The Rise of Social Media

Social media, as we know, started around 2000 with the introduction of Six Degrees, which allowed users to connect with of network of friends. However, it wasn't until Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube that social media really started to take off. These websites focused on users who wanted digital social interactions, entertainment, and the ability to share and communicate with people around the world (Sujon, 2021). On top of that, the rise in mobile technology and the need for the internet during daily tasks also skyrocketed social media. At the end of the day, social media allowed users to keep in touch and share content easily, which is why it took off and was quickly adopted in societies.

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube: A Comparison

Facebook is arguably the most social platform for users, as people center on network socialization. Users network socialization on the site by sharing personal status updates, sharing photos and videos, and entering participation in social units, i.e, joining groups. Businesses use Facebook to provide social customer relationship management (sCRM) as they can create a page for their brand and communicate with their customers directly. It also allows users to follow the business in case they want updates. Users of Facebook utilize the platform to keep in contact with and follow updates on friends and family, and also follow their brands or people of interest. The platform has a social business model and has attracted users on networking, also, has a social business model which has attracted users.

Twitter allows users to send and receive short messages known as tweets. The messages are a maximum of 280 characters to communicate a thought. The nature of the platform allows depth and range of topics to broaden. The immediacy of the tweets allows for fast communication and instant interaction. Users' app platform to communicate and discuss their ideals with followers and with the general public. Users often follow notable users in the public domain to track the surrounding trending and important events (Chaudhary et al., 2021).

It is LinkedIn's goal to provide a platform for professional networking to help users build connections in their work-related fields. Users are able to build an online professional portfolio and connect with their coworkers, possible future employers, and other professionals in their

work-related industry. LinkedIn is also a suitable platform to discuss industry-related topics and seek jobs. Companies use the platform to market and recruit for jobs. The platform is essential for professionals in the work industry (Chaudhary et al., 2021).

Being the most popular video-sharing platform, users can upload, view, and interact with videos of all kinds, aimed at entertainment and/or educational purposes. Users can view content in the form of tutorials, music videos, vlogs, and various other entertainment content. Businesses use the platform to market their brands and promote their products with the help of other users. The ability for the platform to reach and interact with an audience of all kinds is the main reason it's popular.

The Role of Hashtags

Posts on social media use the sign ‘hashtag’ (#) at the start of specific words to make the content of that post easier to find and put into a category. Also, hashtags make it easier for users to participate in discussions about specific subjects, trends, and events. Users on social media platforms and blogs often use hashtags to make their posts more visible and increase audience interaction (Kumar et al., 2022). For example, a user would use the hashtag #WorldCup on their posts to join the worldwide social media discussions that center around the World Cup event.

Hashtags serve a similar purpose for businesses, enabling them to reach a wider audience when promoting their products and services. Businesses boost brand awareness and use hashtags to engage consumers. For example, a business might encourage the use of the hashtag #HolidaySale in a marketing campaign to monitor its use and participation in the sales campaign. This allows businesses to measure participation in the marketing campaigns and monitor social media platforms for consumer content and engagement through analytics and marketing metrics like total sales and hashtag interaction.

Social Media and Gossip: A Christian Perspective

The Bible verse 1 Timothy 5:13 advises against idleness and unproductive talking. This verse is particularly applicable to the nature of social media, which is often idle and unproductive, talking of unverified things. Social media often facilitates gossip, which is very harmful as it allows people to make millions of comments on and share posts with millions of users instantaneously.

While some forms of social media can be used as business tools, Christian men and women can also utilize social media business tools to uplift truth, positivity, and integrity, closing their ears and minds to the temptation of gossip. Christians on social media can easily bypass negative chat and gossip and rather share supporting, professional, and valuable information. Instead of gossiping, Christians can use LinkedIn for networking and professional advancement and use Facebook and Instagram to promote their businesses and products. Christians can bypass social media gossip and gossip tools by being positive, useful, and professional on social media.

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