

The Social Media Standard

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Is the Internet safe? As consumers, many of us consider heavily, the possibility of identity theft while submitting our personal information online. The question remains the same, however, involving easily obtainable information. The convenience of social media has created an effect so superior that some individuals forget that they are potentially at risk. When a person registers for “Facebook,” they are required to submit personal information, which may or may not affect their identity. Following the registration, you have an option to provide a phone number and street address with your exact location. Although your “friends” on Facebook may be trustworthy, and even though Facebook provides a great social experience, one would be naïve to think that their information submitted is limited to “friends” only. Millions of Internet users involved in social media utilize their opportunity to be heard. To have a voice and opinion on specific subjects whether it be a blogging site, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter. Each individual has an option to provide their opinion scrutinizing people, places, and things, which may have a positive or negative effect on a consumer or business; therefore jeopardizing each subject’s credibility.

For Unauthorized Use

So much of an individual’s life consists of convenience. Most individuals use the Internet to research and access information because it is quite simple. Click, type, and click. This would be referred to as easily obtainable information. Other advantages include access to credit information, employment, government information, and media. A man or woman may apply for a credit card over the Internet, access their banking information, and apply for a loan. From the social aspect, the Internet provides us with an opportunity to read consumer reviews about products like video games, household items, and vehicles. Avoiding hassle and the tediousness

of research and phone calls, the Internet provides us with everything we need to maintain and enhance our lives. There are always pros and cons to generally every situation. Although the resources of the Internet seem unmistakably grand, there is risk involved which pertains to every individual submitting his or her information. When applying for a credit card or a loan, one must provide their home address, social security number, and phone number. It has become an overlooked personal issue, which individuals fall victim to every day. Many people have recognized this as a habit, incidental because they feel the Internet is safe. What has become so easily accessible is also easily accessible by many others on the receiving end of one's personal submissions. Is it easy to be naïve involving this matter. There rises one question to us all can the Internet be trusted? Yes. If used properly, the Internet can continue to be the source that has become the foundation for research and information for everyone.

Social Media Influence

There are many advantages to using social media. Individuals use social media sites for communicating to family, friends, and businesses. Marketing has become an advantage widely used by larger corporations to promote product to consumers. *Pandora Radio* is a specific example of how advertisements are being used. *Pandora Radio* offers free music online for their guests. While listening to a radio station you may skip a song. In between songs is the time an advertisement will play and a “clickable” icon will present itself to the user. There are options to rid of these advertisements, however, it comes with a price. Prior to being introduced to social media sites, telephone and writing were the two forms of communication used to contact family members overseas, or in another state. In recent days, we have *Skype* in which individuals may speak and physically see who they are talking with. This makes communication personalized and therefore more desirable. Along with these many advantages of social media, there are

disadvantages. Purchasing of other's information, forgeries, and plagiarism are becoming more of a trend. Software forgeries like bootlegging and copies of movies or music are illegal but easily attainable over the Internet. Although the act of downloading copywrited materials is illegal, there are social media sites that allow one to attain copywrited information without charge.

Using Discretion

Knowing the advantages and disadvantages of social media affords one the opportunity not to be led into predetermined conclusions. Being aware of preconceived influences gives an individual an opportunity to distinguish what is morally right and wrong. The advantages of social media play a role in people's everyday lives. *Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and Skype* are examples of safe social media. However, each individual can exploit the good in these social media sites and use them for the worse. For example, many times each day, a person's profile may be hacked into and abused posting racial content or slander offensive to others and portraying that individual as being someone they are not. Also excerpts and misquotes can be used at any point for intentions other than the original meaning. If, for example, President Obama had posted a blog 20 or 30 years ago that contained some sort negativity or potential slander, someone could have saved it or it could still potentially be accessible. Ultimately, most people know the implications of using social media sites and what they entail. Every social media site must be used with a certain amount of discretion.

Credibility

Misrepresentation by presenters, identity theft, exaggerations, and misquotations are specific forms of credibility issues involving social media. Presenters will tell you about something with partial incomplete verbal or written information. Omission of data and distortion

of visual presentation are critical parts when determining consumer purchasing. However, research may be the only way to determine whether or not information is valid. Blogs are a way to research credibility issues. Many sites provide consumer feedback and critique involving specific companies, products, and services.

Conclusion

Used properly, the Internet, and mass media can be used as a valuable tool for social media. Consequently, intentionally or unintentionally, this tool may also be used as a weapon or for purposes other than originally intended. Discretion is always advised as a consumer in the submission and conveyance of data as it may not always be credible. Long-term affects can be compounding indefinitely.