
Editorial

Piet Kommers*

Faculty of Behavioural Sciences,
University of Twente,
P.O. Box 217, 7500 AE Enschede, The Netherlands
Email: pkommers@gmail.com
*Corresponding author

Margriet Simmerling

Helix5,
Enschede, 7522, The Netherlands
Email: simmerling@helix5.nl

Biographical notes: Piet Kommers is a Professor of the UNESCO Learning Technologies and affiliated with University of Twente and Utrecht University, The Netherlands. His specialty is social media for communication and organisation. As the 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 an Adjunct Professor at 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 European Commission. She designs and moderates e-learning modules and workshops e in the domain of education technology and psychology at the PhD level.

Blogging and vlogging are the most prominent modalities to promote web communities and indeed the amount of YouTube channels is growing. Some YouTubers become famous and even wealthy. Are you interested in its underlying business model and how you can make money out of a YouTube channel? In fact, a YouTuber acts as a publisher: the channel is visited both by subscribers and by random viewers as well. The community that is visiting a YouTube channel is crucial for advertisers. Though 'communities' inherently evolve by themselves, there is a big interest for marketers and brand managers to stimulate its further propagation in order to create a critical size customer mass. Even ideologists and artists may envisage a large crowd of followers and face the same challenge and sometimes even the same instrumental repertoire as the commercial marketers.

Bo Han introduces a new empirical model that addresses the YouTubers revenues. In the article, 'Views versus subscriptions: which one matters to a YouTuber's monetisation success?', the results are presented and critical questions are raised; friendship, relationships and trust are very important concepts.

Utilising a Starbucks fan page is an innovative approach for gathering data. The Taiwanese market is the context for the study presented in the article, 'Long live friendship? Relationships among friendship, trust and brand loyalty: a study of Starbucks'. Yu-Chun Chung, Shu-Hsien Liao and Wen-Jung Chang present several managerial implications that will improve the excellence of the market performance.

Spreading 'opinion spam' via social media and web-based communities can have an enormous impact. The significant challenge of opinion spam detection is the difficulty in identifying the opinions manually. Also, such manual evaluation leads to inefficient design and performance of the algorithm. Meesala Shobha Rani and S. Sumathy did a comprehensive literature review about different methods to detect opinion spam. The article, 'Online social networking services and spam detection approaches in opinion mining – a review', a framework for detecting opinion spam by using the flower pollination algorithm is proposed. More and more we experience the influence social media can have on the voting behaviour.

All kinds of activities are developed by government parties as well as the opposition and it is not always clear what the effect is on the result of the election. The article, 'Significant effects of online news on vote choice: a review' contributes by reviewing the use of online news in election. Mumtaz Aini Alivi, Akmar Hayati Ahmad Ghazali and Ezhar Tamam conclude that vote choice highly depends on the information gained from online news by the public.

Many citizens are eager to influence a decision that is made by the government, using web-based communities and social media, gives a broad range of possibilities. The article, 'Maturity in decision-making: a method to measure e-participation systems in virtual communities', presents a method, that can help citizens to contribute with more mature arguments. Cristiano Maciel, Licio Roque and Ana Cristina Bicharra Garcia motivate the methodology and explain clearly alternatives, indexes and values. A description of several illustrative experiments to show the benefits of the proposed methodology is included.

People often reach out to the internet to find information when they are first diagnosed with a chronic illness. Looking at the learning experiences of those using a Facebook page is a good start to exploring this area of assistance for those living with a chronic disease. Gemma Stevens, Victoria L. O'Donnell and Lynn Williams investigate patient discussions in a chronic illness group on Facebook. In the article 'Patients' learning in cyberspace: a thematic analysis of patient-patient discussions in a chronic illness Facebook page', the data collection and analysis process are presented. The findings are of interest to health professionals and health educators.

The Editors wish you inspiration in benefitting from the following articles.