

# Summary Report of Social Media Tools



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The honeycomb model of social media includes seven common facets that can help individuals and media managers make sense of social networking sites and to understand how to engage the users of these sites in a meaningful way.

# Summary Report of Social Media Tools

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## Introduction

Humans are very social creatures. We tend to resemble the activity of bees in a beehive. Four individuals from the Segal Graduate School of Business<sup>1</sup> have adopted and adapted a honeycomb model of mapping human interaction in the course of social media by taking a beehive of seven functional building blocks<sup>2</sup> and evaluating the interactions and relations of individuals as we use the internet and as we join social networks. This honeycomb model brings the interactions, and the purpose of the interactions, into focus in the same way that a camera lens brings an object into focus. This honeycomb model is intended to lay a solid foundation to support the observation of social interaction and to put it into a framework for the comparison of social media sites and tools.

## The analysis method used

The honeycomb model includes seven common facets, or “elements”, of social networking sites including: Identity, Conversations, Sharing, Presence, Relationships, Reputation, and Groups.

As Kietzmann, et al., state: *“There currently exists a rich and diverse ecology of social media sites, which vary in terms of their scope and functionality. Some sites are for the general masses...other sites... are more focused professional networks.”*<sup>3</sup> It is true that we are experiencing an abundance of social media sites that serve a multitude of purposes. Many sites are similar in function and have a far reach across all continents. Others are very specialized and serve only a focused audience.

So how do we categorize social media sites and what is a representative sample that we can compare? For our purposes, I have chosen ten sites that I was previously unfamiliar with. These sites are: Academia.edu, Foursquare, Google+, Indaba Music, Millat Facebook, Netlog, Skyrock, The Christian Social Network (Cross.tv), Tumblr, and Zorpia.

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## The analysis of ten social media sites:



### 1. Academia.edu

Academia.edu is a social networking website for academics that was founded by Richard Price. It was launched in September 2008.<sup>4</sup> The platform is designed to share research, monitor deep analytics around the impact of the research, and to track the

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<sup>1</sup> Jan H. Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian P. McCarthy, and Bruno S. Silvestre of the Segal Graduate School of Business, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.  
Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *ElSevier. Business Horizons* (2011) 54, 241—251.

<sup>2</sup> See the Appendix for a visual representation.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* (p. 242)

<sup>4</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academia.edu>

research of academics that users follow. The site's mission is to accelerate the world's research.

About 3.2 million academics have signed up to Academia.edu, and have added about 1.7 million papers, and 756,146 research interests. Academia.edu attracts over 5 million unique visitors a month.<sup>5</sup>

No macro-level demographics are available for the site, so a dominant gender and age range of the site's users is not available. (The founder cited privacy concerns as a reason why these metrics are not tracked.) The individual user has the ability to track visitor metrics by country but not by age or gender demographics.

**Identity** – no minimum age to join, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional. Students and scholars share their identity freely. This site allows Facebook profile syncing.

**Conversations** take place through chat, blogs, e-mails and posted comments.

**Sharing** is one of the key factors of this site. Comments about uploaded papers are welcomed from registered users.

**Presence** primarily takes place through chat windows. Physical presence does not seem to have a bearing on this site except for language-related geographical contexts.

**Relationships** take place through friend invites and through collaboration on research.

**Reputation** is a key element because of the nature of publishing research and collaborating.

**Groups** are formed through research topics and can be chosen through a dashboard menu.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Academia.edu site indicates that it has a high social presence that clusters around Sharing, Identity, and Reputation. Businesses would primarily be interested in this site as a research partner. With traffic of slightly over 3 million, this site is more useful to scholars and the niche markets that research presents.



## 2. Foursquare

Foursquare is a location-based social networking website and a software application for mobile devices. Foursquare allows registered users to connect with friends and update their location.<sup>6</sup> Users can choose to have their Twitter or Facebook accounts updated when they check in. Foursquare can enable push-notifications of friend updates. Users can earn badges by checking in at locations with certain tags or for check-in frequency. Foursquare was co-founded in 2009 by Dennis Crowley and Naveen Selvadurai.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>5</sup> <http://www.academia.edu/about>

<sup>6</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/85/Foursquare>

<sup>7</sup> <https://foursquare.com/about/>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 18, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is typically shared from Facebook or Twitter accounts. 24% of the Foursquare members are from the United States. The Foursquare site receives about 6.7 million visitors per month.<sup>8</sup>

**Conversations** are not relevant.

**Sharing** occurs through “likes” and recommendations of places visited and through status updates.

**Presence** occurs through checking-in. Users that want to follow celebrities or meet their friends can meet up through real time check-ins. (Location services have to be enabled and the mobile device application is a popular tool to keep friends connected and updated.)

**Relationships** - Users build relationships by sending invitations to “add” friends. The friend has to accept the invitation. This is done through search functionality (finding existing Foursquare users by name). Existing relationships can also be cultivated and these friends can be exported from the users e-mail contacts in their address book, Twitter, or Facebook.

**Reputation** is gained over time through recommendations and becoming a super user.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Foursquare site indicates that it has a medium social presence that clusters around Presence and Groups. Businesses would primarily be interested in partnering with this tool to drive customers to their own business. With traffic of 6.7 million visitors per month, this site attracts a large number of female visitors over 35 who want to be connected with a community.



### 3. Google+

Google+ is a social network operated by Google, Inc. It was launched in 2011. Google+ is a general purpose social network that focuses on targeted sharing within “Circles” of your social group.<sup>9</sup> Circles can be categorized as Friends, Family, Acquaintances, Following, etc.



Google+ is currently available in 12 languages and has more than 343 million members.<sup>10</sup> Monthly visitor information was not available from social-media.entrepreneur.com. Wikipedia sources estimate monthly visits of 235 million from active users.<sup>11</sup>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 13, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Conversations** occur through many channels and this is one of the features that users admire, Chat, video chat, e-mail, blogs, commenting are all available within the

<sup>8</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/85/Foursquare>

<sup>9</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/203/Google>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.globalwebindex.net/social-platforms-gwi-8-update-decline-of-local-social-media-platforms/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google%2B>

same platform.

**Sharing** is another key feature with the integrated platform of Google docs and Google Drive.

**Presence** is recognized through Google chat availability and is trending upward.

**Relationships** - Existing relationships can also be cultivated and these friends can be exported from the users e-mail contacts in their address book, Twitter, or Facebook.

**Reputation** is gained through the number of followers, posts and blogs. Because Google can link to many applications, security and trust are crucial.

**Groups** are one of the dominate features of Google+. Communities are relatively easy to form based on friendships and interests.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Google+ site and mobile application indicates that it has a high social presence that includes rich media, a synchronous community with close-knit groups. All of the elements are utilized and balanced so that there isn't a cluster.

Businesses would be wise to continue monitoring traffic and exploring ways to generate revenue through teaming up with Google. With traffic estimates of 235 million monthly visits from active users this site attracts a large number of male visitors 25

and up. Users can take advantage of all the elements that they enjoy. I surmise that this will continue to be a top pick for all user demographics and a site I recommend out of all that I researched.



### 4. Indaba Music

Indaba Music was launched in 2007 with the goal of making musicians' lives easier.<sup>12</sup> Indaba is a Zulu word for community and collaboration and was chosen because the platform was designed as a way to meet new people and share ideas to create music.<sup>13</sup> It has grown to over 700,000 at all performance levels. The Indaba platform helps musicians form networks, gain education, produce music, promote themselves, and to distribute their music.

Indaba Music social networking site has an estimated 250,000 - 500,000 users. No macro-level demographics are reported on the social-media.entrepreneur.com site, so a dominant gender and age range of the site's users is not available.<sup>14</sup>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 13, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional. This site allows Facebook profile syncing.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.indabamusic.com/about>

<sup>13</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indaba\\_Music](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indaba_Music)

<sup>14</sup> <http://social-networking.findthebest.com/q/253/358/How-many-people-use-Indaba-Music-social-networking-site>



**Conversations** occur through many channels and this is one of the features that musicians prefer. Chat, e-mail, blogs, commenting are all part of the dashboard feature.

**Sharing** is also done through the dashboard. Users can collaborate and share music files in common industry formats.

**Presence** is recognized through chat availability. Technology enables collaboration without the need for colocation.

**Relationships** - Existing relationships can also be cultivated and these friends can be exported from the users e-mail contacts in their address book, Twitter, or Facebook.

**Reputation** is gained through followers and producing music that users vote on. Self-promotion is a key feature.

**Groups** Communities are relatively easy to form based on musical genres and interests.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of Indaba Music site indicates that it has a low social presence on one end of spectrum and rich media and self-promotion at the other end. With traffic estimates of 500,000 users this site caters to musicians and their fans. Royalties are of interest to businesses that want to partner with this site and it provides opportunities in the music recording and distribution market. Users can take advantage of all the elements that they enjoy, including collaboration.



### 5. Millat Facebook

The objective of this site is to provide a network platform for all Muslims and people of all religions and faiths. One of the site's principles is that users should interact in a way that is socially responsible. The site is intended to provide this medium of exchange by allowing freedom of expression while still respecting each other's sentiments, sensitivities and beliefs.



Millat Facebook began as a response to the protest of images of Muhammad that were posted on Facebook. These images were not removed even after complaints from the Muslim community. This was taken as an insult to the Muslim faith and a new social network site was founded in Pakistan and grew in recognition.

Information about site usage is difficult to come by.<sup>15</sup> 18-24 year olds were the largest user group and males were more frequent users by a ratio of two to one. An article published by Rana Tanveer on January 2, 2013 in the International Herald Tribune Express (entitled, *After two years, Millat Facebook is on the verge of collapse*) states that: "According to Meer, Millat Facebook has over 476,000 members, though he did not specify how many were active."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://msstat.com/overview/millatfacebook.com>

<sup>16</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/487579/angry-social-network-after-two-years-millat-facebook-is-on-the-verge-of-collapse/>

**Identity** – there is no minimum age to join, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Conversations** – take place through friendships that provide e-mail, chat, and blogging.

**Sharing** – rich and diverse opportunities for sharing the full spectrum of videos, recipes, music, audio files, games, markets, free scriptures of the Koran, etc.

**Presence** Chat with friends is available, but doesn't seem to be the focus of the site.

**Relationships, Reputation, Groups** are all held in high esteem and utilized.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Millat Facebook site indicates that it has a medium social presence with engaged interactions. There is a cluster around Sharing, Identity, and Reputation. People of like faith share in a common identity and their values are part of their reputation. Businesses advertise heavily on this site and it detracts from its usability. With traffic of slightly under 500,000 it serves a limited market.



## 6. Netlog

Netlog™ (formerly known as Facebox and Bingbox) is a Belgian social networking website specifically targeted at the Global youth demographic. The site was founded in July 2003 in Ghent, Belgium.

**NETLOG™**  
**Live it. Log it.**

On Netlog, members can create their own web page, extend their social network, publish their music playlists, share videos and post blogs.<sup>17</sup> Netlog is currently available in 20 languages and has more than 59 million members throughout Europe. It receives about 13 million visitors per month.<sup>18</sup> It is considered to be the ultimate tool for young people to connect and communicate with their social network. Finding friends and dating are key areas.<sup>19</sup>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 13, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Conversations** occur through many channels. Chat, e-mail, blogs, commenting are all available on this site.

**Sharing** – rich opportunities for sharing through videos, blogs, home pages, music, audio files and links to external pages.

**Presence** is recognized through chat and meet ups occur.

**Relationships** – are established through friendship and dating requests. Many users have thousands of friends and trust and reputation seem to be lacking.

**Groups** are primarily formed through the gaming sub sites.

<sup>17</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netlog>

<sup>18</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/46/Netlog>

<sup>19</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/46/Netlog>

## Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Netlog site indicates that it has a high social presence that includes rich media and a synchronous community. With traffic of 13 million visitors per month, this site attracts a large number of 18-34 year old male visitors. Relationship building is a key facet but trust issues are a problem. Some content is inappropriate and businesses have to identify if this is the target audience to pursue.



## 7. Skyrock

Skyrock.com is a social networking site that offers a free space on the web to allow its users to create blogs, add profiles, and exchange messages with other registered members. The site also offers a specific space for members who create blogs to showcase their own musical compositions. Back in its earlier days of 2008, Skyrock was ranked as the world's seventh largest social network with over 21 million visitors. Skyrock.com began as a blogging site, Skyblog.com, founded by Skyrock CEO Pierre Bellanger in December 2002. In May 2007, after abandoning the Skyblog.com brand, Skyrock.com was launched as a full-scale social network.<sup>20</sup>



Skyrock is currently available in 3 languages and is most popular in Europe. It receives about 8.3 million visitors per month. Only 2.6% of Skyrock members are from the United States and 55% of members are between 18 and 24 years old, which is moderately less than the average for all Social Media.<sup>21</sup>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 18, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Conversations** – occur through many channels. Chat, e-mail, blogs, commenting are all available on this site.

**Sharing** – is a common practice and music is the hinge pin.

**Presence** – is recognized through chat and meet ups occur.

**Relationships** – are established through friendship and dating requests. Many users have thousands of friends and trust and reputation seem to be lacking.

**Groups** – are primarily formed through the gaming sub sites.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Skyrock site indicates that it has a high social presence that includes rich media and a synchronous community. With traffic 8.3 million visitors per month this site generates competition for Netlog and Zorpia. Relationship building is a key facet but like Netlog, trust issues are a problem. Many users use a pseudo-identity and some content is



<sup>20</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skyrock>

<sup>21</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/173/Skyrock>



inappropriate. Shared music is a draw for individuals and businesses interested in pursuing that medium.

## 8. The Christian Social Network (Cross.tv)



Cross.tv is a multi-lingual, faith-based, online social media community which is a free service for everyone to enjoy.

Cross.tv's values and moral standards provide a family-friendly online network featuring various media sharing functionalities. The cross.tv community reflects a variety of Christian ministries, churches and theological opinions within the Christian worldview. Cross.tv can be utilized by individuals, families, groups, churches, organizations, businesses and artists in diverse ways to present: new ideas, important visions, projects, events and to share videos, audio files, photos, prayers, blogs, manage events and stream videos live as well as on demand video content. One can find new friends, awaken new audiences, or to simply network and communicate within their own congregation, contacts and friends around the globe.

Cross.tv is currently available in 22 languages (although the website lists more) and had more than 95,000 visitors according to Alexa site metrics.<sup>22</sup> Information about usage is difficult to come by. No macro-level demographics are available for the site, so a dominant gender and age range of the site's users is not available. The social media network Cross.tv has 500,000-1,000,000 users.<sup>23</sup>

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 18, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional. This site allows Facebook profile syncing.

**Conversations** – occur through many channels. Chats, e-mail, blogs, and commenting are all available on this site.

**Sharing** – is a common practice for music, song lyrics, public domain sheet music, prayer requests, and videos.

**Presence** – is recognized through chat once another site user accepts the invitation.

**Relationships** – Existing relationships can also be cultivated and these friends can be exported from the users e-mail contacts in their address book, Twitter, or Facebook.

**Groups** – are described as a core functionality of the site. Users can export Friends lists from Facebook or e-mail address book, use the friend finder and select location and hobbies, or just create a new group from scratch.

**Reputation**– Each member has to abide by the site's code of ethics. Reputation is also gained through the number of followers, posts, and blogs.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/cross.tv>

<sup>23</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/q/232/8524/What-is-the-social-media-network-Cross-tv-s-average-traffic>. Demographics listed as unknown.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the Cross.tv site indicates that it has medium social presence. The content is family-friendly and it contains resources for people of faith. With traffic of under one million visitors per month this site does not have the level of relationship building that other sites do. Shared music and videos unite users with similar interests. The site is rich in forums, chat, blogging and sharing photos so it has value to a diverse range of people of the Christian faith. This is another site I recommend for people of the Christian faith.



## 9. Tumblr.

Tumblr is a microblogging platform and social networking website, owned and operated by Tumblr, Inc. The service allows users to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog. Users can follow other users' blogs, as well as make their blogs private. Much of the website's features are accessed from the "dashboard" interface, where the option to post content and posts of followed blogs appear. Tumblr was founded in February of 2007 by David Karp. As of May 19, 2013, Tumblr hosts over 108 million blogs.<sup>24</sup> Tumblr is currently available in 12 languages and it receives about 120 million visitors per month.<sup>25</sup>



**Identity** – minimum age to join is 13, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Relationships** – are built by the number of followers and by comments on posts.

**Conversations and sharing** are the 2 key elements of the Tumblr site and mobile application. Sharing is done through blogs and linking to other social media sites.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This application can be linked to others like Twitter and Goggle+ and offers user metrics. It is low in social presence.



<sup>24</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tumblr>

<sup>25</sup> <http://social-media.entrepreneur.com/1/46/Netlog>

## 10. Zorpia



Zorpia is a social networking service founded by Jeffrey Ng in 2003. The company is based in Hong Kong and the site is most popular in India and China. It has 2 million unique users per month and has grown to a total worldwide user base of 26 million. Users can create groups and find friend. While Zorpia is a free service, if you want any sort of access to the profile of visitors, or if you want to have your profile picture featured on a main page, you need to pay to become a Royal Member. “Zorpia is essentially a social network that allows you to find nearby friends, but it seems more suited for dating than anything. It does have the typical social features like adding friends and joining groups, but unless you live in an Asian country, you're not likely to find many people you already know using this service. The reason this social network ranks so low is the high number of ads and that it requires a paid upgrade to show and hide your friend list and to get unlimited browsing.”<sup>26</sup>

No macro-level demographics are available for the site, so a dominant gender and age range of the site's users is not available.

**Identity** – minimum age to join is 13, open to users (no invitation is required), an e-mail address is required, profile information is optional.

**Conclusion -Not recommended.** (This site was not researched fully.)

It is widely reported by users that Zorpia service has a general problem with honoring privacy. Phishing and inappropriate material abound at this site. People have been reporting that the account deletion requests are not honored and their data is continuously used for outbound invitations, and their - supposedly deleted - photographs being shared with others. In 2012, PandoDaily wrote that Zorpia "has a dreadful spamming problem that it needs to fix fast.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> <http://social-networking-websites-review.toptenreviews.com/zorpia-com-review.html>

<sup>27</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zorpia>

## Appendix

Figure 1 – The bee is the key

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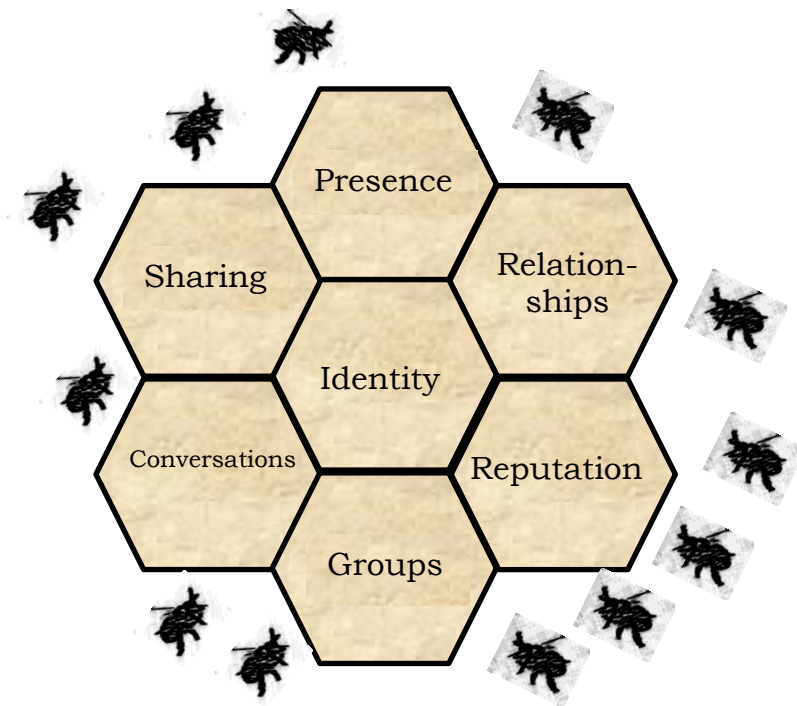












Table 1 Feature comparison and demographics

 Academia.edu				
<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>
Photo Uploading, Public Message, Posting, File Sharing, Groups, Instant Messaging, Real-time updates from other users, Live search results.	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending, Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Event/Activity Invites, Groups, Instant Messaging, Private Messages, Real-time updates from other users, Filtering, Live search results.	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending, Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Event/Activity Invites, File Sharing, Groups, Instant Messaging, Multi-user Games, Private Messages, Filtering, Live search results, Search suggestions, Video chats "Hangouts".	Photo, Video, and Music Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Event/Activity Invites, Groups, Instant Messaging, Live search results, Search suggestions.	Photo Uploading, Public Message Posting, File sharing, Groups, Instant Messaging, Live search results.
N/A	Gender Female users 62%/Male users 38 % Age 13 - 17 year olds 2%/18 - 34 year olds 32%/ 35 - up 67%	Gender Female users 27%/Male users 72 %/ Undetermined 1% Age 13-17 year olds 9%/18 – 24 year olds 23%/25-34 year olds 35%/35-up 33%	N/A	N/A

				
<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>	<b>Site Features</b>
Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Event/Activity Invites, Groups, Instant Messaging, Multi-user Games, Private Messages,	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Event/Activity Invites, Groups, Instant Messaging, Private Messages, Filtering, Live search results.	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Videos and Music, Real-time updates from other users, Real-time updates from other users, Live search results,	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Real-time updates from other users, Compare	Photo Uploading, Private Message Sending. Public Message Posting, Video Uploading, Real-time updates from other users, Compare Social Media Networks with Real-time updates



Filtering, Live search results.		Search suggestions.	Social Media Networks with Real-time updates from other users, Live search results, Search suggestions.	from other users, Live search results, Search suggestions.
Gender Female users 45%/Male users 55 % Age 13-17 year olds 3%/18-34 year olds 55%/ 35- up 42%	Gender Female users 45%/ Male users 55 % Age 13-17 year olds 10%/18-34 year olds 55%/35- up 35%	N/A	Gender Female users 62%/Male users 38 % Age 13 - 17 year olds 8%/18 - 34 year olds 45%/35 - up 47%	N/A