of a TV that has, written on its screen, “In the future, everyone will be anonymous for 15 minutes.” [*12] which was later used in the lyrics of Robbie Williams’ song “The Actor” from his 2006 album Rudebox.

A more recent adaptation of Warhol’s quip, possibly prompted by the rise of online social networking, blogging, and internet celebrity, is the claim that “In the future, everyone will be famous to fifteen people” or, in some renditions, “On the Web, everyone will be famous to fifteen people”. [*13] This quote, though attributed to David Weinberger, was said [*13] to have originated with the Scottish artist Momus.” [*14]

The Marilyn Manson song “I Don’t Like the Drugs (But the Drugs Like Me)”, released on his 1998 album Mechanical Animals, alludes to the term in the line “We’re rehabbed and we’re ready for our fifteen minutes of shame”, as part of the song’s theme of unrepentant escapism through drugs.
The group Queensrÿche uses the words “I guess Warhol wasn’t wrong / Fame fifteen Minutes Long” in their 1988 anti-hero telltale album Operation: Mindcrime song as a way of showing the deterioration of society to reach its aim.

6.1.3 See also
- Andy Warhol’s Fifteen Minutes (a television show hosted by Warhol)
- Big in Japan (phrase)
- Fad
- Famous for being famous
- Internet meme
- It girl
- One-hit wonder
- Reality show
- World famous in New Zealand

6.1.4 Notes
[1] Guinn and Perry, p. 4

6.1.5 References

6.1.6 External links
- The dictionary definition of nine day wonder at Wiktionary
- Quotations related to Andy Warhol at Wikiquote

6.2 Internet celebrity
An Internet celebrity, blogebrity,"[1] cyberstar,"[2] online celebrity,"[2] or Internet personality is someone who has become famous by means of the Internet. The Internet allows people to reach a very large audience across the world and so become famous within one or more Internet communities."[3]"

6.2.1 Rising to fame
Millions of people write online journals or weblogs. In many cases these contributions do not make them notable on a large scale, or only for people with the same specialist interest. But if the author has or develops a distinctive personality, they may rise to fame derived from this as much as from the content of their blog."[2]"
In some cases, people might rise to fame through a single event or video that goes viral. The Internet allows videos, news articles, and jokes to spread very quickly. Depending on the reach of the spread, the content may become considered an "Internet meme," and thus, any of the people associated may gain exposure. For example, Zach
Anner, an Austin, Texas-based comedian gained worldwide attention after submitting a video to Oprah Winfrey’s “Search for the Next TV Star” competition. There is substantial searching online for people. [4]

Internet celebrities have also become a popular phenomenon in China (PRC) with the likes of Sister Furong (Fu Rong Jiejie), who received worldwide notoriety and fame for her unashamed efforts at self-promotion via Internet postings.” [5]

The concept of web celebrity ties into Andy Warhol’s quip about 15 minutes of fame. A more recent adaptation of Warhol’s quip, possibly prompted by the rise of online social networking, blogging, and similar online phenomena, is the claim that “In the future, everyone will be famous to fifteen people” or, in some renditions, “On the Web, everyone will be famous to fifteen people”.[6] This quote, though attributed to David Weinberger, was said[6] to have originated with the Scottish artist Momus.” [7]

Occasionally an Internet celebrity has naively invited fans to meet him/her at a certain place and time, without proper organization, attracting crowds of fans, causing disorderly and even unsafe situations. Alternatively it can be organized in a venue, with security personnel. Magcon is an example of even a group of internet celebrities meeting fans in the latter way.

### 6.2.2 Examples

See also: List of YouTube personalities

- Kyle Craven, an American Internet celebrity known for his ubiquitous photo that became a popular image macro in 2012.”[8]

- Chris Crocker, an American Internet celebrity, occasional blogger, and occasional recording artist. Crocker gained international fame in September 2007 from his viral video “Leave Britney Alone” , in which he tearfully defends pop singer Britney Spears’s comeback performance at the MTV Video Music Awards; his video had over four million views in two days.”[9][10]

- Perez Hilton, a blogger, whose blog, Perezhilton.com, is known for its controversial posts covering gossip items about musicians, actors and celebrities.

- Eduard Khil, a Russian singer whose song, “I am Very Glad to be Returning Home” , or Trololo, became an Internet meme in 2010.

- Jon Lajoie, a comedian, actor, rapper, singer and musician who became an Internet celebrity thanks to his many humorous music videos.

- Violet Benson, a comedian, most known for her female driven funny Instagram account and large social media following.

- Germanno Mosconi, an Italian sport journalist who became famous after the leak, in 2004, of videos showing his off-air bursts of anger and blasphemies.

- Casey Neistat, an American filmmaker who currently has over 6 million subscribers, famous for his inspirational YouTube videos.

- Josh Ostrovsky, an American comedian known for his stunt viral videos and large social media following.

- Jake Boys, a British Youtuber known for his “Lad-dish style videos” and prank videos.

- Grumpy Cat, a female cat known for her grumpy expression.

- Colonel Meow, a male cat known as an “adorable fearsome dictator” and for his love of Scotch.

- Zubin Damania, a Stanford hospitalist who used an alter ego, “ZDoggMD,” to produce YouTube parody rap videos that comment on the state of the healthcare system, different diseases, treatments, preventative measures, and stigmas around healthcare.”[11]

- Vahid Online, an Iranian netizen who rose to fame following his coverage of 2009 Iranian presidential election protests.”[12]

- Felix Arvid Ulf Kjellberg, the Swedish YouTuber, now known as “PewDiePie”, started making “Let’s Play” videos in 2010, and later became the most subscribed channel on YouTube in December 2013, garnering over 52 million subscribers as of January 2017.”[13]

- Jenna Marbles (Moureys), an American comedian and internet personality on YouTube. Began making videos in 2010 and has since become the 2nd most subscribed to female YouTuber on the internet.”[14]

- Crash & Burn aka Shawn Kavanaugh & John Farrell, known for their vlogs, movies and deadpan comedic timing in all of their videos.

- Rebecca Black, known for singing “Friday” in a 2011 music video that went viral, and is currently the 4th most disliked video on YouTube.

- DanTDM, known for his Minecraft videos. He has amassed over 13 million subscribers on YouTube.

- The Unipiper, known for his viral videos of himself dressed as Darth Vader while riding a unicycle and playing the bagpipes. His videos have received over 90 million views.
• Naomi Wu, Cantonese feminist and open source advocate. [15]

6.2.3 See also

• List of Internet phenomena
• Usenet celebrity

6.2.4 References

● Kevin Smokler (1 October 2006). Citizen Media: The High School Years". Fast Company.
● "Perez Hilton says he's an 'outsider". USA Today. 6 November 2006;
● "Pleasing with persona". National Post. 8 March 2010.

6.2.5 Further reading

• "Internet Fame Is Cruel Mistress for a Dancer of the Numa Numa” at The New York Times
• "The Flip Side of Internet Fame" at Newsweek
• "Rise of an Internet Star - Parlaying YouTube Fame Into Big Business” at ReadWriteWeb
• "Internet Famous: Julia Allison and the Secrets of Self-Promotion” at Wired
• "The new fame: Internet celebrity” at CNN
• “The Microfame Game” at New York
6.3 Usenet personality

A Usenet personality was a particular kind of Internet celebrity, being an individual who gained a certain level of notoriety from posting on Usenet, a global network of computer users with a vast array of topics for discussion. Since its inception, Usenet newsgroups have attracted a wide variety of people posting all manner of fact, fiction, theories, opinions, and beliefs. Some Usenet posters achieved a certain amount of fame (or infamy) and celebrity within Usenet circles because of their unusual, non-mainstream ideas, or because their writings and responses are considered especially humorous or bizarre.

6.3.1 Eccentric believers

These individuals (or user-IDs, or pseudonyms) are noted for their eccentric beliefs and theories.

- Alexander Abian (1923–1999) – American mathematician who taught for many years at Iowa State University who became an Internet legend for his incessant and frequently bizarre posts to various Usenet newsgroups. In particular, he gained international notoriety for his claims that blowing up the Moon would solve virtually every problem of human existence, and that mass and time are equivalent. (With regard to the second claim, it was suggested on the “sci.astro.amateur” newsgroup that his demise be observed with a gram of silence.) [1]

One of Dr. Abian’s most endearing hypotheses was the challenge to the Big Bang Theory with the Big Suck Theory. [2]

- Robert E. McElwaine (1948?–2008) – self-described Bachelor of Science in physics who wrote a series of ranting fringe science essays characteristically peppered with capitalized words for emphasis. Each essay covered topics such as alien influence on violence, free energy, coming UFO landings, and cancer cures, often carrying a message that there existed a conspiracy to suppress the information. The essays often concluded with the signature “UNALTERED REPRODUCTION and DISSEMINATION of this IMPORTANT Information is ENCOURAGED, ESPECIALLY to COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS.” McElwaine’s writings stopped appearing on Usenet after 1998, although he continued writing essays up to 2003. He died at age 59 in his home in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, on 12 February 2008. [3]

- Archimedes Plutonium (born Ludwig Poehlmann in 1950, raised as Ludwig Hansen, also known as Ludwig van Ludvig and Ludwig Plutonium) – noted for his many posts about his own theories of physics, mathematics, and stock market investing, and in particular his “Plutonium Atom Totality” theory, which posits that the universe is a giant plutonium atom and that galaxies are “dots” in the electron dot cloud of this atom. [4] [5]

- Jack Sarfatti – American author of a number of popular works on quantum physics and consciousness, known for his iconoclastic ideas concerning the schism between science and the humanities, as well as space migration, intelligence increase, life extension, UFOs, extraterrestrials, time travel, and psychokinesis.

6.3.2 Criminal and eccentric personalities

These individuals (or user-IDs, or pseudonyms) are noted for their criminal, eccentric, paranoid, or threatening behavior, or newsgroup trolling activities.

- Scott Abraham – skiing enthusiast banned by court order in 1999 from posting on the Usenet discussion group “rec.skiing.alpine”, after engaging in a flame war with other online posters. The heated exchanges lasted for months, eventually escalating into death threats, until a police detective from Seattle posted a request for all involved to calm down. All involved did except Abraham, which ultimately led to a court order being filed against him. The Electronic Frontier Foundation and other civil liberties groups commented that this violated free speech, but did not deny that Abraham’s aggressive behavior exceeded the boundaries of normal newsgroup civility. [6]

- Serdar Argic – alias used in one of the first automated newsgroup spam incidents on Usenet, with the objective of denying the Armenian Genocide, it was an automated bot that made thousands of posts to several newsgroups (especially “soc.history” , “soc.culture.turkish” , and “misc.headlines” ) in 1994. [7] The deluge of posts suddenly disappeared in April, 1994, after Stefan Chakerian created a specific newsgroup (“alt.cancel.bots”) to carry only cancel messages specifically for any post from any machine downstream from the UUNET feed which carried Serdar Argic’s messages.

- David D’Amato – former assistant principal and director of guidance at West Hempstead High School, [8] he actively spammed and trolled a variety of newsgroups (particularly “alt.gothic” and “rec.music.phish”) from roughly 1996 to 1999, initiated e-mail bombings against those he considered “opponents,” and solicited for video recordings of young adult males being bound and tickled, all while using the pseudonym/alter ego Terri DiSisto, who was supposedly a female college student. D’Amato was found guilty of e-mail bombings which caused
service outages at a number of colleges and universities, was fined $5,000 (USD), and spent six months in federal prison after being convicted in 2001.[9] He is a subject of the 2016 documentary *Tickled*. He died in March 2017.[11]

- **Valery Fabrikan** – former associate professor of mechanical engineering at Concordia University, he shot and killed four colleagues in the school massacre referred to as the Concordia University massacre. He is currently serving a prison sentence in Canada. Fabrikan has posted in several newsgroups, particularly "can.general" and "can.politics", claiming that he is the innocent victim of a conspiracy against him. These posts can be found at an archive of his home page.[12]

- **Hicprime** – called “a leading Usenet terrorist,” this user wrote and distributed software applications that allow users to modify or cancel newsgroups posts, and to generate large volumes of e-mail spam. These have been classified as denial of service (DoS) and spamming programs. The pseudonym is derived from a neologism appearing in the science fiction novel *Stand on Zanzibar* by John Brunner. Hicprime has never been positively identified and thus it is unknown if it is the work of a single person or a group.

- **MI5Victim (Mike Corley, a.k.a. Boleslaw Tadeusz Szocik)** – paranoid user who goes through periods of binge posting, claiming that British intelligence has bugged his home and is sending people to follow him around and harass him.[13] These allegations are often cross-posted to newsgroups where his messages would be considered off-topic. This has led to claims that he suffers from paranoia. Since 1995 he has posted transcripts and snippets of conversations that he has recorded, citing it as evidence, sometimes years after the actual event. He has also claimed in his posts that television personalities are often talking about him in code and are part of the MI5 conspiracy.[14] After applying the *cui bono* test, many people have found it difficult to understand why Corley should have been targeted by MI5 (given that he has no connections/affiliations which would make him of interest), and cannot see what possible benefit the security services could derive from such harassment, given that they have always had more pressing concerns, e.g. monitoring PIRA in the 1990s and later the threat posed by al-Qaeda. Corley will often cross-post “examples” of MI-5 victimizing him 20 or 30 posts at a time. He has been banned from posting through Google for his abuse of Usenet,[16] and has been similarly bounced from most ISPs in England,[17] an assertion which Corley rebutted in August 2012.[18] In the past, his posts were relatively easy to filter out, due to his similar subject lines and email address. However, at the start of 2008, he began a series of posts that avoided filters through sporgery and by slightly varying his subject line of "MI-5 Persecution", showing an ability to adapt. In 2007, the opera *The Corley Conspiracy* by Tim Benjamin and Sean Starke premiered at the Southbank Centre in London. Corley has his own web site[19] on which he provides so-called evidence of the conspiracies against him. Corley has written a book about his “experiences” with MI5.[20]

### 6.3.3 Unusual personalities

These are individuals (or user-IDs) that are unusual for reasons other than being eccentric.

- **BIFF (or BIFF)** – well-known pseudonym and prototypical newbie on Usenet. Posts usually consisted of uppercase text containing many bangs (!), typos, “cute” misspellings, the use (and often misuse) of fragments of chat abbreviations, a long signature block, sometimes a doubled signature, and exaggerated naïveté. The BIFF pseudonym was originally created by Joe Talmadge, also the author of the infamous and much-copied *Flamer's Bible*. Joe posted twice as BIFF and after that Richard Sexton, who posted as BIFF A few dozen times over the next year or two.[21]

- **Joel K. "Jay"Furr** – Usenet poster in the early 1990s immortalized in the newsgroups “alt.fan.joel-furr”, “alt.bonehead.joel-furr”, and “alt.joel-furr.die.die.die”. He was a pretender to the throne of James “Kibo” Parry, and the bitter enemy of Serdar Argic. Furr was also notable on Usenet for his self-appointed leadership over the “alt” hierarchy during the commercial expansion of the Internet (ca. 1993–1995), during which he attempted to bring some order and rationale to rampant newsgroup creation, but with minimal success. According to Brad Templeton, Furr is one of the earliest people to refer to unsolicited electronic messages as “spam”.

- **Gharlane of Eddore** (1947–2001) – pseudonym of David G. Potter, a science fiction writer and critic in Sacramento, California, who was widely known for acerbic, scathingly humorous and knowledgeable postings to Usenet science fiction newsgroups. He guarded his true identity carefully for many years before his death in 2001. His chief surviving non-fictional work is the Lensman FAQ and voluminous Usenet postings.

- **The Internet Oracle** (a.k.a. The Usenet Oracle) – collective effort at humor in a question-and-answer format, wherein a user sends a question to the Oracle via e-mail or the Internet Oracle website, which is then randomly sent to another user who has asked
6.3. USENET PERSONALITY

These people are known for their exceptional and widely read contributions within their respective Usenet communities.

- **Kibo** – pseudonym of James Parry, who provided the basis for the formation of an entire newsgroup, "alt.religion.kibology". Kibo was known for his high-volume but thoughtful posts, but achieved Usenet celebrity circa 1991 by writing a small script to grep his entire Usenet feed for instances of his name, and then answering personally whenever and wherever he was mentioned, giving the illusion that he was personally reading the entire feed.

- **Mark V Shaney** – pseudonym of an automated program that used Markov chain logic to recombine the texts of posts into nearly coherent posts.

- **Publius** – anonymous poster who, from 1994 to 1995, used the Penet remailer service to deliver cryptic messages to "alt.music.pink-floyd". These posts revealed that an enigma had been hidden within Pink Floyd's *The Division Bell*, and Publius called upon fans to find the solution. Although the remailer service was shut down in 1995 and Publius has not been heard from since, the puzzle and the prize for solving it were acknowledged by Floyd's drummer, Nick Mason, at a book signing in 2005.[22] The Publius Enigma has never been officially solved.

6.3.4 Other personalities

These people are known for their exceptional and widely read contributions within their respective Usenet communities.

- **John C. Baez** – mathematical physicist at the University of California, Riverside, known to science fans as the author of *This Week's Finds in Mathematical Physics*,[23] an irregular column on the web featuring mathematical exposition and criticism, which he started in 1993 for the Usenet community and which now has a worldwide following. Baez is also known on the World Wide Web as the author of the crackpot index, a humorous numerical method for rating scientific claims and the individuals that make them.

- **Torkel Franzén** (1950–2006) – Swedish academic who worked at Luleå University of Technology, Sweden, in the fields of mathematical logic and computer science. He was known for his work on Gödel’s incompleteness theorems and for his contributions to Usenet.

- **Tilman Hausherr** – German poster[24] who is well-known among critics of Scientology for his frequent Usenet posts and for maintaining a website critical of Scientology. He is also credited with coining the term “sporgery”.

- **James Nicoll** – science-fiction reviewer and retired game-store owner. As a Usenet personality, Nicoll is known for writing a widely quoted epigram on the English language, as well as for his contributions of concepts like the Nicoll-Dyson Laser and the "brain eater" to Usenet groups like "rec.arts.sf.written" and "rec.arts.sf.fandom"; and for his accounts of suffering a high number of accidents (known collectively as "Nicoll Events") recounted in these groups.

- **Brad Templeton** – software architect, civil rights advocate and entrepreneur. An early luminary of Usenet, Templeton founded ClariNet Communications Corporation and created the newsgroup rec.humor.funny in 1987 and moderated it from 1987 to 1992.

6.3.5 See also

- Backbone cabal
- Crank
- Godwin’s Law
- List of Internet phenomena

6.3.6 References


CHAPTER 6. INTERNET CELEBRITY

6.4 h3h3Productions

h3h3Productions (often shortened to h3h3 or simply h3) is an Israeli-American comedy YouTube channel produced by husband-and-wife team Ethan and Hila Klein.[2][1] Their content mostly consists of reaction videos and sketch comedy where they lampoon popular internet culture. In 2016, h3h3 was voted YouTube channel of the year in a poll on Reddit. As of July 2017, the group has over four million subscribers and more than 735 million views. In addition to their main channel they run a secondary vlog channel by the name of Ethan and Hila and a third channel called H3 Podcast.

6.4.1 Early life

Ethan Edward Klein (born June 24, 1985) was born in Ventura, California to Gary and Donna Klein into an Ashkenazi Jewish family, and attended Buena High School.[5] Ethan studied English Literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz from 2004 to 2009, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in creative writing. His biological grandfather was film and television producer Leonard Katzman.[6]

Hila Klein (née Hacmon, Hebrew: הילה חכמון; born December 12, 1987) was born and raised in Holon, Israel to a Sephardic Jewish family. Hila served as a soldier in the Israel Defense Forces for two years. During her military service, she met Ethan Klein who was visiting Jerusalem at the time on his Birthright Israel trip. She attended the Shenkar College of Engineering and Design in Israel.[7] The couple married in 2012.

They released their first reaction video of the video poem "Girls Who Read" in November 2013. Many of their early videos were projects for Hila during her time at college. At the time the couple lived together in Israel, in the Florentin neighborhood of Tel Aviv.[1] In April 2015, the Kleins moved to the United States. They first lived in Los Angeles,[8][9] but moved to New York City in September 2015.[10] They moved back to Los Angeles in August 2016.[11]

6.4.2 YouTube career

The main form of content on the channel is the "h3h3 reaction video". More involved than traditional reaction videos, these consist of clips of a source video intermixed with commentary and absurd sketches, a style which has been described as a cross between the works of comedy duo Tim & Eric and the television series Mystery Science Theater 3000.[1]

The channel has gained a reputation for criticizing certain Internet trends and personalities[12] as well as the policies of YouTube itself.[13][14][15] Often the pair will comment on or participate in online controversies, for instance with SoFloAntonio.[13]
On July 15, by winning a Hot 97 contest, Ethan met DJ Khaled and showed him a series of videos, including "The DJ Khaled Documentary." [16] The channel released a short documentary on Counter-Strike: Global Offensive gambling, which involves trading skins for real-world currency. The channel criticized several YouTubers for attempting to attract young viewers to their gambling websites. [17]

The channel joined the Freedom! network after leaving Collective Digital Studio in August 2015, and since 2016 is a part of the Omnia Media network.

On April 7, 2017, Ethan and Hila started a new YouTube channel by the name of H3 Podcast. [18] Since May 19, 2017, the channel is a VOD Channel for their Podcast hosted at their Twitch.tv account, 'h3h3productions'. Erik Hoffstad of the YouTube channel Internet Comment Etiquette has been a recurring guest and hosts his own segment called Erik’s Conspiracy Closet, where he presents conspiracy theories and the members of the podcast discuss the conspiracy. A member of the film crew named Dan also hosts a segment where he and the other members of the podcast discuss current events. They have featured guests such as Justin Rolland, Post Malone, Ian Hecox, Markiplier, [19] Keemstar, [20] Michael Stevens, [21] PewDiePie, [22] Filthy Frank, Steve-O, Joey Salads, iDubbbzTV, SoFlo Antonio, Jack Douglass, Erik Hoffstad, Rudy Pantoja, Jesse Wellens and Martin Shkreli.

### 6.4.3 Controversies

#### Hosseinzadeh v. Klein

Matthew “Matt” Hosseinzadeh (known on YouTube as MattHossZone and nicknamed Bold Guy), the subject of a reaction video on Ethan and Hila’s second channel, filed a civil action against them in late April 2016, alleging copyright infringement. Hosseinzadeh claims that he initially contacted the Kleins “to politely ask them to remove my content from their video,” but that they refused. Hosseinzadeh’s lawyer, Tim Bukher, claims that the video used more than 70% of his work “while contributing nothing substantive to it.” [23] [24]

After a video on this was released by h3h3Productions the following month, fellow YouTube personality Philip DeFranco started a fundraiser on GoFundMe to help raise money for their legal fees, citing the need to protect fair use on YouTube. [25] The fundraiser raised almost $170,000, receiving large donations from notable individuals including the Fine Brothers, Markus “Notch” Persson, PewDiePie, Markiplier, Jacksepticeye, Justin Rolland, and Garry Newman. The Kleins were, at one point, represented by Ryan Morrison, commonly known as the “Video Game Attorney,” and Michael Lee of Morrison & Lee LLP in the lawsuit. [26]

On May 26, 2016, Ethan and Hila announced that the funds raised will go into an escrow account called the “Fair Use Protection Account” (FUPA), overseen by Morrison & Lee LLP to be used to help people defend fair use. [27] On June 27, 2016, Lee announced on Twitter that he had filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit. [28] Court filings from November 2016 state that Ethan and Hila Klein have new attorneys and are no longer represented by Morrison & Lee LLP. [29] Later confirmed by both Ethan and Hila, they stated that the switch was due to, among other reasons, “things not working out.” They also discussed that the fees charged by the new firm were US$54,146.57 for one month of work. [30] As of March 17, 2017, the trial set for April 17, 2017 has been adjourned in anticipation of ruling on summary judgment motions. [31]

#### Allegations against The Wall Street Journal

h3h3Productions, alongside several prominent channels, supported YouTube personality PewDiePie amid a 2017 controversy over Nazi jokes in one of his videos from January. [32] On February 14, The Wall Street Journal ran a story about PewDiePie’s previous references to Hitler, which brought nine other videos into the debate and elicited frequent discussions on whether they were taken out of context. [33] When YouTube subsequently released advertiser-friendly tools to help companies avoid offensive videos, Ethan Klein claimed that the tools were overly broad and negatively affected unrelated content, including his own channel. [34]

One of the authors of the Wall Street Journal piece, Jack Nicas, wrote another one on March 24, claiming that YouTube did not do a good enough job of keeping major advertisements away from racist content. Ethan Klein accused the report of being written selectively to maximize outrage. Specifically, the article showed a Coca-Cola ad playing on a video of the country song “Alabama Nigger” by American white supremacist Johnny Rebel. Upon seeing that the video was not contributing to the uploader’s income, Klein alleged that Nicas had used an altered screenshot and asserted this in a widely shared video. Hours later, he was informed that the video was indeed monetized, but through a copyright claim rather than an explicit choice of the user. Klein withdrew his accusation in response and The Wall Street Journal released a statement that it stood by the authenticity of the screenshots. [35]

### 6.4.4 References


19 H3 Podcast (2017-05-29), H3 Podcast #8 – Markiplier & Ian Hecox (Smoosh), retrieved 2017-06-13

20 H3 Podcast (2017-04-10), H3 Podcast #5 – Keemstar, retrieved 2017-06-13

21 H3 Podcast (2017-04-07), H3 Podcast #3 – Viscous (Michael Stevens), retrieved 2017-06-13

22 H3 Podcast (2017-04-07), H3 Podcast #2 – PewDiePie (Felix Kjellberg), retrieved 2017-06-13


31 Leonard French (2017-03-17), h3h3 Poker: the Judge shows Her Hand, retrieved 2017-05-13


6.4.5 External links

- Official website

6.5 PewDiePie

Born in Gothenburg, Sweden, PewDiePie originally pursued a degree in industrial economics and technology management at Chalmers University of Technology. In 2010, during his time at the university, he registered a YouTube account under the name PewDiePie. The following year, he dropped out of Chalmers after growing bored with his degree field, much to the dismay of his parents. After failing to earn an apprenticeship with an advertising agency in Scandinavia, he then decided to focus on creating content for his YouTube channel. In order to fund his videos, PewDiePie began selling prints of his Photoshop art projects and working at a hot dog stand. PewDiePie soon gathered a rapidly increasing online following, and in July 2012, his channel surpassed one million subscribers.

Early on, PewDiePie was signed under the multi-channel network Machinima. After dissatisfaction with the network, he signed with Maker Studios, having his channel under Maker's sub-networks Polaris, and later, Revelmode. Throughout his time on YouTube, PewDiePie has produced content that has been praised as genuine and unfiltered, but also been received as abrasive, and in some cases, met with controversy. As a result of an early 2017 controversy regarding allegations of anti-Semitism in several of PewDiePie's videos, the Disney-operated Maker Studios ended their partnership with him, dropping him from their network. While he criticised the coverage of the situation and defended his content as jokes that were taken out of context, he conceded its offensiveness.

Since 15 August 2013, PewDiePie has been the most subscribed user on YouTube, being surpassed for a total of 46 days in late 2013 by YouTube Spotlight channel. Holding the position since 22 December 2013, the channel has over 56 million subscribers as of August 2017. [8] From 29 December 2014 to 14 February 2017, PewDiePie's channel held the distinction of being the most viewed of all time, and as of June 2017, the channel has received over 15 billion video views. [8]

PewDiePie refers to his fanbase as the "Bro Army", and individual fans as "bros". Through his Bro Army fanbase, PewDiePie has raised money for charities. Due to his popularity, PewDiePie's coverage of indie games has created an Oprah effect, boosting sales for titles he plays. [9] In 2016, Time named him one of "The World's 100 Most Influential People". [10] PewDiePie lives in Brighton with his girlfriend, Italian YouTube personality Marzia Bisognin.

6.5.1 Early life and education

PewDiePie was born and raised in Gothenburg, Sweden. [11] He was born to Lotta Kristine Johanna (born 7 May 1958) and Ulf Christian Kjellberg (born 8 January 1957), and grew up with his sister Fanny. [12] His mother, a former KappAhl CIO, was named the 2010 CIO of the Year in Sweden. [12] His father is also a Chief Executive of another company. [13]

During his early schooling life, he was interested in art, and has noted that he would draw popular video game characters such as Mario and Sonic the Hedgehog. [14] During high school, he would skip classes to play video games at an Internet cafe with friends; on this topic, PewDiePie has commented, "Sweden has a great culture around gaming." [14] In 2008, he graduated from Göteborgs Högre Samskola. [15] He then went on to pursue a degree in industrial economics and technology management at Chalmers University of Technology, but left the university in 2011. [16] On his decision, PewDiePie has stated, "Thinking about it now, it was utterly absurd. To get into Chalmers for industrial economics you need straight A's, but somehow I was happier selling hot dogs and making my own gaming-videos." [13] While his reason for leaving Chalmers has often been reported as a want to focus on his YouTube career, [17] in 2017, PewDiePie clarified, "Why does everyone get this story wrong? [...] I dropped out of university because I didn't like it. To drop out of university to pursue YouTube, that'd just be fucking stupid." [18] He added that "industrial management and economics [was] boring as hell [...] and I couldn't relate to fucking anyone." [18] PewDiePie has also shared that he "loved Photoshop", wanting to work on photo manipulation art using Adobe Photoshop rather than be in school. [18] Relating to this passion, he entered Photoshop contests and almost earned an apprenticeship at "one of the best advertising agencies in Scandinavia." [18] He was also interested in creating content on YouTube, and after not earning the apprenticeship, he sold limited edition prints of his Photoshopped images in order to purchase a computer to work on YouTube videos. [18]

6.5.2 Internet career
YouTube channel format

The main focus of PewDiePie's videos is his commentary and reactions to various games as he plays through them.[19][20] Due to this, his videos fall under the Let's Play umbrella.[21] Unlike conventional walkthroughs, his Let's Play videos are devoted to "sharing gaming moments on YouTube with my bros".[22] Variety details that "PewDiePie acts like he's spending time with a friend. He begins each video introducing himself in a high-pitched, goofy voice, drawing out the vowels of his YouTube moniker, then delves into the videos."[21]

In his early years as a YouTube personality, PewDiePie was known for playing horror and action video games,[19][23][24] most notably Amnesia: The Dark Descent and its related mods.[25] PewDiePie also began posting weekly vlogs starting from 2 September 2011.[26] These vlogs are uploaded under the title of Fridays with PewDiePie.[14] He typically performs a "Brofist" at the end of each of his videos.[27] As his channel grew, he began to branch out in terms of his video content, uploading live-action and animated comedy shorts.[14] In 2014, he began to more actively play games that interested him, regardless if they were of the horror genre or not.[28] In addition, he is also known to support video games from indie developers.[19]

PewDiePie has also been noted for his frequent upload output, something he scaled down in 2014.[29] By early 2017, he had uploaded almost 3,500 videos to his channel, around 400 of which have been made private.[30] In March 2017, PewDiePie noted that his channel was running on a daily output, on which he commented, "[there's] a lot of challenges in doing daily content, it's stupid. I really shouldn't be doing it, I really should just fucking go back and upload twice a week or some shit, and then take a step back, but I still really, really love the daily challenge—the daily grind—of just being like, 'hey, I'm gonna make a video today, no matter what.' And sometimes it really works, and sometimes it doesn't."[31]

During the early portion of his YouTube career, PewDiePie refused to hire any editor or outside assistance to help with his video output, stating, "I want YouTube to be YouTube."[29] In October 2014, however, while speaking to Rhett and Link on their Ear Biscuits podcast, PewDiePie expressed that he would seek an editor in 2015.[32] In February 2017, PewDiePie stated in his My Response video, "I'm just a guy. It's literally just me. There's not a producer out there [...] there's no writer, there's no camera guy."[33]

Style of content

The nature of PewDiePie's video content has been described by various outlets as goofy, energetic, obnoxious and filled with profanity.[34][35][36] However, many of the same outlets concede that PewDiePie's content is genuine and un-filtered.[36][37] Sarah Begley of Time said his clips contained "charismatic narration".[38] Chris Reed of The Wall St. Cheat Sheet said it contained "off-the-cuff running commentary that's characterised by goofy jokes, profanity and loud outbursts."[37] Another reporter noted PewDiePie's "chosen mode of sharing his critique happens to be ribald entertainment, an unmediated stream of blurted jokes, startled yelps, goofy voices, politically incorrect comments and pretty much non-stop profanity."[36] Reed adds that these aspects of PewDiePie's videos are what critics find most abrasive, but what fans love the most.[37] PewDiePie resorts occasionally to gameplay, resulting in silent or emotional commentary;[36][37] his playthrough of The Last of Us, it was noted, left the usually vocal gamer speechless at the ending.[37][39]

In 2016, he examined his older videos and while noting the stylistic changes he had undergone, he expressed specific regret for his casual use of words like gay or retarded in a derogatory sense.[40] In December 2016, Kotaku's Patricia Hernandez wrote about his stylistic changes, explaining that "over the last year, the PewDiePie channel has also had an underlying friction, as Kjellberg slowly distances himself from many of the things that made him famous. He's doing fewer Let's Plays of horror games like Amnesia," and adding, "the PewDiePie of 2016 can still be immature, sure, but [...] a defining aspect of recent PewDiePie videos is existential angst, as he describes the bleak reality of making content for a machine he cannot fully control or understand."[41] On the technical aspect of his videos, PewDiePie spoke about how his early videos would feature raw footage, although he later began to dedicate time to edit his videos.[42]

History

Early years (2010–2012) PewDiePie originally registered a YouTube account under the name "Pewdie";[1] he explains that "pew" represents the sound of lasers and "die" means death.[43] After forgetting the password to this account, he then registered the "PewDiePie" YouTube channel on 29 April 2010.[27] After he dropped out of Chalmers, his parents refused to support him,[27] and as a result he funded his early videos by selling prints of his Photoshop art, as well as working at a hot dog stand.[18][44] On having to work at the stand, PewDiePie stated, "the fact that I could make videos was so much more important to me than [that] I had to spend a few hours a day doing a job that wasn't that prestigious."[44] Five years later, PewDiePie recalled, "I knew people were big at other types of videos, but there was no one big in gaming, and I didn't know you could make money out of it. It was never like a career that I could just quit college to pursue. It was just something I loved to do. And here we are five years later and it's exploded."[44] By December 2011, PewDiePie's channel had around 60,000 subscribers.[27] Around the time his
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channel earned 700,000 subscribers. PewDiePie spoke at Nonick Conference 2012. On 11 July 2012, the channel reached 1 million subscribers, and it reached 2 million subscribers in September. In October, OpenSlate ranked the PewDiePie channel as the #1 YouTube channel. [47] That December, PewDiePie signed with Maker Studios. [27]

Early in his YouTube career, PewDiePie used rape jokes in his videos. [34] Criticism of these jokes stirred controversy, and in October 2012, he addressed the issue through a Tumblr post, writing, “I just wanted to make clear that I’m no longer making rape jokes, as I mentioned before I’m not looking to hurt anyone and I apologise if it ever did.” [13] [48] The Globe and Mail stated "unlike many young gamers, he listened when fans and critics alike pointed out their harmful nature, and resolved to stop making rape jokes." [34]

Becoming the most subscribed user (2013) On 18 February 2013, the PewDiePie channel reached 5 million subscribers, [27] and in April, PewDiePie earned coverage on The New York Times after surpassing 6 million subscribers. [20] In May, at the inaugural Starcount Social Stars Awards in Singapore PewDiePie won the award for Swedish Social Star. [49] Competing against Jenna Marbles, Smosh and Toby Turner, [50] PewDiePie also won the award for Most Popular Social Show. [51] In July 2013, he overtook Jenna Marbles to become the second most subscribed YouTube user, [52] and reached 10 million subscribers. [27]

PewDiePie’s subscriber count surpassed that of the leading channel, Smosh, on 15 August 2013. [53] On becoming the most subscribed YouTube user, PewDiePie commented, “When I started my YouTube channel in 2010, I never imagined that one day it would be the most subscribed channel in the one that I would be a part of such a great community.” [54] After becoming the most subscribed user, Ben Donovan of Maker Studios stated that PewDiePie “is a great example of how a YouTube content creator can amass a worldwide following due to passion and creativity, and his large subscriber base showcases the loyalty and strong connection he has to his ‘bros.’” [55] On 1 November, PewDiePie became the first channel to reach 15 million subscribers; [56] the following day, the channel was surpassed by YouTube’s Spotlight account at the top of the site’s subscriber rankings. [57] In the same month, PewDiePie proclaimed his dislike of YouTube’s new comment system. [58] In December, PewDiePie overtook the YouTube Spotlight channel to once again become the most subscribed user on YouTube. [59] [60]

Throughout 2012 and 2013, PewDiePie’s channel was one of the fastest growing on YouTube, in terms of subscribers gained. [61] In 2013, the PewDiePie channel went from 3.5 million to just under 19 million subscribers, [62] and by the end of 2013, it was gaining a new subscriber every 1.037 seconds.” [63] Billboard reported that the PewDiePie channel gained more subscribers than any other channel in 2013. [64] Furthermore, in the second half of 2013, the PewDiePie channel earned just under 1.3 billion video views. [65]

Continued growth (2014–2015) In March 2014, PewDiePie updated his video production output, announcing he would be scaling down the frequency of uploads. [29] In August 2014, Maker Studios released an official PewDiePie app for the iPhone, allowing audiences to view his videos, create custom favourite video feeds and share videos with others. [66] Later in the month, PewDiePie uploaded a video, announcing he would permanently disable comments on his YouTube videos. [67] On his decision, PewDiePie stated “I go to the comments and it’s mainly spam, it’s people self-advertising, it’s people trying to provoke... just all this stuff that to me, it doesn’t mean anything. I don’t care about it, I don’t want to see it.” [68] After disabling comments, PewDiePie continued interacting with his audience through Twitter and Reddit. [69] In mid-September, PewDiePie uploaded a follow-up video, sticking by his decision, and announcing the launch of broarmy.net, an online forum, in which he will actively connect with his viewers, designed to replace the YouTube comment section. [70]

In September 2014, PewDiePie began streaming videos of his co-hosted series, BroKen, onto MLG.tv. [71] PewDiePie co-hosted the series with Kenneth Morrisson, known as CinnamonToastKen, also an online game commentator. [72] On 13 October, PewDiePie decided to allow comments on his videos once more, albeit only after approval. [73] [74] However, PewDiePie has tweeted, “I have them set as approved so I can redirect people to comment on my website instead.” [75] [76] In a later video, PewDiePie claimed that disabling comments helped him become happier. [77] In 2014 alone, PewDiePie’s account amassed nearly 14 million new subscribers and over 4.1 billion video views: both figures were higher than any other user. [78] [79] According to Social Blade, a website which tracks YouTube channel statistics, on 29 December 2014, the PewDiePie channel surpassed NUMusic’s video view count, at around 7.2 billion views, to become the most viewed channel on the website. [80] [81] During July 2015, PewDiePie’s videos were documented to receive over 300 million views per month. [82] On 6 September, PewDiePie’s YouTube account became the first to eclipse 10 billion video views. [83] Later in the month, PewDiePie teased about having a role in a series, and that he was on location in Los Angeles for the show’s shooting. [84] Although not many details were revealed at the time, in October, it was announced that the series would be titled Scare PewDiePie.” [85]
**YouTube Red and style change (2016–2017)** The *Scare PewDiePie* series was debuted on PewDiePie’s channel in January 2016 through YouTube’s paid subscription service, YouTube Red. [85] In October, he announced that he would be going back to Los Angeles to record another season of *Scare PewDiePie*, and that he would be daily vlogging while he was away. [86]

Throughout 2016, PewDiePie’s video style change became more apparent than the tweaks he implemented in the past (see above for more). As aforementioned, PewDiePie addressed his use of words such as gay as a pejorative, retrospectively expressing, “I still make kinda stupid jokes that I shouldn’t make. But I feel like back then I didn’t understand. I was so immature and I just thought things were funny just because they were offensive [...] I’m not proud of it. I’m really not. But I’m also glad that I’ve grown past it.” [42] While continuing to produce fewer Let’s Play videos about horror games, his style of humour also changed; PewDiePie commented in a December 2016 video, “I think the thing is that I have a lot of younger audience [members], and I think my humour got drier, and they don’t get it.” [41]

On 20 October, PewDiePie jokingly launched a second channel, under the name Jack septicEye2. [87] The name is derived from his friend and fellow YouTube video game commentator, Jacksepticeye. [41] By December, Kotaku reported the Jack septicEye2 channel had garnered 1.4 million subscribers, despite having only one upload available to watch. [41]

Throughout late November and early December 2016, PewDiePie jokingly expressed his desires to delete his YouTube channel at 50 million subscribers. [88] [89] On 2 December, he uploaded a video in which he discussed his frustration with the issue of YouTube accounts experiencing an unexplained loss of subscribers and views. [89] PewDiePie expressed, “I find that a lot of people that work with YouTube, almost anyone, have no idea what it’s like to work as a content creator, as someone who’s built this for years and really cared about it.” [41] On this issue, a Google representative provided a comment to Ars Technica, detailing, “Some creators have expressed concerns around a drop in their subscriber numbers. We’ve done an extensive review and found there have been no decreases in creators subscriber numbers beyond what normally happens when viewers either unsubscribe from a creator’s channel or when YouTube removes spammed subscribers.” [90]

On 8 December, PewDiePie’s channel reached 50 million subscribers, becoming the first YouTube channel to do so. [91] After reaching the milestone, PewDiePie tweeted “[I] will delete tomorrow 5pm gmt,” in reference to his channel, before later uploading a celebratory video featuring fireworks. [91] Ultimately, he did not delete his PewDiePie channel, and instead shut down the joke Jack septicEye2 channel, stating “You know when you make a joke and it just blows up way bigger than you’d imagined?” [90] PewDiePie’s stunt received negative reception from Fortune. The publication’s Mathew Ingram opined, “this is just a temper tantrum by a man-baby who makes millions of dollars playing video games,” adding, “at first glance, the video in which he threatens to delete his channel seems like the whining of a rich, entitled celebrity who has noticed that his videos aren’t getting as many views as they used to, and blames the platform for not supporting him as much as he thinks they should.” [92] On 18 December 2016, he received a Ruby Play Button from YouTube as a reward for hitting 50 million subscribers. [93]

On 10 December, PewDiePie released a video, titled “Can this video hit 1 million likes?” In the video, after watching various YouTubers ask to get a certain amount of likes on their videos, he jokingly begged viewers to help the video reach 1 million likes. [94] The video currently has over 3.2 million likes, which ranks it as the 70th-most-liked video on YouTube, as well as the most liked non-music video on YouTube. On 24 December, he released a follow-up video, titled “Can this video get 1 million dislikes?” [95] The content is almost the same as the one asking for likes, except that in this video, he asks the viewers to dislike the video instead. The video currently has over 2.8 million dislikes, placing it as the 3rd-most-disliked video on YouTube, and the most-disliked video that is neither a music video nor a trailer. On 28 January 2017, he uploaded another similarly-themed video, titled “Can this video get 1 million comments?” [96] Within 2 days of its release, it amassed over 5.3 million comments, becoming the most commented video on YouTube. [97] Also in January, PewDiePie noted that his videos accumulated over 150,000 years of watchtime. [98]

On 14 February 2017, according to Social Blade, his channel’s total video view count was surpassed by Indian record label T-Series at the top of the site’s view rankings. [99] [100]

**Controversial videos, network drop and streaming (2017)** In January 2017, PewDiePie began to receive criticism for his non-gaming videos. In one, he seemingly uses the word nigga, [101] which caused #PewDiepieIsOverParty to trend worldwide on Twitter. [102] A few days later, PewDiePie created further controversy, when he uploaded a video featuring him reviewing the website Fiverr, which allows people to sell a service for $5 USD. In the video, PewDiePie shows his reaction to a duo he had paid to display the message “DEATH TO ALL JEWS” on a sign. [101] [103] as a joke and attempt to highlight the ridiculous things which can be provided as a paid service on the Internet. [104] He immediately apologised within the same video stating, “I am sorry. I didn’t think they would actually do it. I feel partially responsible,” adding “I’m not anti-Semitic, [...] so don’t get the wrong idea. It was a funny meme, and I didn’t think it would work, okay.”
"[101] PewDiePie received criticism from some users in the video’s comment section, as well as from some media outlets."[101] As a result of this video, both PewDiePie and the duo were banned from Fiverr, prompting the latter to upload an apology video stating that they did not understand the meaning of the sign, and that they were sorry to all Jews."[105]

"I’ve made some jokes that people don’t like. And you know what? If people don’t like my jokes, I fully respect that. I fully understand that. I acknowledge that I took things too far, and that’s something I definitely will keep in mind moving forward, but the reaction and the outrage has been nothing but insanity.”

—PewDiePie, My Response video (2017)’[33]

A few weeks later, The Wall Street Journal reported on the incident, while also adding that since August 2016, PewDiePie has included anti-Semitic jokes or Nazi imagery in nine separate videos."[106] The publication noted he removed three of the videos, including the January 2017 Fiverr one."[106]’[107] In a 12 February Tumblr post, PewDiePie expressed: “I am in no way supporting any kind of hateful attitudes, [...] I think of the content that I create as entertainment, and not a place for any serious political commentary,” and conceded, “though this was not my intention, I understand that these jokes were ultimately offensive.”[104]’[107] In his post, he also reiterated he does not support anti-Semitic groups."[104] PewDiePie’s motivation for his Tumblr post was partially driven by the fact that neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups and publications, such as The Daily Stormer, were referencing and praising PewDiePie for his jokes."[33]’[108]

On 13 February, the Disney-owned Maker Studios multi-channel network cut its ties with PewDiePie because of the aforementioned controversy and the additional videos containing allegedly anti-Semitic jokes."[107]’[109] Maker stated that “although [he had] created a following by being provocative and irreverent, he clearly went too far in this case and the resulting videos are inappropriate.”[109] Google also took action, dropping him from the Google Preferred advertising program, as well as cancelling the Scare PewDiePie YouTube Red series."[110]’[111] Various media journalists and outlets joined the Wall Street Journal in criticising PewDiePie."[112]’[113]’[114] Kirsty Major of The Independent, Arwa Mahdawi of The Guardian and Ben Kuchera of Polygon, were all critical of PewDiePie’s defense of his content as jokes taken out of context, opining that his content helps normalise ideologies such as fascism, neo-Nazism and white supremacy."[112]’[113]’[114] Ironically, Ben Fritz, one of the three WSJ reporters who wrote the original piece about PewDiePie, has made several anti-Semitic and Nazi jokes on Twitter, himself."[115] PewDiePie’s fans picked up on the jokes, accusing Fritz of hypocrisy and began attacking him.’[115]

Many in the YouTube community, including Ethan Klein of 3h3Productions, a Jewish YouTube sketch comedian, who is also friends with PewDiePie, as well as YouTube news commentator Philip DeFranco, and popular gamers Markiplier and Jacksepticeye, as well as many others, defended PewDiePie and criticised the way media handled the incident."[116]’[117] On 16 February, PewDiePie himself responded in a video entitled My Response, in which he apologised to those who were offended by his previous videos and which he also criticised the reporting by the media."[33]’[118]’[119] He also states The Wall Street Journal framed his jokes as “posts” and took them out of context.’[120] One of the examples PewDiePie gives of this includes one of his vlogs, in which he expresses frustration at people creating swastikas in his Tuber Simulator video game.’[121]’[122] In the My Response video, he also touched upon the aforementioned stylistic changes that his video content began undergoing, detailing his desire to be more honest and open about his opinions.’[33]

In April 2017, while still continuing to upload new content onto YouTube, PewDiePie created Netglow, a channel on the livestreaming service Twitch.’[123] On Netglow, he started streaming Best Club, a weekly live stream show scheduled for Sunday at 4:00 p.m. GMT.’[123] Best Club premiered on 9 April.’[123] PewDiePie commented that his decision to create Netglow was in the works prior to the aforementioned allegations of anti-Semitic themes in his videos.’[123] On 11 April, Business Insider detailed that PewDiePie’s first stream amassed around 60,000 viewers, and that Netglow has accumulated 93,000 subscribers to that point.’[124] As of 7 August 2017, there have been two episodes of the show.’[125]

**Viewer demographics**

In a video called “YOUTUBE MADE A MISTAKE” from 25 April 2017, PewDiePie revealed his viewership at that time to mainly consist of people between the age of 18 and 34.’[126] According to the data, 71 percent of his viewers are male, while 29 percent are female.’[126] Shown data from a one-month period leading up to the video is as follows:

**Relationship with YouTube networks and programs**

As a result of Maker Studios dropping PewDiePie from their network over the aforementioned anti-Semitic controversy, PewDiePie is not signed to any multi-channel network (MCN).’[107] He was previously signed to Machinima prior to his partnership with Maker.’[127] PewDiePie expressed feeling neglected by the network, which operates as a rival to Maker.’[127] Feeling frustrated with how Machinima treated him, PewDiePie
hired a lawyer to free him from his contract with the network."[127]

While under Maker, PewDiePie signed with the MCN’s gaming sub-network, Polaris."[128] Maker itself is a multi-channel network that drives the growth of the channels under it."[22]"[129]"[130]"[131]

In October 2014, PewDiePie began hinting at the possibility that he might not renew his contract with Maker Studios upon its expiration in December 2014."[132] Reports that covered this information also added that PewDiePie expressed his frustrations with the studio's parent company, Disney; PewDiePie was quoted saying, "The fact that Disney bought Maker Studios doesn’t really change anything for me. If I ask for help, they reply, but that’s all the contact we have. We’ll see what happens.”[127] Rather than re-sign with Maker, PewDiePie has mulled the option of launching his own network, although he has declined to provide in-depth details on the subject."[15]"[133] However, in light of news outlets reporting his disinterest with Maker, PewDiePie tweeted, “I feel like I was misquoted in the WSJ and I’m really happy with the work that Maker has been doing for me.”[134] PewDiePie ultimately continued creating videos under Maker; his relationship with the network has seen Maker establish an official PewDiePie website, app, and online store to sell Bro Army merchandise, while PewDiePie promotes Maker’s media interests and gives the network a share of his YouTube ad revenue.[14]

In early 2015, Nintendo launched its Creator Program, in order to share revenue with YouTube video creators who feature gameplay of their products in videos."[135] PewDiePie joined various gamers in criticising the programme."[136] PewDiePie called the program a “slap in the face to the YouTube channels that [do] focus on Nintendo game[s] exclusively”, adding, “The people who have helped and showed passion for Nintendo’s community are the ones left in the dirt the most.”[136] Despite criticisms from PewDiePie and other gamers alike, Nintendo experienced more requests from YouTube creators than expected, causing an extension on the 72-hour wait time for video approval through the program."[136] Additionally, PewDiePie, stated, “I’ll still play Nintendo games that I want to play on my channel as usual. I’m lucky to be in a situation where losing ad revenue on a few videos won’t matter. However, many people on YouTube are not in that situation.”[137] Ultimately, the focal point of criticism is toward the approval of a video which Nintendo has to administer, and may be motivated by biased intentions."[137]

In January 2016, PewDiePie announced a partnership with Maker Studios to produce Revelmode, a sub-network of Maker, that would showcase PewDiePie and his friends on YouTube in original series."[138] After the deal, the head of Maker Studios, Courtney Holt, stated, “we’re thrilled to be doubling down with Felix.”[138] Along with PewDiePie, eight other YouTubers signed to the network upon its creation: CinnamonToastKen, Marzia, Dodger, Emma Blackery, Jacksepticeye, Jelly, Kweebelkop, and Markiplier."[138] Three YouTubers —Cryaotic, KickThePJ and Slogoman —would later join the sub-network after its launch."[139]"[140]"[141] In March 2017, PewDiePie confirmed that Revelmode "doesn’t exist anymore,” in wake of the controversy surrounding the Wall Street Journal’s allegations of anti-Semitism toward him.[31] While announcing this, he also revealed that he worked on the company for about 3 or 4 years.[31]

6.5.3 Public image and influence

Responses to PewDiePie's content are mixed; Anthony Taormina of Game Rant writes "It’s no secret that as his popularity continues to grow, PewDiePie has become an increasingly divisive figure. While some love the YouTuber for the entertainment he provides, others see PewDiePie as the singular representation of our gameplay obsession obsessed culture.”[142] Chris Reed of The Wall St. Cheat Sheet commented on the divisive opinions about PewDiePie, stating, "PewDiePie is not universally adored [...] the great divide in opinion on PewDiePie seems to be largely generational. Older people are less likely to subscribe to YouTube channels, or to pay much credence to YouTube personalities in general. Many younger viewers, on the other hand, see him as endlessly entertaining and relatable.”[37]

His channel appeals strongly to younger viewers, a group Google refers to as Generation C for their habits of “creation, curation, connection and community.”[22]"[143] According to a 2014 survey commissioned by Variety, PewDiePie along with a few other YouTube personalities have been reported to be more influential and popular than mainstream celebrities, such as Jennifer Lawrence, among US teenagers aged 13 through 18.[144] His rise to fame has been used as “a great example of how the emerging society gives extensive opportunities to individuals with great ideas, courage, and, of course, a significant portion of luck as opposed to the old society.”[145] Studies of the gaming community on YouTube have shown that 95% of gamers engage in watching online videos related to gaming and has been noted as an important reason for PewDiePie’s popularity.[146] In 2015, PewDiePie was included on Time's list of the 30 most influential people on the Internet, cementing his influence as an internet personality.[38] Later in 2015, PewDiePie was featured on the cover of Variety’s “Famechangers” issue, with the magazine ranking him as the “#1 Famechanger”, or “those whose influence stands head and shoulders above the rest”.[147] The following year, Time included him on their Time 100 list, with South Park co-creator Trey Parker writing in his entry, “I know it might seem weird, especially to those of us from an older generation, that people would spend so much time watching someone else play video games [...] But I choose to
see it as the birth of a new art form. And I don’t think anyone should underestimate its most powerful artist.” [10]

In June 2017, Forbes released a quarterly “Top Influencers” list, ranking PewDiePie at #2 in the Gaming category behind Markiplier. [148] Forbes cited their reasoning for the ranking, writing, “[PewDiePie’s] overall brand suffered earlier this year when he included anti-Semitic content in nine of his videos.” [149]

Swedish columnist Lars Lindstrom commented positively about PewDiePie, stating, “that Felix Kjellberg has a comic talent is indisputable. It is both amazingly awful and amazingly funny when a father bikes around with his son in the game Happy Wheels and both get crushed and bloody again and again and PewDiePie improvises absurd comments as the game continues. The secret is that he really loves to play these games and that he has fun doing it.” [17] PewDiePie has also been received negatively by the media on some occasions, often being reported as an “inexplicable phenomenon.” [28] Andrew Wallenstein of Variety heavily criticised PewDiePie, following his channel becoming the most subscribed channel on YouTube, describing his videos as “aggressive stupidity” and “psycho babble.” [35]

In September 2014, Rob Walker of Yahoo! called PewDiePie’s popularity “insane”, writing, that it “strikes me as considerably more curious — I mean, you know who Rihanna is, but would you recognise this kid if he were standing in line behind you at the bank?” [36] Walker, among other reporters and some casual gamers, have questioned the reasons for his popularity.”[36] [37] while other reporters have criticised his rise in notability.”[35] Walker noted PewDiePie’s interaction with his audience, writing, “While he can be raucous and crude, it always comes across as genuine. He constantly addresses his audience as a bunch of peer-like friends, as opposed to distant, genuflecting fans. He’s certainly more than willing to make fun of himself in the process.” [36] In 2015, The Verge wrote, “Love it or hate it, his success — like so many other YouTube personalities — isn’t just in playing games but actually connecting and talking directly to an audience. No agent, press release, or any other intermediary. He just hit record.” [150] He refers to his fan base as the “Bro Army” and addresses his audience as “bros.” [151] On this, Walker wrote, “Profanity aside, it’s a bummer that his persona includes constant references to his viewers as “bros,” and that he’s loose with words like “bitch” when his gaming adventures lead him into contact with female villain characters. Given how smart this guy clearly is when he speaks directly, I suspect he could modify his demeanor in a way that remained engaging to a young fan base but somehow contributed to improving gamer-land’s sometimes disturbingly bro-centric attitude.” [36] However, both Walker and Reed have commented on PewDiePie’s intelligence, with Reed opining, “He’s much more thoughtful and self-aware than he seems in many of his videos.” [37]

Relating to his responsibility as a celebrity, PewDiePie has stated “many people see me as a friend they can chill with for 15 minutes a day”, adding, “The loneliness in front of the computer screens brings us together. But I never set out to be a role model; I just want to invite them to come over to my place.” [15] Correlating with this note, his audience has been reported to provide positive remarks about him; some of his viewers created and contributed to a thread expressing that he has made them happier and feel better about themselves. [28] Conversely, during an informal Twitter poll conducted by one Kotaku reporter, respondents described him as “annoying” and an “obnoxious waste of time.” [28] Additionally, Rolling Stone has documented the existence of several Reddit threads dedicated to sharing disparaging views of PewDiePie.[14]

PewDiePie has himself claimed that he dislikes being called “famous”, and has been reported to live a “shy and retiring life” .[13] In a Rolling Stone article, PewDiePie admitted to being shocked by his fame; PewDiePie recalled a gaming event near his hometown, stating “I remember there were five security guards yelling at a crowd to back up — it was out of control. It was shocking to find myself in that situation, where I was that celebrity person.” [14] At the 2013 Social Star Awards, PewDiePie greeted his fans personally despite security warning him against doing so.[1] [152] PewDiePie also mentioned this event to Rolling Stone, stating, “I didn’t even understand they were screaming for me at first.” [14]

Influence on video games

PewDiePie’s commentaries have had a positive effect on sales of indie games.[146] [153] For instance the developers of McPixel stated, “The largest force driving attention to McPixel at that time were ‘Let’s Play’ videos. Mostly by Jesse Cox and PewDiePie.” [154] PewDiePie has also been confirmed to have positively influenced the sales of Slender: The Eight Pages and Goat Simulator.[15] [28] Although games being featured on PewDiePie’s channel have reportedly contributed to their commercial success, he has stated, “I just want to play the games, not influence sales.” [155]

PewDiePie, along with characters from Amnesia: The Dark Descent, which PewDiePie renamed and made characters within his own commentaries were referenced to by a McPixel level designed in his honour.[156] Additionally, in the video game Surgeon Simulator 2013, the Alien Surgery stage features an organ called “Pewds-ball” in honour of PewDiePie.[157] [158] PewDiePie agreed to allow the developers of Surgeon Simulator 2013 to use his likeness in GOTY IDST, a showering simulation video game.[159] [160] PewDiePie was also included as a NPC in the indie game, Party Hard.” [161]
Income

In June 2014, The Wall Street Journal reported that PewDiePie earned $4 million in 2013.[162][163] PewDiePie confirmed on Reddit that the figures were roughly around what he actually earned.[15] In July 2015, the Swedish newspaper Expressen reported that PewDiePie’s production company, PewDie Productions AB, reported earnings of 63.7 million kr ($7.5 million) in 2014.[164][165] The Guardian commented that the reason the media was so captivated by PewDiePie’s earnings is that the topic “offers a rare insight into the money being made at the top end of YouTube stardom”, adding “it’s very rare for any YouTube creator to talk about their earnings publicly, not least because YouTube itself does not encourage it.”[44] Although outlets agreed that PewDiePie’s income was sizeable, and even “remarkable”,[166] PewDiePie appeared at the top of Forbes’ October 2015 list of the richest YouTube stars with a reported $12 million earned in 2015.[167] Relating to the earnings, Michael Thomsen of Forbes opined that “$7 million may well seem like an astronomical figure to a 25 year-old who just wants to make friends and play videogames, but it’s a wildly insubstantial figure for the size of his audience and influence.”[168]

On the topic of his earnings, PewDiePie stated that he is “extremely tired of talking about how much I make. In the very few interviews I’ve made, it doesn’t matter how long we’ve talked to each other, the headline is still just about my paycheck.”[169] After extensive media coverage of his earnings, PewDiePie posted a video, expressing his frustration at the extensive media coverage over his income. In the video he claimed, “We did raise a million dollars for charity, and very few articles picked up on that, but here it is everywhere how much money I make”, adding, “It seems like the whole world cares more about how much money I make than I do myself.”[170] Relating to his source of his income, PewDiePie stated: “I think that’s what’s cool about YouTube: That anyone could technically do it, right? Surely if I didn’t exist, there would be someone to fill my place.”[171]

In December 2016, Forbes named PewDiePie as the highest-earning YouTuber with his annual income reaching $15 million.[172] This is up 20% from 2015, largely due to his YouTube Red series Scare PewDiePie and his book This Book Loves You, which sold over 112,000 copies according to Nielsen Bookscan.[173]

Marketing campaigns

Beginning in April 2014 and spanning into August, PewDiePie, along with his girlfriend Marzia Bisognin, began a marketing campaign for the Legendary Pictures film As Above, So Below.[174][175] PewDiePie’s videos for the marketing campaign included a minionseries featuring him participating in the “Catacombs Challenge”. The challenge involved PewDiePie searching for three keys in the catacombs to open a container holding “the Philosopher’s stone”. In January 2015, the couple’s videos were able to earn nearly 20 million views.[176] Maker Studios, which both PewDiePie and Bisognin are represented by, brokered the ad deal between the two and Legendary Pictures.[176] In January 2015, Mountain Dew partnered with PewDiePie to launch a fan fiction contest, in which winning fan fictions will be animated into video formats and then uploaded onto his channel.[178] In the same month, a quote from him was used by Techland on Dying Light posters.[179] The quote, which read, “I love this game. It’s sooo awesome!”, spread controversy as it came from a seemingly advertorial video, featuring him playing Dying Light.[180] In response to the issue, PewDiePie tweeted, “I love this game. It’s sooo awesome! - IGN.”[181] When another Twitter user mentioned the issue, tagging PewDiePie in their tweet, he responded, “I don’t even remember saying this.”[181]

Despite these partnerships, PewDiePie maintains that he conducts very few promotions and works with few brands.[15][182] Additionally, PewDiePie posted on Reddit, “I make more than I need from YouTube”, adding, “with that freedom, but also to respect my fans for making that possible, I don’t end up doing many endorsements.”[183] On this topic, PewDiePie has claimed that it is disappointing when a large chunk of people misinterpret a component of his character; he states, “if I mention on Twitter that I find this or that Kickstarter project cool, people immediately start to ask what economical interests I might have in it. Things like that can bring me down. But it’s not personal; some people just prefer to believe the worst about others at any given time.”[15]

Charities

PewDiePie’s popularity has allowed him to stir support for fundraising drives.[184] In February 2012, PewDiePie ran for King of the Web, an online contest. He lost the overall title; however, he still became the “Gaming King of the Web” for the 1–15 February 2012 voting period.[185] During the following voting period, PewDiePie won and donated his cash winnings to the World Wildlife Fund.[186][187] He has raised money for the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.[19][186]

PewDiePie also began a “Water Campaign” charity, where his fans could donate money to Charity: Water, in celebration of reaching ten million subscribers.[188] PewDiePie also contributed one dollar to the charity for every 500 views the video announcing the campaign accumulates, up to a maximum of $10,000.[189] PewDiePie had the stated goal of raising US$250,000, at the end of the drive, the amount raised was $446,462.[186][190][191] In June 2014, PewDiePie, announced that a fourth charity drive for “Save the Children” raised over $630,000, surpassing a $250,000 goal.[192] In an interview with the Swedish
On 24 September 2015, PewDiePie released his own video game  
PewDiePie: Legend of the Brofist on iOS and Android. The game is developed by Canadian game 
developer Outerminds in collaboration with PewDiePie himself.[206][207] On 29 September 2016, he 
released another game developed by Outerminds, titled 
PewDiePie’s Tuber Simulator.[208] It was released as a 
free app on iOS and Android devices. The game focuses on 
getting enough subscribers to dethrone PewDiePie as 
the king of YouTube. The game reached the number one 
spot on the App Store within a few days of its release, 
while also experiencing its servers crashing due to its pop-
ularity.[208]
Penguin Group released PewDiePie's This Book Loves You, a parody of self-help books, on 20 October 
2015.[85] The book includes a collection of aphorisms, 
jokes, and wisdom, paired with visuals.[209]

6.5.5 Personal life

Kjellberg is originally from Sweden,[5] but moved to 
Italy to live with his girlfriend, Marzia Bisognin.[11] She 
is also a YouTube personality, formerly known on the 
website as CutiePieMarzia,[13][210] but now known 
as simply Marzia.[211] The two were introduced to each 
other through a friend of Bisognin’s in 2011, and after es-

tablishing an online friendship, Kjellberg flew to Italy to 
meet her.[13]

The two shuffled between Sweden and Italy, before settling in 
Brighton, Sussex, England.[13][212] Kjellberg moved to the UK in July 2013 for better Internet 
connectivity.[213] Kjellberg admits that he enjoys living in 
Brighton, as he is able to live in general anonymity, adding 
that one of the reasons he has not moved to Los Angeles 
is, "Anytime I’m there, people are constantly patting you 
on the back, telling you how great you are. It fucks with 
your brain. I started YouTube because I was bored, not 
to become famous.”[27] In June 2016, Kjellberg an-


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appears in other media

Aside from his own YouTube channel, PewDiePie has 
made appearances in the videos of other YouTube cre-
ators and series. In April 2013, he made a cameo in an 
episode of Epic Rap Battles of History, portraying 
Mikhail Baryshnikov.[196] In July 2013, PewDiePie 
starred alongside Anthony Padilla and Ian Hecox of 
Smosh, as well as Jenna Marbles, as guest judges on the 
second season of Internet Icon.[197] PewDiePie has also 
appeared in YouTube’s annual year-end Rewind series in 
each year since 2013.[198][199][200][201]

In December 2014, PewDiePie guest starred in two 
episodes of the 18th season of South Park, one of 
his favourite series. The two episodes served as a 
two-part season finale. The first part, titled 
#REHASH aired on 3 December, while the second 
part, titled #HappyHolograms, aired on 10 December. 
[202][203] In the episodes, he parodied himself 
and other Let’s Play commentators, who added comment-
ary over Call of Duty gameplay in an overly expressive 
way. In #REHASH, the character Kyle wonders why 
his brother and his brother's friends favour watching others 
comment on events over experiencing events them-
seves.[202]

In July 2015, PewDiePie was announced as a voice 
actor in the Vimeo fantasy series, Oscar’s Hotel for Fantas-
tical Creatures.[204] In October, PewDiePie appeared 
as a guest on The Late Show with Stephen Colbert; 
PewDiePie’s charm was well received by online media 
outlets.[205]

6.5.4 Other ventures

On 24 September 2015, PewDiePie released his own 
video game PewDiePie: Legend of the Brofist on iOS 
and Android. The game is developed by Canadian game 
developer Outerminds in collaboration with PewDiePie 

magazine Icon, he has expressed desire to continue these 
drives as time goes on, and also credited John and Hank 
Green as two individuals who gave him the idea of mak-
ing unique videos for charity.[15] These videos are pur-
chased by game manufacturers and advertisers, for prices 
ranging up to $50,000.[15]

In December 2016, he hosted “Cringemas”, a livestream 
held across two days (9 and 10 December, both at 
around 6PM–10PM GMT), with other Revelmode cre-
ators.[193] During the livestream, they helped raise 
money for RED, a charity committed to helping elimi-
nate HIV/AIDS in Africa.[194] After the first day, the 
fundraiser raised over $200,000, after YouTube doubled 
their goal of $100,000, and at the end of the livestream, 
they had raised a total of over $1.3 million with help from 
the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.[195]

Marzia Bisognin (pictured in 2014) and PewDiePie have been in a relationship since 2011

6.5. Personal life
ter his landlord confronted him for being too loud."[214] On 30 December 2016, he announced that he had been evicted once again, and that he had moved into Club Penguin’s old UK office.[215] Kjellberg has stated on his YouTube channel that he is an agnostic atheist.”[216]

6.5.6 Filmography

6.5.7 Gameography

6.5.8 Awards

6.5.9 See also

- List of most subscribed users on YouTube
- List of YouTube personalities

6.5.10 Notes

[1] PewDiePie received a second Silver Play Button for the Jack septime2 channel in 2016.[2]

[2] PewDiePie received a second Gold Play Button for the Jack septime2 channel in 2016.[2]


[5] PewDiePie has appeared in every YouTube Rewind short since 2013.[198][199][200][201]

6.5.11 References


Gutelle, Sam (8 October 2012). “Check Out This Awesome Infographic of YouTube’s Top 1,000 Channels”. Tubefilter. Retrieved 14 October 2012.


[125] https://www.twitch.tv/netglow/videos/all


6.5. PEWDIEPIE


6.6. Jenna Marbles

**Jenna Nicole Mourey** (born September 15, 1986)[1][2], better known by her pseudonym **Jenna Marbles**, is an American YouTube personality, vlogger, comedian and actress. As of June 2017, her channel has over 2 billion video views and 17 million subscribers,[3] making it the 26th most subscribed channel on YouTube and the second most popular channel operated by a woman.[4]

### 6.6.1 Early life

Marbles was born and raised in Rochester, New York, where she graduated from Brighton High School in 2004. She then moved to Boston, where she attended Suffolk University. At Suffolk she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, and later attended Boston University for a Master of Education in Sport Psychology and Counseling.[5]

### 6.6.2 Career

Marbles initially started her career with Barstool Sports, where she wrote for their female counterpart site Stool-LaLa.[6] In the summer of 2010, Marbles was sharing a three-bedroom apartment in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She had an $800 rent that she paid for by working various jobs, like bartending, working at a tanning salon, blogging, and go-go dancing at nightclubs.[7]

Marbles released a video in 2010 entitled “How To Trick People Into Thinking You’re Good Looking” which was viewed over 5.3 million times in its first week.[8][9] Her video “How To Avoid Talking To People You Don’t Want To Talk To” was featured in articles by *The New York Times* and *ABC News* in August 2011. In the video, she stated, “I’m sick and tired of guys thinking that just because I showed up at a club or a dance or a bar, that I want to have their genitalia touching my backside.”[10][11] The video had approximately 35 million views as of April 2017.

She uploads a new video to her YouTube channel every Wednesday or Thursday. Her pseudonym “Jenna Marbles” comes from her mother’s complaint that “Mourey,” their legal surname, pulled up only Jenna’s videos on Google. Jenna’s mother was unemployed at the time that Jenna’s first video went viral, and was concerned that their content might put off potential employers.[5] The name

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6.5.12 Further reading


6.5.13 External links

- PewDiePie’s channel on YouTube
- PewDiePie on IMDb
- Sveriges Radio – Felix “PewDiePie” Kjellberg

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Bibliography

“Marbles” comes from her dog “Mr. Marbles.” As of April 2017, Marbles’ YouTube channel had about 17 million subscribers and 2.2 billion video views. citations


Marbles appeared as herself in Smosh: The Movie.”[14]

Marbles has also professionalized her business affairs by expanding her business and bringing in people to help, including, a personal assistant, a business manager, and her mother (the chief executive officer).”[7]

Other ventures

Marbles released a brand of dog toys called Kermit Worm & Mr. Marbles. The toys’ appearances are based upon her real dogs.”[5] She has also created items with some of her most memorable quotes printed on them (e.g. “what are this”).

Marbles also hosts a weekly pop countdown on SiriusXM Hits 1 called “YouTube 15”.[15][16]

In 2016, Marbles became an executive producer for Maximum Ride, a film based on the series of novels of the same name by James Patterson.”[17]

Marbles does a weekly podcast with her boyfriend Julien Solomita called ”The Jenna and Julien Podcast”. Topics focus on things such as stories growing up, conspiracy theories, YouTubers and other general topics. They often feature other YouTubers as guests on their podcast including Shane Dawson amongst others. ”[18]

6.6.3 References

[15] SiriusXM Hits 1

6.6.4 External links

- Official website
- Jenna Marbles’s channel on YouTube
- Jenna Marbles on IMDb

6.7 Rebecca Black

Rebecca Renee Black (born June 21, 1997)[11] is an American YouTube and singer who gained extensive media attention with her 2011 single ”Friday”. After its music video went viral on YouTube and other social media sites, ”Friday” was derided by many music critics and viewers, who dubbed it ”the worst song ever”.[2][3][4] Rebecca went on to release other songs; her Dave Days collaboration ”Saturday” earned more success. She currently uploads videos on her YouTube channel about various topics.”[5]

6.7.1 Early life

Black was born in Irvine, California.”[6] She is the daughter of John Jeffery Black and Georgina Marquez Kelly, both veterinarians.”[7][8] Her mother is of Mexican descent, and her father, originally from Iowa,”[9] is of
English, Italian, and Polish descent.\cite{10}\cite{11} Black attended private school from kindergarten to 6th grade, and moved to a public school due to bullying. She joined the school's musical theater program, where she felt she was "meant to be." In April 2011,\cite{9} Black dropped out in favor of homeschooling, citing both a need to focus on her career\cite{12} and a desire to avoid taunts from her former classmates.\cite{13} Black has claimed that she was also failing English class due to her busy schedule.\cite{9}

### 6.7.2 Career

#### 2010–11: Breakthrough with 'Friday' and music

See also: Friday (Rebecca Black song)

In late 2010, a classmate of Black and music-video client of Los Angeles record label ARK Music Factory told her about the company.\cite{14} Black's mother paid $4,000 for ARK Music to produce the music video while the Blacks retained ownership of both the master and the video.\cite{7}\cite{15} The single, "Friday," written entirely by Ark, was released on YouTube and iTunes. The song's video was uploaded to YouTube on February 10, 2011, and received approximately 1,000 views in the first month. The video went viral on March 11, acquiring millions of views on YouTube in a matter of days, becoming the most-talked-about topic on social networking site Twitter,\cite{16} and garnering mostly negative media coverage.\cite{17} The single was released on March 14, with first-week sales estimated to be around 40,000 by Billboard.\cite{18} On March 22, Black appeared on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, during which she performed the song and discussed the negative reaction to it.\cite{19} The song peaked on the Billboard Hot 100 and the New Zealand Singles Chart at numbers 58 and 33, respectively.\cite{20}\cite{21} In the UK, the song debuted at number 61 on the UK Singles Chart.\cite{22} In response to the YouTube video of "Friday," Black began to receive phone and email death threats,\cite{23} which were investigated by the Anaheim Police Department.\cite{24} Black teamed up with Funny or Die on April Fool's Day 2011 (when the comedy site was renamed Friday or Die) for a series of videos, including one about the underage teens driving a car in her "Friday" video.\cite{25} She signed to manager Debra Baum's DB Entertainment, reportedly with Ryan Seacrest’s help.\cite{26}

Black also stated that she is a fan of Justin Bieber, and expressed interest in performing a duet with him.\cite{27} MTV selected Black to host its first online awards show, the O Music Awards Fan Army Party, in April 2011.\cite{28} As an homage to "Friday," Black appeared in the music video for Katy Perry's "Last Friday Night (T.G.I.F.)."\cite{29} in which Black plays alongside Perry as the hostess of a party Perry attends. A cover of "Friday" was performed on Glee in the second-season episode, "Prom Queen." When asked about why the song was covered on Glee, show creator Ryan Murphy replied, "The show pays tribute to pop culture and, love it or hate it, that song is pop culture."\cite{30} Not long after the "Friday" video went viral on YouTube, Black and her mother, Georgina Kelly, got into legal issues with Ark Music over rights to the song. In a letter from Kelly’s lawyer to Ark Music on March 29, 2011, it was alleged that Ark Music failed to fulfill the terms of their November 2010 agreement by not giving her the song and video's master recordings, by claiming Black as exclusively signed to the label, and by exploiting the song without permission – for example, selling a "Friday" ringtone. While Ark founder (and "Friday" co-writer) Patrice Wilson stated that Kelly "will get the masters and the song [...] [t]hey can have it all," and agreed that Black was not exclusive to Ark, his attorney claimed that Ark owns the copyright for the song and the November agreement is invalid.\cite{31}

In June 2011, Ark Music Factory started charging $2.99 to watch the music video on YouTube.\cite{32} Later that month, "Friday" was removed as a result of the legal dispute; it was restored to YouTube on September 16, 2011, on Black's official channel.\cite{33}

"Friday" was revealed as YouTube's No. 1 video of 2011, with Black hosting a short video called "YouTube Rewind" in the year-end recap.\cite{34}\cite{35} Despite the over 167 million views during its first four months, prior to its temporary removal,\cite{36} "Friday" had amassed more than 3,190,000 "dislikes."\cite{37} After the fallout with Ark Music Factory, Black started an independent record label named RB Records.\cite{38} She released a self-produced single titled "My Moment" on July 18, 2011, the first on her label, with an accompanying music video published to her YouTube channel the same day.\cite{39} In the video, director Morgan Lawley features real life footage of Black from both before and after her fame.\cite{40} In late October 2011, production began on
the music video for Black's third single, "Person of Interest". [41] About the song, Black stated "The basis of it is that it's a love song but it's not a love song. It's about almost teenage crushes – when you're not in love yet but you really like a guy – which I'm really excited about because I don't think there are too many out like that. It's very much a dance type song. It will make you get up and dance and sing along in your car." [42] The single and its accompanying music video were released on November 15, 2011. [43] Black released two more singles in 2012: "Sing It" in May, [44] and "In Your Words" in November. [45] [46] [47] Black was planning to release her debut album in late 2011, which she said would include "a bunch of different kinds of stuff." [48] The album was being recorded at a studio belonging to music producer Charlton Pettus. [49] However, the album was never released. Black was featured in an ABC Primetime Nightline: Celebrity Secrets special entitled Underage and Famous: Inside Child Stars' Lives. [50]

2012–present: YouTuber videos

In 2012, Black signed onto the Maker Studios YouTube network. [51] She was also brought to Australia by Telstra to promote the launch of their 4G service. [52] Zeitgeist, which sorted billions of Google searches to capture the year's 10 fastest-rising global queries, listed Black as "#1 Most Searched – Google". [53] The searches for the teen singer topped even those of pop icons Lady Gaga and Adele. [54] In late 2013, Black released the song "Saturday". For her sequel to "Friday", she collaborated with Dave Days. [55] It became Black's second song to chart on the Billboard Hot 100, peaking at number 55. While it reached a higher position than "Friday" (number 58), "Saturday" was on the chart only one week, compared to six for "Friday". [56] Aside from her original music, Black has been posting videos regularly on her YouTube channel, which include blogs (sometimes with other people on YouTube), question-and-answer videos, and occasional covers of songs by other artists. [57] This includes her versions of two Miley Cyrus songs from 2013. That July, Black collaborated with fellow YouTube personality Jon D in an acoustic cover of "We Can't Stop", for which lyrical changes were made. [58] Black followed with an acoustic version of "Wrecking Ball" in November. [59]

At VidCon 2015, Black revealed that she had been working on an album which she hoped to release by the end of 2015. According to her, the album will not be anything like her previous songs. She had been working on the album since releasing her song Friday; however, but it took her a while to be free from Ark Music Factory and find producers with whom she was comfortable. [60] However, no album or new original songs were released. Towards the end of 2015, Black performed a cover of "Wild" by Troye Sivan. [61] Black created a web video in January 2016 on Go90 called "Life After Friday".

In the show, Black graduates from high school, tells her parents she is not going to college, and follows her adventures after moving to Los Angeles. [62] [63]

On August 26, 2016, Black released a new single titled "The Great Divide" , her first release of new material in almost 3 years. [64] This was followed by another single, "Foolish", on April 21, 2017.

6.7.3 Filmography

6.7.4 Discography

Singles

Music videos

6.7.5 Awards and nominations

- In April 2011, the MTV O Music Awards, one of the annual awards established by MTV to honor the art, creativity, personality and technology of music into the digital space nominated "Which Seat Can I Take?" for "Favorite Animated GIF" that included footage by Rebecca Black featuring 50 Cent and Bert. [79]

- Black was named "Choice Web Star" at the 2011 Teen Choice Awards in August 2011. [80]

6.7.6 References


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Wilson, Jess. "Rebecca Black doesn’t look like THIS anymore – see Friday hitmaker’s dramatic image overhaul". OK!. Retrieved January 16, 2016.


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CHAPTER 6. INTERNET CELEBRITY


6.7.7 External links

- Official YouTube Channel
- Rebecca Black on IMDb

6.8 Jon Lajoie

Jonathan Lajoie ([la'zoʊ] born August 21, 1980) is a Canadian comedian, actor, rapper, singer, musician, and Internet celebrity from Montreal, Quebec. [1] He gained fame mostly from his YouTube channel, “Jon-Lajoie,” posting comedic original songs (often as rapper characters, such as “MC Vagina” and “Everyday Normal Guy”) and comedy skits. Lajoie is also known for his role as Taco MacArthur on the FX comedy series The League.
6.8.1 Early life

Lajoie was born in Longueuil, Quebec, Canada, and raised in the South Shore of Montreal. His father is Québécois and his mother is English-Canadian, and he is the third of nine children. He graduated from Dawson College’s professional theatre program in 2002.[2]

6.8.2 Career

Since early 2003, Lajoie has portrayed an English-Canadian musician named Thomas Edison in Radio-Canada’s French-Canadian sitcom L’Auberge du chien noir.[3] Lajoie began his career as a comedy musician in 2006. His performances include music, skits, and some stand-up comedy. Jon Lajoie has also released 3 studio albums, the first two featuring comedy music. His third album took a folk music direction independent of comedy and was released under the moniker ‘Wolfie’s Just Fine’.[4]

The League

Lajoie was cast in the FXX TV show The League as Taco MacArthur, a perpetually stoned and unemployed musician.[5] Lajoie performs his songs “The Birthday Song” and “Vaginal Hubris” in two episodes of the first season. Throughout the series, Lajoie performed songs written for the show.’[6]

Comedy Central Presents

Lajoie filmed an episode of Comedy Central Presents on November 7, 2009.[7] It premiered on March 5, 2010.[8] The same special aired uncensored as part of Comedy Central’s Secret Stash on June 6 featuring the world premiere of the video for his song “Pop Song”.

Film

Lajoie was featured in the 2014 movie Let’s Be Cops, as the boss of Damon Wayans, Jr.’s character. He was also featured in Quentin Dupieux’s 2013 movie Wrong Cops as Officer Regan.

Television

He guest-starred as Caleb95 in one episode of the Williams Street original television show NTSF:SD:SUV::.

Singles and albums

Lajoie has published several novelty songs that he has made available on websites such as Funny or Die and YouTube. Two of his best known alter-ego characters in his music are the ‘Everyday Normal Guy’ and ‘MC Vagina’ rappers, both of which perform comedy hip-hop. The ‘MC Vagina’ character is known for the songs and related music videos ”Show Me Your Genitals”, ”Show Me Your Genitals 2: E=MC Vagina”, and ”I Kill People”. He has closed off his live shows with ”Show Me Your Genitals”.[9]

6.8.3 Discography

Studio albums

Singles

- “High As Fuck” (2008)
- ”Show Me Your Genitals” (2008)
- ”I’m Inside Me!” (2010)
- ”Very Super Famous” (2011)
- ”The Best Song” (2011)
- ”F**k Everything” (2011)
- ”WTF Collective 3” (2011)
- ”Song for the Students” (2012)
- ”Broken-Hearted” (2012)
- ”The Best Christmas Song” (2012)
- ”Started As a Baby” (2013)
- ”Miley, You’re a Good Girl” (2013)
- ”Merry Christmas Exclamation Point” (2013)
- ”Please Use This Song” (2014)

Music videos

6.8.4 References


[8] "Comedy Central TV Show Schedule – Find when your Favorite Funny Shows are Playing | Comedy Central".

[9] "I am Jon Lajoie (the Youtube guy/Taco), we’ve done this before. Ask me anything!".


6.8.5 External links

- Official website
- Jon Lajoie’s channel on YouTube
- Lajoie on Funny or Die
- Jon Lajoie on IMDb
Chapter 7

The Dark Side of the Internet

7.1 Anonymous post

An anonymous post is an entry on a bulletin board system, Internet forum, or other discussion forums, without a screen name or more commonly by using a non-identifiable pseudonym. Some online forums such as Slashdot and Techdirt do not allow such posts, requiring users to be registered either under their real name or utilizing a pseudonym. Others like JuicyCampus, AutoAdmit, 2channel, and other Futaba-based imageboards (such as 4chan) thrive on anonymity. Users of 4chan, in particular, interact in an anonymous and ephemeral environment that facilitates rapid generation of new trends.

7.1.1 History of online anonymity

Online anonymity can be traced to Usenet newsgroups in the late 1990s where the notion of using invalid emails for posting to newsgroups was introduced. This was primarily used for discussion on newsgroups pertaining to certain sensitive topics. There was also the introduction of anonymous remailers which were capable of stripping away the sender's address from mail packets before sending them to the receiver. Online services which facilitated anonymous posting sprang up around mid-1992, originating with the cypherpunk group.[1]

The precursor to Internet forums like 2channel and 4chan were textboards like Ayashii World and Amezou World that provided the ability for anonymous posts in Japan. These "large-scale anonymous textboards" were inspired by the Usenet culture and were primarily focused on technology, unlike their descendents.[2]

Today, image boards receive tremendous internet traffic from all parts of the world. In 2011, on 4chan's most popular board, /b/, there were roughly 35,000 threads and 400,000 posts created per day. At that time, that level of content was on par with YouTube. Such high traffic suggests a broad demand from internet users for anonymous content sharing sites.[3]

7.1.2 Levels of anonymity

Anonymity on the Internet can pertain to both the utilization of pseudonyms or requiring no authentication at all (also called "perfect anonymity") for posting on a website.[4] Online anonymity is also limited by IP addresses. For example, WikiScanner associates anonymous Wikipedia edits with the IP address that made the change and tries to identify the entity that owns the IP address. On other websites, IP addresses may not be publicly available, but they can be obtained from the website administrators only through legal intervention. They might not always be traceable to the poster.[5]

7.1.3 Techniques

Utilizing pseudonyms allow people to post without revealing their real identity. Pseudonyms, however, are still prone to being tracked to the user's IP address.[6] To avoid being tracked to an IP address, it is possible to post via a public computer where the IP address would usually be under the purview of the public workspace such as a coffee shop, and hence cannot be traced to the individual user.[6]

Memes

Another way people are posting anonymously online is through the use of memes. One popular meme is the Confession Bear meme. People use Confession Bear to post everything from funny and embarrassing stories to very-troubled thoughts.[7]

Technology

There are services described as anonymizers which aim to provide users the ability to post anonymously by hiding their identifying information. Anonymizers are essentially proxy servers which act as an intermediary between the user who wants to post anonymously and the website which logs user information such as IP addresses. The proxy server is the only computer in this network which is aware of the user's information and provides its
own information to anonymize the poster."[8] Examples of such anonymizers include I2P and Tor, which employ techniques such as onion and garlic routing to provide enhanced encryption to messages that travel through multiple proxy servers."[6]

Applications like PGP utilizing techniques like private-key and public-key encryptions are also utilized by users to post content in Usenet groups and other online forums."[9]

7.1.4 Legal standards and regulations

Main article: Doe subpoena

China

The revised draft of the Chinese government’s “Internet Information Services” "[10] proposes that "Internet information service providers, including microblogs, forums, and blogs, that allow users to post information on the Internet should ensure users are registered with their real identities” .[11]

The Philippines

The Philippine government passed the Cybercrime Prevention Act on 12 September 2012, which among other things grants the Department of Justice the ability to "block access to 'computer data' that is in violation of the Act; in other words, a website hosting criminally libelous speech could be shut down without a court order” .[12]

United Kingdom

Under the Defamation Act 2013, in an action against a website operator, on a statement posted on the website, it is a defence to show that it was not the operator who posted the statement on the website. The defence is defeated if it was not possible for the claimant to identify the person who posted the statement.

United States

In the United States, the right to speak anonymously online is protected by the First Amendment and various other laws. These laws restrict the ability of the government and civil litigants to obtain the identity of anonymous speakers. The First Amendment says that "Congress shall make no law ‘…abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press’. [13] This protection has been interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court to protect the right to speak anonymously offline.

For example, in McIntyre v. Ohio Elections Commission, the Supreme Court overturned an Ohio law banning the distribution of anonymous election pamphlets, claiming that an "author's decision to remain anonymous … is an aspect of the freedom of speech protected by the First Amendment" and that "anonymous pamphleteering is not a pernicious, fraudulent practice, but an honorable tradition of advocacy and of dissent", as well as a "shield against the so-called tyranny of the majority."[14] Various courts have interpreted these offline protections to extend to the online world."[15]

Identifying the author of an anonymous post may require a Doe subpoena. This involves gaining access to the IP address of the poster via the hosting website. The courts can then order an ISP to identify the subscriber to whom it had assigned said IP address. Requests for such data are almost always fruitful, though providers will often effect a finite term of data retention (in accordance with the privacy policy of each—local law may specify a minimum and/or maximum term). The usage of IP addresses has, in recent times, been challenged as a legitimate way to identify anonymous users."[16]

On March 21, 2012, the New York State Senate introduced the bill numbered S.6779 (and A.8668) labeled as the “Internet Protection Act”. It proposes the ability of a website administrator of a New York–based website to take down anonymous comments unless the original author of the comment agrees to identify themselves on the post."[17]

7.1.5 In online communities

Online communities vary with their stances on anonymous postings. Wikipedia allows anonymous editing in most cases but does not label users; instead, identifying them by their IP addresses, with other editors commonly referring to them with neutral terms such as “anons” or “IPs” .[18]

Many online bulletin boards require users to be signed to write—and, in some cases, even to read—posts. 2channel and other Futaba-based image boards take an opposite stance, encouraging the anonymity, and in the case of English-language Futaba-based websites, calling those who use usernames and tripcodes "namefags" and "tripfags", respectively."[19] As required by law, even communities such as 4chan do require the logging of IP addresses of such anonymous posters. Such data, however, can only be accessed by the particular site administrator.

Slashdot discourages anonymous posting by displaying "Anonymous Coward” as the author of each anonymous post. The mildly derogatory term is meant to chide anonymous contributors into logging in."[20][21]
7.1.6 Ramifications

Effects on users

The effects of posting online anonymously has been linked to the online disinhibition effect in users whilst been categorized into either benign or toxic disinhibition."[22] Disinhibition can result in misbehavior but can also improve user relationships. It may also result in greater disclosure among Internet users, allowing more emotional closeness and openness in a safe social context."[23]

Anonymous computer communication has also been linked to accentuate self-stereotyping."[24] Although it has been linked to notable effects in gender differences, only when the topic bears similarity and fits with the gender stereotype."[24]

A 2015 study suggested that anonymous news comment sections are more susceptible to uncivil comments, especially those directed at other users. Anonymous news comment section users are also more likely to be impolite by either being sarcastic and casting aspersions."[25]

With regard to a recent hostile subpoena in California, commentators have asked if there will be a "Layfield & Barrett effect" chilling job review posting free speech."[26][27] On May 2, 2016, through its lawyers, Layfield and Barrett and partner Phil Layfield issued a subpoena on Glassdoor seeking the online identities of former employees who posted extremely critical and negative reviews. Glassdoor executives have stated that they will fight the subpoena as they have fought off other efforts to disclose anonymous identities in the recent past."[28] Other litigants in California have won their right to anonymously post negative job reviews but the law remains hotly contested."[29][30]

Effects on online communities

The conditions for deindividuation, such as "anonymity, reduced self-awareness, and reduced self-regulation", fosters creations of online communities much in the same way that they might be employed offline."[31] This is evident in proliferation of communities such as Reddit or 4chan which utilize total anonymity or pseudonymity, or tools such as Informers (which add anonymity to non anonymous social media like Facebook or Twitter), to provide its users the ability to post varied content. The effect of disinhibition has been seen to be beneficial in "advice and discussion threads by providing a cover for more intimate and open conversations.".[32]

The "ephemerality," or the short-lived nature, of the posts that exist on some anonymous image boards such as 4chan create a fast paced environment. As of 2009, threads on 4chan had a median lifespan of 3.9 minutes."[33]

There is also research suggesting that content that gets posted in such communities also tends to be more deviant in nature than would be otherwise."[34] The ability to post anonymously has also been linked to the proliferation of pornography in newsgroups and other online forums wherein users utilize sophisticated mechanisms such as mentioned in technology."[9]

7.1.7 See also

- John Doe

7.1.8 References

[1] Rigby, Karina, "Anonymity on the Internet Must Be Protected"
[2] "Ayashii World"
[5] "Just how do websites track or monitor our activity?"
[10] "Internet Information Services (revised draft)". June 7, 2012
[13] First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
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[32] Bernstein et al, "4chan and /b/: An Analysis of Anonymity and Ephemerality in a Large Online Community"


7.1.9 External links

- Privacy for People Who Don’t Show Their Navel

7.2 Internet troll

“Trolling” redirects here. For other uses, see Troll (disambiguation).

“Do not feed the troll” redirects here. For the Wikipedia advice, see Wikipedia:Deny recognition.

In Internet slang, a troll (ˈtrol,ˈtrol) is a person who sows discord on the Internet by starting quarrels or upsetting people, by posting inflammatory, [1] extraneous, or off-topic messages in an online community (such as a newsgroup, forum, chat room, or blog) with the intent of provoking readers into an emotional response [2] or of otherwise disrupting normal, on-topic discussion, [3] often for the troll's amusement.

This sense of both the noun and the verb “troll” is associated with Internet discourse, but also has been used more widely. Media attention in recent years has focused on online harassment. For example, the mass media have used “troll” to mean “a person who faces Internet tribute sites with the aim of causing grief to families.” [4] [5] In addition, depictions of trolling have been included in popular fictional works, such as the HBO television program The Newsroom, in which a main character encounters harassing persons online and tries to infiltrate their circles by posting negative sexual comments.
7.2. INTERNET TROLL

7.2.1 Usage

Application of the term troll is subjective. Some readers may characterize a post as trolling, while others may regard the same post as a legitimate contribution to the discussion, even if controversial. Like any pejorative term, it can be used as an ad hominem attack, suggesting a negative motivation.

As noted in an OS News article titled "Why People Troll and How to Stop Them" (25 January 2012), "The traditional definition of trolling includes intent. That is, trolls purposely disrupt forums. This definition is too narrow. Whether someone intends to disrupt a thread or not, the results are the same if they do." [6][7] Others have addressed the same issue, e.g., Claire Hardaker, in her Ph.D. thesis [7] "Trolling in asynchronous computer-mediated communication: From user discussions to academic definitions." [8] Popular recognition of the existence (and prevalence) of non-deliberate, "accidental trolls", has been documented widely, in sources as diverse as Nicole Sullivan’s keynote speech at the 2012 Fluent Conference, titled "Don’t Feed the Trolls" [9] Gizmodo, [10] online opinions on the subject written by Silicon Valley executives [11] and comics. [12]

Regardless of the circumstances, controversial posts may attract a particularly strong response from those unfamiliar with the robust dialogue found in some online, rather than physical, communities. Experienced participants in online forums know that the most effective way to discourage a troll is usually to ignore it, because responding tends to encourage trolls to continue disruptive posts – hence the often-seen warning: "Please do not feed the trolls".

The “trollface” is an image occasionally used to indicate trolling in Internet culture. [13][14][15]

At times, the word can be abused to refer to anyone with controversial opinions they disagree with." [16] Such usages goes against the ordinary meaning of troll in multiple ways. While psychologists have determined that the dark triad traits are common among internet trolls, some observers claim trolls don’t actually believe the controversial views they claim. Farhad Manjoo criticises this view, noting that if the person really is trolling, they are a lot more intelligent than their critics would believe." [16]

7.2.2 Origin and etymology

There are competing theories of where and when “troll” was first used in Internet slang, with numerous unattested accounts of BBS and Usenet origins in the early 1980s or before.

The English noun “troll” in the standard sense of ugly dwarf or giant dates to 1610 and comes from the Old Norse word “troll” meaning giant or demon. [17]

The word evokes the trolls of Scandinavian folklore and children’s tales: antisocial, quarrelsome and slow-witted creatures which make life difficult for travellers. [18][19]

In modern English usage, “trolling” may describe the fishing technique of slowly dragging a lure or baited hook from a moving boat [20] whereas trawling describes the generally commercial act of dragging a fishing net. Early non-Internet slang use of “trolling” can be found in the military: by 1972 the term “trolling for MiGs” was documented in use by US Navy pilots in Vietnam. It referred to use of "...decoys, with the mission of drawing...fire away..." [21]

The contemporary use of the term is alleged to have appeared on the Internet in the late 1980s, [22][23] but the earliest known attestation according to the Oxford English Dictionary is in 1992. [24][25][26]

The context of the quote cited in the Oxford English Dictionary [25] sets the origin in Usenet in the early 1990s as in the phrase “trolling for newbies”, as used in alt.folklore.urban (AFU). [27][28] Commonly, what is meant is a relatively gentle inside joke by veteran users, presenting questions or topics that had been so overdone that only a new user would respond to them earnestly. For example, a veteran of the group might make a post on the common misconception that glass flows over time. Long-time readers would both recognize the poster’s name and know that the topic had been discussed a lot, but new subscribers to the group would not realize, and would thus respond. These types of trolls served as a practice to identify group insiders. This definition of trolling, considerably narrower than the modern understanding of the term, was considered a positive contribution. [27][29] One of the most notorious AFU trolls, David Mikkelson, [27] went on to create the urban folklore website Snopes.com.

By the late 1990s, alt.folklore.urban had such heavy traf-
fic and participation that trolling of this sort was frowned upon. Others expanded the term to include the practice of playing a seriously misinformed or deluded user, even in newsgroups where one was not a regular; these were often attempts at humor rather than provocation. The noun troll usually referred to an act of trolling – or to the resulting discussion – rather than to the author, though some posts panned on the dual meaning of troll.”[30]

In other languages

In Chinese, trolling is referred to as bái mì (Chinese: 白目; literally: “white eye”), which can be straightforwardly explained as “eyes without pupils”, in the sense that whilst the pupil of the eye is used for vision, the white section of the eye cannot see, and trolling involves blindly talking nonsense over the internet, having total disregard to sensitivities or being oblivious to the situation at hand, akin to having eyes without pupils. An alternative term is bái làn (Chinese: 白爛; literally: “white rot”), which describes a post completely nonsensical and full of folly made to upset others, and derives from a Taiwanese slang term for the male genitalia, where genitalia that is pale white in colour represents that someone is young, and thus foolish. Both terms originate from Taiwan, and are also used in Hong Kong and mainland China. Another term, xiào bái (Chinese: 小白; literally: “little white”) is a derogatory term that refers to both bái mì and bái làn that is used on anonymous posting internet forums. Another common term for a troll used in mainland China is pén zi (Chinese: 喷子; literally: “sprayer, spunter”).

In Japanese, tsuri (釣り) means “fishing” and refers to intentionally misleading posts whose only purpose is to get the readers to react, i.e. get trolled. arashi (荒らし) means “laying waste” and can also be used to refer to simple spamming.

In Icelandic, purs (a thurs) or troll (a troll) may refer to trolls, the verbs pursa (to troll) or pursast (to be trolling, to troll about) may be used.

In Korean, nak-si (나क시) means “fishing”, and is used to refer to Internet trolling attempts, as well as purposefully misleading post titles. A person who recognizes the troll after having responded (or, in case of a post title nak-si, having read the actual post) would often refer to himself as a caught fish.

In Portuguese, more commonly in its Brazilian variant, troll (produced [ˈtrɔw] in most of Brazil as spelling pronunciation) is the usual term to denote internet trolls (examples of common derivate terms are trollismo or trollingem, “trolling”, and the verb trollar, “to troll”, which entered popular use), but an older expression, used by those who want to avoid anglicisms or slangs, is complexo do pombo enxadrista to denote trolling behavior, and pompoms enxadristas (literally, “chessplayer pigeons”) or simply pompoms are the terms used to name the trolls. The terms are explained by an adage or popular saying: “Arguing with fulano (i.e., John Doe) is the same as playing chess with a pigeon: the pigeon defecates on the table, drop the pieces and simply fly, claiming victory.”

In Thai, the term krian (ถ้าร้าย) has been adopted to address Internet trolls. According to the Royal Institute of Thailand, the term, which literally refers to a closely cropped hairstyle worn by schoolboys in Thailand, is from the behaviour of these schoolboys who usually gather to play online games and, during which, make annoying, disruptive, impolite, or unreasonable expressions.[31] The term top krian (พอท่าร้าย; “slap a cropped head”) refers to the act of posting intellectual replies to refute and cause the messages of Internet trolls to be perceived as unintelligent.

In the Sinhala language, this is called ala kireema (අල් කිරීම), which means “Turning it into Potatoes (Sabotage)”. Sometimes it is used as ala vaga kireema (අල් වාක කිරීම) – “Planting Potatoes”. People/Profiles who does trolling often are called “Potato Planters” – ala vagaakaruvan (අල් වාකාකරුවන). This seems to be originated from university slang ala veda (අල් නොවේ) which means “Potato business” is used for breaking the laws/codes of the university.

7.2.3 Trolling, identity, and anonymity

Early incidents of trolling[32] were considered to be the same as flaming, but this has changed with modern usage by the news media to refer to the creation of any content that targets another person. The Internet dictionary NetLingo suggests there are four grades of trolling: playtime trolling, tactical trolling, strategic trolling, and domination trolling.[33] The relationship between trolling and flaming was observed in open-access forums in California, on a series of modem-linked computers. CommuniTree was begun in 1978 but was closed in 1982 when accessed by high school teenagers, becoming a ground for trashing and abuse.[34] Some psychologists have suggested that flaming would be caused by deindividuation or decreased self-evaluation: the anonymity of online postings would lead to disinhibition amongst individuals[35] Others have suggested that although flaming and trolling is often unpleasant, it may be a form of normative behavior that expresses the social identity of a certain user group.[36][37] According to Tom Postmes, a professor of social and organisational psychology at the universities of Exeter, England, and Groningen, The Netherlands, and the author of Individuality and the Group, who has studied online behavior for 20 years, “Trolls aspire to violence, to the level of trouble they can cause in an environment. They want it to kick off. They want to promote antipathetic emotions of disgust and outrage, which morbidly gives them a sense of pleasure.”[34]

The practice of trolling has been documented by a number of academics as early as the 1990s. This included
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Steven Johnson in 1997 in the book, Interface Culture, and Judith Donath in 1999. Donath’s paper outlines the ambiguity of identity in a disembodied “virtual community” such as Usenet:

In the physical world there is an inherent unity to the self, for the body provides a compelling and convenient definition of identity. The norm is: one body, one identity ... The virtual world is different. It is composed of information rather than matter.”[38]

Donath provides a concise overview of identity deception games which trade on the confusion between physical and epistemic community:

Trolling is a game about identity deception, albeit one that is played without the consent of most of the players. The troll attempts to pass as a legitimate participant, sharing the group’s common interests and concerns; the newsgroups members, if they are cognizant of trolls and other identity deceptions, attempt to both distinguish real from trolling postings, and upon judging a poster a troll, make the offending poster leave the group. Their success at the former depends on how well they – and the troll – understand identity cues; their success at the latter depends on whether the troll’s enjoyment is sufficiently diminished or outweighed by the costs imposed by the group.

Trolls can be costly in several ways. A troll can disrupt the discussion on a newsgroup, disseminate bad advice, and damage the feeling of trust in the newsgroup community. Furthermore, in a group that has become sensitized to trolling – where the rate of deception is high – many honestly naïve questions may be quickly rejected as trollings. This can be quite off-putting to the new user who upon venturing a first posting is immediately bombarded with angry accusations. Even if the accusation is unfounded, being branded a troll is quite damaging to one’s online reputation.”[38]

Susan Herring and colleagues in “Searching for Safety Online: Managing ‘Trolling’ in a Feminist Forum” point out the difficulty inherent in monitoring trolling and maintaining freedom of speech in online communities: “harassment often arises in spaces known for their freedom, lack of censure, and experimental nature”. [39]

Free speech may lead to tolerance of trolling behavior, complicating the members’ efforts to maintain an open, yet supportive discussion area, especially for sensitive topics such as race, gender, and sexuality.”[39]

In an effort to reduce uncivil behavior by increasing accountability, many web sites (e.g. Reuters, Facebook, and Gizmodo) now require commenters to register their names and e-mail addresses.”[40]

7.2.4 Corporate, political, and special interest sponsored trolls

See also: troll army and Megaphone desktop tool

Investigative journalist Sharyl Attkisson is one of several in the media who has reported on the increasing trend for organizations to utilize trolls to manipulate public opinion as part and parcel of an Astroturfing initiative. Teams of sponsored trolls, sometimes referred to as sockpuppet armies,”[41] swarm a site to overwhelm any honest discourse and denigrate any who disagree with them.”[42]

A 2012 Pew Center on the States presentation on Effective Messaging included two examples of social media posts by a recently launched “rapid response team” dedicated to promoting fluoridation of community water supplies. That same presentation also emphasized changing the topic of conversation as a winning strategy.”[43]

A 2016 study by Harvard political scientist Gary King reported that the Chinese government’s 50 Cent Party creates 440 million pro-government social media posts per year.”[44][45] The report said that government employees were paid to create pro-government posts around the time of national holidays to avoid mass political protests. The Chinese Government ran an editorial in the state-funded Global Times defending censorship and 50c party trolls.”[46]

A 2016 study for the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (NATO StratCom COE) on hybrid warfare notes that the Russian military intervention in Ukraine “demonstrated how fake identities and accounts were used to disseminate narratives through social media, blogs, and web commentaries in order to manipulate, harass, or deceive opponents.” [47](p3) The NATO report describes that a “Wikipedia troll” uses a type of message design where a troll does not add “emotional value” to reliable “essentially true” information in reposts, but presents it “in the wrong context, intending the audience to draw false conclusions.” For example, information, without context, from Wikipedia about the military history of the United States “becomes value-laden if it is posted in the comment section of an article criticizing Russia for its military actions and interests in Ukraine. The Wikipedia troll is ‘tricky’, because in terms of actual text, the information is true, but the way it is expressed gives it a completely different meaning to its readers.” [47](p62)

Unlike “classic trolls,” “Wikipedia trolls ‘have no emotional input, they just supply misinformation’ and are one of “the most dangerous” as well as one of “the most effective trolling message designs.” [47](pp70, 76) Even among people who are “emotionally immune to aggressive messages” and political, “training in critical thinking” is needed, according to the NATO report, because “they have relatively blind trust in Wikipedia sources and are not able to filter information that comes from platforms they consider authoritative.”[47](p72) While Russian-language hybrid trolls
use the Wikipedia troll message design to promote anti-Western sentiment in comments, they “mostly attack aggressively to maintain emotional attachment to issues covered in articles.” [47] (p75) Discussions about topics, other than International sanctions during the Ukrainian crisis, “attracted very aggressive trolling” and became polarized according to the NATO report, which “suggests that in subjects in which there is little potential for re-educating audiences, emotional harm is considered more effective” for pro-Russian Latvian-language trolls. [47] (p76)

7.2.5 Psychological characteristics

Researcher Ben Radford wrote about the phenomenon of clowns in history and modern day in his book Bad Clowns and found that bad clowns have evolved into Internet trolls. They do not dress up as traditional clowns but, for their own amusement, they tease and exploit “human foibles” in order to speak the “truth” and gain a reaction. Like clowns in make-up, Internet trolls hide behind “anonymous accounts and fake usernames.” In their eyes they are the trickster and are performing for a nameless audience via the Internet. [48]

7.2.6 Concern troll

A concern troll is a false flag pseudonym created by a user whose actual point of view is opposed to the one that the troll claims to hold. The concern troll posts in Web forums devoted to its declared point of view and attempts to sway the group’s actions or opinions while claiming to share their goals, but with professed “concerns”. The goal is to sow fear, uncertainty and doubt within the group. [49] This is a particular case of sockpuppeting.

An example of this occurred in 2006 when Tad Furtado, a staffer for then-Congressman Charles Bass (R-NH), was caught posing as a “concerned” supporter of Bass’ opponent, Democrat Paul Hodes, on several liberal New Hampshire blogs, using the pseudonyms “IndieNH” or “IndyNH”. “IndyNH” expressed concern that Democrats might just be wasting their time or money on Hodes, because Bass was unbeatable. [50] [51] Hodes eventually won the election.

Although the term “concern troll” originated in discussions of online behavior, it now sees increasing use to describe similar behaviors that take place offline. For example, James Wolcott of Vanity Fair accused a conservative New York Daily News columnist of “concern troll” behavior in his efforts to downplay the Mark Foley scandal. Wolcott links what he calls concern trolls to what Saul Alinsky calls “Do-Nothing’s”, giving a long quote from Alinsky on the Do-Nothing’s method and effects:

These Do-Nothings profess a commitment to social change for ideals of justice, equality, and opportunity, and then abstain from and discourage all effective action for change. They are known by their brand, ‘I agree with your ends but not your means’. [52]

The Hill published an op-ed piece by Markos Moulitsas of the liberal blog Daily Kos titled “Dems: Ignore ‘Concern Trolls’”. The concern trolls in question were not Internet participants but rather Republicans offering public advice and warnings to the Democrats. The author defines “concern trolling” as “offering a poisoned apple in the form of advice to political opponents that, if taken, would harm the recipient”. [53]

7.2.7 Troll sites

While many webmasters and forum administrators consider trolls a scourge on their sites, some websites welcome them. For example, a New York Times article discussed troll activity at 4chan and at Encyclopedia Dramatica, which it described as “an online compendium of troll humor and troll lore”. [22] 4chan’s /b/ board is recognized as “one of the Internet’s most infamous and active trolling hotspots”. [54] This site and others are often used as a base to troll against sites that their members can not normally post on. These trolls feed off the reactions of their victims because “their agenda is to take delight in causing trouble”. [55]

Another site, NationStates, while not a troll site, has been known to have an unknown number of self-proclaimed ‘professional trolls’, who claim to be paid by the administrators and moderators of the site to harass people speaking out against them over cases of cyber-bullying on the site by the admins and mods.

7.2.8 Media coverage and controversy

Mainstream media outlets have focused their attention on the willingness of some Internet users to go to extreme lengths to participate in organized psychological harassment.

Australia

In February 2010, the Australian government became involved after users defaced the Facebook tribute pages of murdered children Trinity Bates and Elliott Fletcher. Australian communications minister Stephen Conroy decried the attacks, committed mainly by 4chan users, as evidence of the need for greater Internet regulation, stating, “This argument that the Internet is some mystical creation that no laws should apply to, that is a recipe for anarchy and the wild west.” [56] Facebook responded by strongly urging administrators to be aware of ways to ban users and remove inappropriate content from Facebook pages. [57] In 2012, the Daily Telegraph started a
campaign to take action against “Twitter trolls”, who abuse and threaten users. Several high-profile Australians including Charlotte Dawson, Robbie Farah, Laura Dundovic, and Ray Hadley have been victims of this phenomenon.\[58\]\[59\]\[60\]

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, contributions made to the Internet are covered by the Malicious Communications Act 1988 as well as Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, under which jail sentences were, until 2015, limited to a maximum of six months.\[61\] In October 2014, the UK's Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling, said that “internet trolls” would face up to two years in jail, under measures in the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill that extend the maximum sentence and time limits for bringing prosecutions.\[61\]\[62\] The House of Lords Select Committee on Communications had earlier recommended against creating a specific offence of trolling. Sending messages which are “grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character” is an offence whether they are received by the intended recipient or not. Several people have been imprisoned in the UK for online harassment.\[63\]

Trolls of the testimonial page of Georgia Varley faced no prosecution due to misunderstandings of the legal system in the wake of the term trolling being popularized.\[64\] In October 2012, a twenty-year-old man was jailed for twelve weeks for posting offensive jokes to a support group for friends and family of April Jones.\[65\]

United States

On 31 March 2010, the Today Show ran a segment detailing the deaths of three separate adolescent girls and trolls’ subsequent reactions to their deaths. Shortly after the suicide of high school student Alexis Pilkington, anonymous posters began performing organized psychological harassment across various message boards, referring to Pilkington as a “suicidal slut”, and posting graphic images on her Facebook memorial page. The segment also included an expose of a 2006 accident, in which an eighteen-year-old fatally crashed her father’s car into a highway pylon; trolls emailed her grieving family the leaked pictures of her mutilated corpse.\[5\]

In 2007, the media was fooled by trolls into believing that students were consuming a drug called Jenkem, purportedly made of human waste. A user named Pickwick on TOTSE posted pictures implying that he was inhaling this drug. Major news corporations such as Fox News Channel reported the story and urged parents to warn their children about this drug. Pickwick’s pictures of Jenkem were fake and the pictures did not actually feature human waste.\[66\]

In August 2012, the subject of trolling was featured on the HBO television series The Newsroom. The character of Neal Sampat encounters harassing individuals online, particularly looking at 4chan, and he ends up choosing to post negative comments himself on an economics related forum. The attempt by the character to infiltrate trolls' inner circles attracted debate from media reviewers critiquing the series.\[67\]\[68\]

The publication of the 2015 non-fiction book The Dark Net: Inside the Digital Underworld by Jamie Bartlett, a journalist and a representative of the British think tank Demos, attracted some attention for its depiction of misunderstood sections of the internet, describing interactions on encrypted sites such as those accessible with the software Tor. Detailing trolling-related groups and the harassment created by them, Bartlett advocated for greater awareness of them and monitoring of their activities. Professor Matthew Wisnioski wrote for The Washington Post that a “league of trolls, anarchists, perverts and drug dealers is at work building a digital world beyond the Silicon Valley offices where our era’s best and brightest have designed a Facebook-friendly” surface and agreed with Bartlett that the activities of trolls go back decades to the Usenet ‘flame wars’ of the 1990s and even earlier.\[69\]

India

Newslaundry covered the phenomenon of “Twitter Trolling” in its Critics.\[70\] It has also been characterising Twitter trolls in its weekly podcasts.\[71\]

7.2.9 Examples

As reported on 8 April 1999, investors became victims of trolling via an online financial discussion regarding PairGain, a telephone equipment company based in California. Trolls operating in the stock’s Yahoo Finance chat room posted a fabricated Bloomberg News article stating that an Israeli telecom company could potentially acquire PairGain. As a result, PairGain’s stock jumped by 31%. However, the stock promptly crashed after the reports were identified as false.\[72\]

So-called Gold Membership trolling originated in 2007 on 4chan boards, when users posted fake images claiming to offer upgraded 4chan account privileges; without a “Gold” account, one could not view certain content. This turned out to be a hoax designed to fool board members, especially newcomers. It was copied and became an Internet meme. In some cases, this type of troll has been used as a scam, most notably on Facebook, where fake Facebook Gold Account upgrade ads have proliferated in order to link users to dubious websites and other content.\[73\]

The case of Zeran v. America Online, Inc. resulted primarily from trolling. Six days after the Oklahoma City bombing, anonymous users posted advertisements for
shirts celebrating the bombing on AOL message boards, claiming that the shirts could be obtained by contacting Mr. Kenneth Zeran. The posts listed Zeran’s address and home phone number. Zeran was subsequently harassed.”[72]

Anti-Scientology protests by Anonymous, commonly known as Project Chanology, are sometimes labeled as "trolling" by media such as Wired.[74] and the participants sometimes explicitly self-identify as “trolls”.

Neo-Nazi website The Daily Stormer orchestrates what it calls a “Troll Army”, and has encouraged trolling of Jewish MP Luciana Berger and Muslim activist Mariam Veiszadeh.”[75]

7.2.10 See also

- Anti-social behaviour
- Astroturfing
- Cyber-bullying
- Disengaging from an abuser using the no contact rule or grey rock method
- Flame war
- Fake news website
- Griefer
- Heckler
- Hit-and-run posting
- Narcissistic supply
- Patent troll
- Patriotic Nigras
- Poe’s law
- Sea lioning
- Shitposting
- Social gadfly
- Sockpuppet (Internet)

7.2.11 References

7.2. INTERNET TROLL


[29] Zotti, Ed et al. (14 April 2000). "What is a troll?". The Straight Dope. Retrieved 24 March 2009. To be fair, not all trolls are slimeballs. On some message boards, veteran posters with a mischievous bent occasionally go 'newbie trolling.'


CHAPTER 7. THE DARK SIDE OF THE INTERNET

7.2.12 Further reading


7.2.13 External links

Trolling advocacy and safety

- The Trolling Academy – trolling advice, comment, and training
- Get Safe Online – free expert advice on online safety

Background and definitions

- Usenet and Bulletin Board Abuse at DMOZ
- NetLingo definition
- Urban Dictionary definition
- Guide to Internetting, “breaks down every type of troll”

Academic and debate

- Searching for Safety Online: Managing “Trolling” in a Feminist Forum
- How to Respond to Internet Rage

7.3 Silk Road (marketplace)

For the historical trade routes, see Silk Road.

Silk Road was an online black market and the first modern darknet market, best known as a platform for selling illegal drugs. As part of the dark web, [6] it was operated as a Tor hidden service, such that online users were able
In February 2013, an Australian Department of Justice initiate the law enforcement authorities to shut it down, including publicly, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer asked federal law enforcement authorities to shut it down, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Department of Justice.

In June 2011, a steady stream of revenue, he started increasing oversight that the site’s pseudonymous founder “Dread Pirate Roberts”. [3] On 6 November 2013, Silk Road 2.0 came online, run by former administrators of Silk Road. [12] It too was shut down, and the alleged operator was arrested on 6 November 2014 as part of the so-called “Operation Onymous”.

Ulbricht was convicted of eight charges related to Silk Road in U.S. Federal Court in Manhattan and was sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole. [13] [1] [14]

7.3.1 History

Operations

Silk Road was founded in February 2011. [15] The name “Silk Road” comes from a historical network of trade routes started during the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) between Europe, India, China, and many other countries on the Afro-Eurasian landmass. Silk Road was operated by the pseudonymous “Dread Pirate Roberts” (named after the fictional character from The Princess Bride), who was known for espousing libertarian ideals and criticizing regulation. [3] [16] Two other individuals were also closely involved in the site’s growth and success, known as Variety Jones and Smedley. [17]

Henry Farrell, an associate professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, analyzed Silk Road in an essay for Aeon in 2015. [18] He noted that Ulbricht created the marketplace to function without government oversight but found it difficult to verify anonymous transactions. To sustain a steady stream of revenue, he started increasing oversight to ensure low transaction costs. To do this, he added measures to ensure trustworthiness with implementation of an automated escrow payment system and automated review system.

In June 2011, Gawker published an article about the site [19] which led to “Internet buzz” [15] and an increase in website traffic. [7] Once the site was known publicly, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer asked federal law enforcement authorities to shut it down, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Department of Justice. [20]

In February 2013, an Australian cocaine and MDMA (“ecstasy”) dealer became the first person to be convicted of crimes directly related to Silk Road, after authorities intercepted drugs that he was importing through the mail, searched his premises, and discovered his Silk Road alias in an image file on his personal computer. [21] Australian police and the DEA have targeted Silk Road users and made arrests, albeit with limited success at reaching convictions. [19] [22] [23] In December 2013, a New Zealand man was sentenced to two years and four months in jail after being convicted of importing 15 grams of methamphetamine that he had bought on Silk Road. [24] In May 2013, Silk Road was taken down for a short period of time by a sustained DDoS attack. [25] On 23 June 2013, it was first reported that the DEA seized 11.02 bitcoins, then worth $814, which the media suspected was a result of a Silk Road honeypot sting. [26] [27] [28] The FBI has claimed that the real IP address of the Silk Road server was found via data leaked directly from the site’s CAPTCHA, [29] but security researchers believe that the PHP login page was manipulated to output its $SERVER variable and real IP following site maintenance reconfiguration. [30]

Arrest and trial of Ross Ulbricht

The FBI has claimed that the real IP address of the Silk Road server was found via data leaked directly from the site’s CAPTCHA, [29] but security researchers believe that the PHP login page was manipulated to output its $SERVER variable and real IP following site maintenance reconfiguration. [30]

Ross Ulbricht was alleged by the FBI to be the founder and owner of Silk Road and the person behind the pseudonym “Dread Pirate Roberts” (DPR). He was arrested on 2 October 2013 in San Francisco [11] [31] [32] [33] at 3:15 p.m. PST [34] in Glen...
Ulbricht was indicted on charges of money laundering, computer hacking, conspiracy to traffic narcotics,\footnote{34}\footnote{35} and attempting to have six people killed.\footnote{36} Prosecutors alleged that Ulbricht paid $730,000 to others to commit the murders, although none of the murders actually occurred.\footnote{36} Ulbricht ultimately was not prosecuted for any of the alleged murder attempts.\footnote{37}

The FBI initially seized 26,000 bitcoins from accounts on Silk Road, worth approximately $3.6 million at the time. An FBI spokesperson said that the agency would hold the bitcoins until Ulbricht’s trial finished, after which the bitcoins would be liquidated.\footnote{38} In October 2013, the FBI reported that it had seized 144,000 bitcoins, worth $28.5 million, and that the bitcoins belonged to Ulbricht.\footnote{39} On 27 June 2014, the U.S. Marshals Service sold 29,657 bitcoins in 10 blocks in an online auction, estimated to be worth $18 million at current rates and only about a quarter of the seized bitcoins. Another 144,342 bitcoins were kept which had been found on Ulbricht’s computer, roughly $87 million.\footnote{40} Tim Draper bought the bitcoins at the auction with an estimated worth of $17 million, to lend them to a bitcoin start-up called Vaumum which is working in developing economies of emerging markets.\footnote{41}

Ulbricht’s trial began on 13 January 2015 in Federal Court in Manhattan.\footnote{42} At the start of the trial, Ulbricht admitted to founding the Silk Road website, but claimed to have transferred control of the site to other people soon after he founded it.\footnote{43} Ulbricht’s lawyers contended that Dread Pirate Roberts was really Mark Karpelès, and that Karpelès set up Ulbricht as a fall guy.\footnote{44} However, Judge Katherine B. Forrest ruled that any speculative statements regarding whether Karpelès or anyone else ran Silk Road would not be allowed, and statements already made would be stricken from the record.\footnote{45}

In the second week of the trial, prosecutors presented documents and chat logs from Ulbricht’s computer that, they said, demonstrated how Ulbricht had administered the site for many months, which contradicted the defense’s claim that Ulbricht had relinquished control of Silk Road. Ulbricht’s attorney suggested that the documents and chat logs were planted there by way of BitTorrent, which was running on Ulbricht’s computer at the time of his arrest.\footnote{45}

On 4 February 2015, the jury convicted Ulbricht of seven charges,\footnote{14} including charges of engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, narcotics trafficking, money laundering, and computer hacking. He faced 30 years to life in prison.\footnote{11}\footnote{12} The government also accused Ulbricht of paying for the murders of at least five people, but there is no evidence that the murders were actually carried out, and the accusations never became formal charges against Ulbricht.\footnote{46}\footnote{47} During the trial, Judge Forrest received death threats. Users of an underground site called The Hidden Wiki posted her personal information there, including her address and Social Security number. Ulbricht’s lawyer Joshua Dratel said that he and his client “obviously, and as strongly as possible, condemn the anonymous postings against the judge. “They do not in any way have anything to do with Ross Ulbricht or anyone associated with him or reflect his views or those of anyone associated with him”, Dratel said.\footnote{48}

In late March 2015, a criminal complaint issued by the United States District Court for the Northern District of California led to the arrest of two former federal agents who had worked undercover in the Baltimore Silk Road investigation of Ulbricht, former Drug Enforcement Administration agent Carl Mark Force IV and Secret Service agent Shaun Bridges.\footnote{49}\footnote{50} The agents are alleged to have kept funds that Ulbricht transferred to them in exchange for purported information about the investigation.\footnote{49}\footnote{51} The agents were charged with wire fraud and money laundering.\footnote{52} In late November 2016, Ulbricht’s lawyers brought forward a case on a third DEA agent, who they claim was leaking information about the investigation and tampered with evidence to omit chat logs showing conversations with him.\footnote{53}

On March 15, 2015, director/screenwriter Alex Winter debuted at the South by Southwest Film Festival a movie based on Silk Road. Deep Web gives the inside story of the arrest of Ross Ulbricht.\footnote{54}

In a letter to Judge Forrest before his sentencing, Ulbricht stated that his actions through Silk Road were committed through libertarian idealism and that “Silk Road was supposed to be about giving people the freedom to make their own choices” and admitted that he made a “terrible mistake” that “ruined his life”.\footnote{55}\footnote{56} On May 29, 2015, Ulbricht was given five sentences to be served concurrently, including two for life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.\footnote{57} He was also ordered to forfeit $183 million. Ulbricht’s lawyer Joshua Dratel said that he would appeal the sentencing and the original guilty verdict.\footnote{46}. On May 31, 2017, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit denied Ulbricht’s appeal, and affirmed the judgment of conviction and life sentence, in a written opinion authored by the Honorable Gerard E. Lynch, United States Circuit Judge.\footnote{58}

Other trials

Dutch drug dealer 23-year-old Cornelis Jan “Maikel” Slomp\footnote{59} pleaded guilty for large scale selling of drugs through the Silk Road website and was sentenced in Chicago to 10 years in prison on 29 May 2015 with his attorney, Paul Petruzza, present.\footnote{60}\footnote{61} Dealer Steven Sadler was sentenced to five years in prison. There have been over 130 other arrests connected with The Silk Road, although some of these arrests may not be directly
related to The Silk Road, and may not be public information due to legal reasons."[62]\[63]\[64]

7.3.2 Products

In March 2013, the site had 10,000 products for sale by vendors, 70% of which were drugs.\[19]\[65] In October 2014, there were 13,756 listings for drugs, grouped under the headings stimulants, psychedelics, prescription precursors, other opioids, ecstasy, dissociatives, and steroids/PEDs.\[77]\[15]\[66]\[67] Fake driver’s licenses were also offered for sale.\[68] The site’s terms of service prohibited the sale of certain items. When the Silk Road marketplace first began the creator and administrators instituted terms of service that prohibited the sale of anything whose purpose was to "harm or defraud" .\[15]\[69] This included child pornography, stolen credit cards, assassinations, and weapons of any type; other darknet markets such as Black Market Reloaded gained user notoriety because they were not as restrictive on these items as the Silk Road incarnations were.\[65]\[70] There were also legal goods and services for sale, such as apparel, art, books, cigarettes, erotica, jewelry, and writing services. A sister site, called "The Armory," sold weapons (primarily guns) during 2012, but was shut down because of a lack of demand.\[71]\[72] Buyers were able to leave reviews of sellers’ products on the site, and in an associated forum where crowdsourcing provided information about the best sellers and worst scammers.\[73] Most products were delivered through the mail, with the site’s seller's guide instructing sellers how to vacuum-seal their products to escape detection.\[74]

7.3.3 Sales

![Silk Road Payment System Flowchart]

A flowchart depicting Silk Road’s payment system. Exhibit 113 A, entered into evidence at Ulbricht’s trial.

Based on data from 3 February 2012 to 24 July 2012, an estimated $15 million in transactions were made annually on Silk Road.\[75]\[76] Twelve months later, Nicholas Christin, the study’s author, said in an interview that a major increase in volume to "somewhere between $30 million and $45 million" would not surprise him.\[77] Buyers and sellers conducted all transactions with bitcoins (BTC), a cryptocurrency that provides a certain degree of anonymity.\[77] Silk Road held buyers’ bitcoins in escrow until the order had been received and a hedging mechanism allowed sellers to opt for the value of bitcoins held in escrow to be fixed to their value in US$ at the time of the sale to mitigate against Bitcoin’s volatility. Any changes in the price of bitcoins during transit were covered by Dread Pirate Roberts.\[79]

The complaint published when Ulbricht was arrested included information the FBI gained from a system image of the Silk Road server collected on 23 July 2013. It noted that, "From February 6, 2011 to July 23, 2013 there were approximately 1,229,465 transactions completed on the site. The total revenue generated from these sales was 9,519,664 Bitcoins, and the total commissions collected by Silk Road from the sales amounted to 614,305 Bitcoins. These figures are equivalent to roughly $1.2 billion in revenue and $79.8 million in commissions, at current Bitcoin exchange rates..." , according to the September 2013 complaint, and involved 146,946 buyers and 3,877 vendors.\[11] This statement was made to emphasize the importance of the operation, because in the years 2011-2013 the value of 9,519,664 Bitcoins was $0.2 billion.\[80] According to information users provided upon registering, 30 percent were from the United States, 27 percent chose to be "undeclared", and beyond that, in descending order of prevalence: the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Canada, Sweden, France, Russia, Italy, and the Netherlands. During the 60-day period from 24 May to 23 July, there were 1,217,218 messages sent over Silk Road’s private messaging system.\[11]

7.3.4 Similar sites

The Farmer’s Market was a Tor site similar to Silk Road, but which did not use bitcoins.\[81] It has been considered a 'proto-Silk Road' but the use of payment services such as PayPal and Western Union allowed law enforcement to trace payments and it was subsequently shut down by the FBI in 2012.\[73]\[82]\[83] Other sites already existed when Silk Road was shut down and The Guardian predicted that these would take over the market that Silk Road previously dominated.\[84]\[85] Sites named ‘Atlantis’, closing in September 2013, and Project Black Flag, closing in October 2013, each stole their users’ bitcoins.\[12] In October 2013, the site named Black Market Reloaded closed down temporarily after the site’s source code was leaked.\[12] The market shares of various Silk Road successor sites were described by The Economist in May 2015.\[86]
7.3.5 Book Club

Silk Road had a Tor-based book club that continued to operate following the initial site's closure and even following the arrest of one of its members. Reading material included conspiracy theories and computer hacking. Some of the titles included mainstream books as well as books that contained terrorist information such as *The Anarchist Cookbook* and *Defeating Electromagnetic Door Locks*. Most of the titles on this book club were pirated. This book club still lives on through a private Tor based chatroom. [*87][88]

7.3.6 Direct successors

**Silk Road 2.0**

![Alert placed on the Silk Road's homepage following its being seized by the U.S. government and European law enforcement](image)

On 6 November 2013, administrators from the closed Silk Road relaunched the site, led by a new pseudonymous Dread Pirate Roberts, and dubbed it “Silk Road 2.0”. It recreated the original site's setup and promised improved security. [*12] The new DPR took the precaution of distributing encrypted copies of the site's source code to allow the site to be quickly recreated in the event of another shutdown. [*89]

On 20 December 2013, it was announced that three alleged Silk Road 2.0 administrators had been arrested; [*90] two of these suspects, Andrew Michael Jones and Gary Davis, were named as the administrators "Inigo" and "Libertas" who had continued their work on Silk Road 2.0. [*91] Around this time, the new Dread Pirate Roberts abruptly surrendered control of the site and froze its activity, including its escrow system. A new temporary administrator under the screenname "Defcon" took over and promised to bring the site back to working order. [*92]

On 13 February 2014, Defcon announced that Silk Road 2.0's escrow accounts had been compromised through a vulnerability in Bitcoin's protocol called "transaction malleability". [*93] While the site remained online, all the bitcoins in its escrow accounts, valued at $2.7 million, were reported stolen. [*93] It was later reported that the vulnerability was in the site's "Refresh Deposits" function, and that the Silk Road administrators had used their commissions on sales since 15 February to refund users who lost money, with 50 percent of the hack victims being completely repaid as of 8 April. [*94]

On 6 November 2014, authorities with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Europol, and Eurojust announced the arrest of Blake Benthall, allegedly the owner and operator of Silk Road 2.0 under the pseudonym "Defcon", the previous day in San Francisco as part of Operation Onymous. [*5][95]

**Others**

Following the closure of Silk Road 2.0 in November 2014, Diabolus Market renamed itself to 'Silk Road 3 Reloaded' in order to capitalise on the brand. [*96]

In January 2015, Silk Road Reloaded launched on I2P with multiple cryptocurrency support and similar listing restrictions to the original Silk Road market. [*97] This website is also defunct.

7.3.7 Advocates of Deepweb Drug Sales

Meghan Ralston, a former “harm reduction manager” for the Drug Policy Alliance, was quoted as saying that the Silk Road was "a peaceable alternative to the often deadly violence so commonly associated with the global drug war, and street drug transactions, in particular". Proponents of the Silk Road and similar sites argue that buying illegal narcotics from the safety of your home is better than buying them in person from criminals on the streets. [*98][99]

7.3.8 See also

- Agorism
- Bitcoin protocol
- Crypto-anarchism
- Dark web
- Darknet
- Darknet market
- Deep Web (film)
- Variety Jones and Smedley
- OpenBazaar
- War on Drugs
7.3.9 References

Notes


[9] Dread Pirate Roberts (26 June 2011). “New seller accounts”. Silk Road forums. Retrieved 5 August 2013. [...] we shut down new seller accounts briefly, but have now opened them up again. This time, we are limiting the supply of new seller accounts and auctioning them off to the highest bidders. Our hope is that by doing this, only the most professional and committed sellers will have access to seller accounts. For the time being, we will be releasing one new seller account every 48 hours, though this is subject to change. If you want to become a seller on Silk Road, click “become a seller” at the bottom of the homepage, read the seller contract and the Seller’s Guide, click “I agree” at the bottom, and then you’ll be taken to the bidding page. Here, you should enter the maximum bid you are willing to make for your account upgrade. The system will automatically outbid the next highest bidder up to this amount. [...] 

[10] Dread Pirate Roberts (1 July 2011). “New seller accounts”. Silk Road forums. Retrieved 5 August 2013. [...] We received a threat from a very disturbed individual who said they would pose as a legitimate vendor, but send carcinogenic and poisonous substances instead of real products and because seller registration is open, they would just create a new account as soon as they got bad feedback. This was shocking and horrifying to us and we immediately closed new seller registration. Of course we need new sellers, though, so we figured that charging for new seller accounts would deter this kind of behavior. [...] 


[17] Cox, Joseph (10 September 2015). "These Are The Two Forgotten Architects of Silk Road”


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[64] "Silk Road drug dealer who cooperated, then fled, sentenced to five years". * Ars Technica. Retrieved 7 November 2015.


[70] Amrutha Gayathri (11 June 2011). "From marijuana to LSD, now illegal drugs delivered on your doorstep". *International Business Times.*


[77] Howell O'Neill, Patrick (13 July 2013). "How big is the Internet's most notorious black market?". *The Daily Dot.* Retrieved 1 August 2013.

[78] "Bitcoin Anonymity".


[93] Brandon, Russell (13 February 2014). "The Silk Road 2 has been hacked for $2.7 million". *The Verge.* Retrieved 14 February 2014.

[94] Joseph Cox (22 April 2014). "How Silk Road Bounced Back from its $1 Million Dollar Hack". *Vice.* Using this, the hacker was able to spam the link and exponentially credit their account with more and more bitcoins, taking them out of the section of Silk Road that stored the currency while it was being traded... According to Silk Road staff members, 50 percent of the hack victims had been completely repaid as of April 8, and users themselves have been contumaciously reporting payments since the breach, posting on the site forum when they receive their payment. Since February 15, the administration of the site has not made any commissions on sales. Instead, every time a purchase is made, a five percent slice of the cost goes directly into the account of a randomly determined hack victim.
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Further reading


- Eileen Ormsby, The drug’s in the mail // The Age, Victoria, 27 April 2012

- Eileen Ormsby, «The new underbelly» // The Sydney Morning Herald, 1 June 2012

- Brennon Slattery, U.S. Senators Want to Shut Down Bitcoins, Currency of Internet Drug Trade // PC World, 10 June 2011

- Brett Wolf, Senators seek crackdown on “Bitcoin” currency // Reuters, 8 June 2011

- Criminal complaint against Carl Mark Force IV and Shaun W. Bridges (Archive). U.S. Department of Justice. - Criminal complaint against a DEA agent and a USSS agent accused of defrauding the government, wire fraud, and/or money laundering in relation to the Baltimore Silk Road investigation

- “Silk Road, the underground website where you can buy any drug imaginable, is back and busier than ever”. The Huffington Post. 1 May 2014.

- “Silk Road: eBay For Drugs”. Addiction
7.4. YOUTUBE POOP

YouTube Poop, often abbreviated as YTP, is a type of video mashup, created by editing preexisting media sources to create or convey a story, while others follow a non-linear narrative. Some contain no storyline at all. [1]

Alternatively, a YouTube Poop may consist solely of an existing video repeated in a slowed or remixed loop. [2]

In many cases, YouTube Poops utilize a bizarre sequence of elements that may entertain, confuse or irritate, depending on the viewer. [1]

Media sources of YouTube Poops may include television shows, movies, cartoons, commercials, video games, and other videos obtained from YouTube or elsewhere. There is no generally accepted limitation as to what kind of source material may be used for a YouTube Poop. Some primary sources include cutscenes from Zelda: The Wand of Gamelon, Link: The Faces of Evil, Hotel Mario and I.M. Meen as well as SpongeBob SquarePants, Teen Titans Go!, Caillou, My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic and works featuring Michael Rosen, Billy Mays and Dr. Rabbit. YouTube: Online Video and Participatory Culture notes YouTube Poop having a particular fascination with "low" Saturday-morning American cartoons from the 1990s such as The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!, Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog and Mega Man as well as anime series, video game cutscenes and videos from YouTube itself." [4]

YouTube Poop is often derivative in the sense that the work of one artist (or "pooper") is sometimes used as the underlying work for another video. Lawrence Lessig, Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, referred to this behavior as an example of "call & response" within a remix culture. [5]

7.4.2 Copyright and fair use

Due to the use of copyright materials and the manner in which these sources are depicted, YTP videos may be removed from YouTube following a DMCA complaint. However, political scientist and author Trajce Cvetkovski noted in 2013 that, despite Viacom filing a copyright infringement lawsuit with YouTube in 2007, YouTube Poops such as "The Sky Had a Weegee" by Hurricoaster, which features scenes from the animated series SpongeBob SquarePants (in particular, the episode, "Shanghaied") and a satiric caricature based on Nintendo's Luigi as he appears in the educational video game Mario Is Missing!, remained on YouTube. [6]

The law in the United Kingdom does allow people to use copyrighted material for the purposes of parody, pastiche, and caricature without infringing on the copyright of the material." [7] Copyright owners are only able to sue the parody, pastiche, or caricature creator if the parody, pastiche, or caricature contains hateful or discriminative messages. If the case is then taken to court, it will be down to a judge to decide whether the video meets these criteria." [8]

7.4.3 Individual responses

Individuals involved in YouTube Poops sometimes make efforts to take their videos down due to the mature and defamatory content prevalent in them, especially if they have a large audience of children watching their work. Children's poet Michael Rosen (who claims to have "become a cult" among YouTube Poopers) [9] initially attempted to take his videos down, but after a few frank discussions with YouTube Poopers, he decided to allow the videos to stay online." [9] Rosen issued a warning on

- Australian Penthouse story: "The High Road: Silk Road, an online marketplace like no other", January 2012
- SILK ROAD: A VICIOUS BLOW TO THE WAR ON DRUGS
- Shopping on The Dark Web: Pure Drugs and Plastic Explosives reportage from Sabotage Times
- "Unravelling the dark web" (GQ)

7.3.10 External links

- "Silk Road' website called the Amazon of heroin, cocaine". ABC Action News. YouTube. 10 June 2011
- "Silk Road: Theory & Practice"
- "United States of America v. Ross William Ulbricht" Grand Jury Indictment, District of Maryland (1 October 2013)
- Archived early advertisement page for Silk Road
his website, saying that:

7.4.4 See also

- Anime music video
- Downfall Parodies
- Netdisaster
- Vidding

7.4.5 References


[3] Electronic Frontier Foundation. “In the matter of exemption to prohibition on circumvention of copyright protection systems for access control technologies” (PDF).


Chapter 8

Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

8.1 Text

- Cyberculture Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyberculture


195

- Source: Linkdicas, Luca2valhua, Magic links bot and Anonymous: 99

- Source: Linkdicas, Luca2valhua, Magic links bot and Anonymous: 99

195
CHAPTER 8. TEXT AND IMAGE SOURCES, CONTRIBUTORS, AND LICENSES
8.2 Images

- **File:10elqpi.jpg** Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/93/10elqpi.jpg License: CC BY-SA 3.0 Contributors: Transferred from en.wikipedia to Commons. Original artist: The original uploader was Ladislav Mecir at English Wikipedia


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- **File:Ambox_current_red.svg** Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0f/Ambox_current_red.svg License: CC0 Contributors: self-made, inspired by Gnome globe current event.svg, using Information icons.svg and Earth clip art.svg Original artist: Vipersnake151, pubnabag, Tkgd2007 (clock)

- **File:Ambox_important.svg** Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b4/Ambox_important.svg License: Public domain Contributors: Own work based on: Ambox scales.svg Original artist: Donurut, pubnabag

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