

Assignment 1 “Investigate and Evaluate” Social Media Platforms

Purpose: Investigate and evaluate two social media alternatives

Rationale: Most social media (SM) users have little understanding of the underlying dynamics at work when they choose to use a particular SM. A SM strategist should understand these dynamics and help others weigh the relative costs/benefits of their choices.

Major Activities:

1. Select one SM platform from the “Major Players” list below and one platform from the “Niche Players” list.

SM Major Players		SM Niche Players	
Facebook	Multiply	Live Journal	Digg
Twitter	MyLife	Deviant Art	Xanga
LinkedIn	Ning	Google Plus+	Badoo
Pinterest	Café Mom	VK	Xing
Snapchat	Orkut	flickr	Biznik
YouTube	Tagged	Foursquare	Friendstr
Instagram	Bebo	Tumblr	Meetup
	Waze	MySpace	Yelp

2. Become the resident expert on your two SM platforms. At a minimum, your expertise should allow you to answer the following questions:
 - What are the origins of the SM?
 - How does the SM provider make money?
 - What are the mechanics of using the platform? In other words, how does the platform actually work?
 - How do users typically make use of the platform?
 - Who are the primary users? Why are they the primary users?
3. Develop a list of effective and ineffective uses of the two SM platforms. Provide your rationale.
4. Describe the potential benefits and costs for various users (e.g., CEOs, entertainers, teens) of each platform.
5. Describe the potential benefits and costs for various types of organizations (e.g., restaurants, hi-tech, manufacturers, non-profits).
6. Craft an infographic for each of the two SM platforms that summarizes key facts along with your insights.
7. For each of the two SM platforms, summarize your thoughts with an ML (Most Like) + - analysis and demonstrate how it might be used to discuss a social media strategy for an organization.
8. Describe a recent SM “fail” that occurred on each of your platforms. Use the format found on the “Social Media Fails” link under the “Fun” tab on amazingsmstrategy.com

(e.g., brief explanation, proof, and lessons learned).

Note: Lessons learned should reference #5CsofSocial.

9. Craft a tool to evaluate whether an organization is making effective use of the two SM platforms. Justify your criteria.

Requirements:

- Professional group presentation (15 - 20 minutes) and cross examination (5 – 10 minutes)
- Written report (due 1 week after oral presentation)

Evaluation:

- Synthesis of key ideas – Does the report synthesize key insights from personal experience, research, and class principles?
- Utility of insights – Can the ideas in the report be applied to real-world problems?
- Depth of analysis – Does the report indicate that the team thought deeply about the issues? Have certain ideas been eliminated or honed through discussion?
- Quality of insights and rationale – Does the report go beyond the standard recommendations advocated by self-ordained “social media gurus”?
- Professional style - Does the report and presentation adhere to professional standards (e.g., well organized, one voice, proper design, well written, proper citations & appendices)?