
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Piet Kommers is a Professor of UNESCO Learning Technologies and affiliated with the Universities of Twente and Utrecht, Netherlands. His specialty is social media for communication and organisation. As a Conference co-Chair of the IADIS multi-conference, he initiated the conferences of web-based communities and social media, e-society, mobile learning and international higher education. He is a Professor at the UNESCO Institute for Eastern European Studies in Educational Technology and Adjunct Professor at the Curtin University in Perth, Australia.

Margriet Simmerling is a peer consultant/Senior Manager for R&D projects in the area of e-society and web-based communities. She participated in the advisory board for the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and is active as a reviewer for the European Commission. She designs and moderates e-learning modules and workshops in the domain of education technology and psychology at the PhD level.

Twitter, Facebook and social media; this issue of *IJWBC* presents new research findings that are helping to see web-based community aspects from a different perspective. From the USA, India, China, Turkey, Switzerland and Australia scientists share the results of intense study and research.

What strikes most is the recent transformation from web-communities as way for feeling togetherness into its subservience to pragmatic sectors like education, matchmaking, mental healthcare, brand management, marketising and social bookmarking. Beyond the question how traditional sectors affect cultures for web communities is the questions what web-communities did to these professional developments the last two decades? Its main effect is without doubt the effect of 'quality awareness'; what do we understand with social affinity, belongingness and sense of loyalty. Each of them has been increased during the 20 years of social media and networking. In compact terms we can say that more articulate etiquettes have been developed: What do you expose of your private and professional life, and: especially: What do you affiche of your friends, colleagues and neighbours via posting on social media?

At the same time, it is hard to accept that commercial entities like in the recent Facebook – Cambridge Analytica scandal, showed no scruples to exploit large-scale personal data that were trusted to the first and second-order social networks. It illustrates that while person-based social networks grow in net-etiquette, corporate entities like Cambridge Analytica feel no indignity to trace and re-exploit social networks. The expected counter reaction at the moment is that an increased sensitivity on leaking membership data in f2f circles like football clubs and chambers of commerce is emerging. As summary we might conclude that different modalities like the f2f versus the web-based networks sharpen each other for the sake of social connectivity while unwanted privacy loss is kept to a minimum. It might be good to mention that also f2f social interactions are full of unwanted side effects like eavesdropping, gossiping, etc. In other words, let us not be surprised that social media and web-presence suffer from ‘childhood diseases’ as well. Most important is that after abnormalities like in the Facebook – Cambridge Analytica case, refined policies and legal regulations are defined and maintained at corporate, national and international levels.

The article ‘Understanding the motivation in massive open online courses: a twitter mining perspective’ discusses massive open online courses (MOOCs) from a social media viewpoint in order to understand crowd sentiments considering the massive amount of data being created. Ritanjali Panigrahi and Praveen Ranjan Srivastava utilises text mining of MOOC providers, related Twitter data, discovers the sentiments of users towards MOOCs, association rules, and the engagement of MOOC providers on Twitter. In addition, Ritanjali Panigrahi and Praveen Ranjan Srivastava examine the traits of the influencers in seven MOOC providers. The results indicate implications for MOOC industry, academic institutions, and policy making.

How do we use Facebook and how does a photo influence the acceptance of an actual friendship request? In the article ‘Friendship acceptance on Facebook: men prefer cold calls from attractive women while women favour unattractive friends’ interesting results are presented about online behaviour. The study of David Weibel and Bartholomäus Wissmath suggest an essential difference of behaviour between male and female users. The authors describe previous research in this area and describe the method they use. In the conclusions they elaborate more of the findings in the context of earlier research.

The next article ‘Moderating effect of gender on the relationship between extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness and Facebook use’ also addresses gender difference in the Facebook environment. Ecem Basak, Nermin Nergis Yasar and Fethi Calisir focus on the effect of neurotics among Facebook usage. They find interesting differences between male and female users. Their sample is based on Facebook users in Turkey. The results are compared with international studies in this domain.

The papers ‘Social capital: an influence on critical to success factors in online brand communities’ contributes to the existing literature and provides insight into how these online brand communities (OBC) can be supported and facilitated. Stephanie Meek, Claire Lambert, Maria Ryan and Madeleine Ogilvie present five hypotheses and examples of successful OBC are provided. The sample of this study consists of 659 participants from seven OBCs. Recommendations to the developers of OBC are discussed.

An online community depends on the participation of the users. In the article ‘We learn from each other: exploring interpersonal communications in online communities’

research is presented that improve the understanding of the user involvement. Bo Liang and Debra L. Scammon focus on the social context in which participants learn by reading others' posts and making replies. Recommendations for social media marketers are provided.

In the article 'A tag-based recommender system framework for social bookmarking websites', Haibo Liu uses datasets from two social bookmarking website to compare the presented framework with several other methods. Suggestions for further research are provided.

May these articles help you in the quick scan of web-community trends the coming months and report on both alertness, new opportunities and global trends.