



Social Media Success

A Beginner's Guide To Web 2.0

By Ted Prodromou
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Preface

Social Media or Web 2.0 is sweeping the Internet like wildfire. Never before has anything impacted the way we communicate and connect with our prospects and customers like Social Media. Today we can easily find our ideal clients and customers anywhere on the internet using social bookmarking and social networking websites and build lasting relationships through electronic communities.

In the 1990's the internet changed our lives by connecting the entire world via the world wide web. Suddenly the world became smaller as we could easily meet and communicate with people anywhere in the world. Borders were erased. Distances were removed. Communicating with our friends half a world away became as easy as talking to our next door neighbor.

The original internet was based on the "if you build it they will come" theory. People and companies built websites that contained static pages of content and people found the websites through search engines. The content could only be changed by the webmaster and the website visitor had no way of interacting with the website.

Social Media or Web 2.0 is based on the community model where like-minded people gather in electronic communities and share information and ideas. It's all about the conversation and collaboration in Web 2.0. Interactive websites are all the rage with the website visitor creating literally all of the content in many cases.

The original internet consisted of web pages full of text and images. Music was added to the mix and eventually web video appeared which was very slow and choppy. Today the internet is full of information and entertainment in many different forms. Users can create their own music and share it with the entire world through music sharing websites. Unknown bands can get their big break using the internet.

Web video has exploded in the past few years since the inception of websites like youtube.com. Anyone can create a video with the home movie camera and share it with the entire world. Millions of new videos appear daily on the internet opening doors for many people and businesses. Anyone can become famous using today's internet.

New social networking communities are appearing daily, connecting us with people all over the world with similar interests. Sites like MySpace.com and Facebook.com let us communicate with friends in virtually any niche. If you love basket weaving you can find an online community full of passionate basket weavers all over the world. Web 2.0 is making it possible to become friends with anyone, anywhere at anytime. The great news is that you can turn these world-wide relationships into world-wide customers.

In this guide I'm going to give you a brief history of the internet as it was in the 1990's and show you how it's evolved over the years into a compilation of electronic communities.

About the Author

Ted Prodromou worked in the Information Technology field for over 20 years working for IBM, Digital Equipment Corporation, Cellular One, and Putnam Lovell Securities before starting his own consulting company, Valiss Internet Solutions, ten years ago. His company has now evolved into NetBizExperts, a consulting firm that specializes in helping businesses use Social Media and Web 2.0 to build long-term customer relationships with customers all over the world.



Today, Ted teaches consultants, independent professionals and businesses how to automatically acquire more client leads using their website and convert those website visitors into paying clients. Ted also designs and develops websites, helps increase your website traffic, gets your website listed high in the search engines and helps you with your pay-per-click campaigns.

Ted lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife Ellen, his daughter Alicia and his son Mike. They enjoy hiking, biking and skiing in their spare time.

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What is Web 2.0?

Web 2.0 is here to stay, but what is it? Is it something out of the Matrix?

A short answer would be No. Web 2.0 can be identified as the change in the way we as internet surfers interact with each other online as opposed to a an upgrade or change in the internet itself. Don't get me wrong the internet is changing and adapting but not in the way that you would think.

Web 2.0 was a term that was introduced in a 2004 web conference regarding the state of the internet. Prior to 2004 there was not much interaction on the web short of the normal ecommerce transaction or blog. Now the internet has transformed into a collection of collaborators from all over the world adding their 2 cents to everything and anything under the sun.

There are social sites that live only to bookmark other popular internet pages, there are review pages of countless items via blog, forum and the like. There are connections being made on daily basis that were not being made before. This and much more can be considered the Web 2.0 revolution.

With the increasing availability of higher speeds of internet access it has allowed the internet to evolve to include higher levels of programming which at a previous time could not be accessed due to the sheer bulky nature of it. This increase of internet speed has allowed for the different connectivity interactions via wiki, blogging, social bookmarking sites etc.. This has also increased the number of active surfers online as well as the entertainment factor has also increased.

There are sites like you tube type which allows streaming media which could not have been a possibility before due to bandwidth issues. The sheer social nature of these types of sites has also increased the popularity of the internet. Sites such as myspace and facebook have easily transformed the way that we interact

with each other. We no longer conform to just the simple mediums of phone and mail, now we enjoy the benefits of e-mail, text messaging and profiles dedicated to all the things that we know and enjoy. This in and of itself is the heart of web 2.0.

We no longer have to wait to hear about what's going on around the world. We can get first hand news from people who are there. You can discover the benefits of a specific product by reading about it from someone who owns it. You can receive answers to questions that you never would have thought you would have been able to get answered. These answers would be given by experts in their respected fields. This is the strength of Web 2.0.

Enjoy it. Embrace it. Web 2.0 is here to stay (for now at least!)

Interesting Definitions & Explanations of Web 2.0

Best (Or Most Interesting) Web 2.0 Definitions and Explanations are given below:

[O'Reilly's Definition of Web 2.0](#)

“The famous meme map alone is worth serious study and is the central work defining the interlocking elements of Web 2.0. O'Reilly touches on Web 2.0 as having more of a "gravitational core" than being a concrete set of technologies. He also introduces all the major planks of his vision of the next generation of the Web as a set of *best practices* from the first generation. A terrific read worth every minute spent on it. Finish this before starting the rest”.

[Wikipedia Definition for Web 2.0](#)

“While this entry undergoes near constant revision, I recommend a visit to see what an amalgam of opinionated contributors brings to the table for Web 2.0 definition. Devoid of hype or even many buzzwords, the entry has become somewhat disappointing but the key facts are present and is also notably lacking in major anti-hype. In the end, a balanced if slightly boring view produced by a little wisdom of the crowds”.

[Richard MacManus Defines Web 2.0 in February, 2005](#)

“It's amazing to see how far along things have come when you read the very interesting pieces hyperlinked within. Richard does a bang-up job rolling up prevailing opinion at the time from around the Web. He finally settles on Web as Platform for the time being, but of course, the concept would continue to grow”.

[The "Official" Web 2.0 Compact Definition](#)

"Tim O'Reilly realized his 5 page essay would not result in a pithy definition and so he obliged everyone with a more compact definition. While quite the run-on sentence, the definition does capture the essence: *"Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually-updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an "architecture of participation," and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences."*

[A Cumulative Web 2.0 Definition](#)

"Here is an interesting one, if more than a little obtuse. Incredibly, this is what comes up first in Google when you search on "Web 2.0 definition", presumably because the word *definition* is in the title and a few people have linked to it. While technically not inaccurate, it's not very complete either. I can't help wondering if partial definitions like this are a big part of the problem people are having understanding the concepts".

[Jeff Clavier Tries His Hand At Web 2.0 Definition](#)

"He does a credible job. He puts *openness of data and services*, then *rich user's experiences*, and then *low cost of delivery* using lightweight programming models and techniques. It is a bit of a light definition in my personal opinion but highly accessible".

[I Give Web 2.0 Explanation A Try](#)

"Though admittedly my description might seem a bit overwrought, I still stand by it. I haven't seen anything this compelling since the original Web and some of the things we're seeing, like the Web 2.0 information ecosystem, will change the world forever".

 [Paul Graham Weighs In On Web 2.0](#)

“Here is one of the most recent explanations and one of the clearest headed. While I certainly don't agree with everything he says, it's an excellent antidote to some of the most extreme Web 2.0 hype, while not throwing out the baby with the bath water either. A must read”.

In addition to the above more illustrations are given here:

Tim O'Reilly says about Web 2.0: “The bursting of the dot-com bubble in the fall of 2001 marked a turning point for the web. Many people concluded that the web was overhyped, when in fact bubbles and consequent shakeouts appear to be a common feature of all technological revolutions. Shakeouts typically mark the point at which an ascendant technology is ready to take its place at center stage. The pretenders are given the bum's rush, the real success stories show their strength, and there begins to be an understanding of what separates one from the other.

The concept of "Web 2.0" began with a conference brainstorming session between O'Reilly and MediaLive International. Dale Dougherty, web pioneer and O'Reilly VP, noted that far from having "crashed", the web was more important than ever, with exciting new applications and sites popping up with surprising regularity. What's more, the companies that had survived the collapse seemed to have some things in common. Could it be that the dot-com collapse marked some kind of turning point for the web, such that a call to action such as "Web 2.0" might make sense? We agreed that it did, and so the Web 2.0 Conference was born.

In the year and a half since, the term "Web 2.0" has clearly taken hold, with more than 9.5 million citations in Google. But there's still a huge amount of disagreement about just what Web 2.0 means, with some people decrying it as a meaningless marketing buzzword, and others accepting it as the new conventional wisdom.

In our initial brainstorming, we formulated our sense of Web 2.0 by example:

Web 1.0

DoubleClick
Ofoto
Akamai
mp3.com
Britannica Online
personal websites
evite
domain name speculation
page views
screen scraping
publishing
content management
systems
directories (taxonomy)
stickiness

Web 2.0

Google AdSense
Flickr
BitTorrent
Napster
Wikipedia
Blogging
upcoming.org and EVDB
search engine optimization
cost per click
web services
Participation
Wikis
tagging ("folksonomy")
Syndication

The list went on and on. But what was it that made us identify one application or approach as "Web 1.0" and another as "Web 2.0"? (The question is particularly urgent because the Web 2.0 meme has become so widespread that companies are now pasting it on as a marketing buzzword, with no real understanding of just what it means. The question is particularly difficult because many of those buzzword-addicted startups are definitely *not* Web 2.0, while some of the applications we identified as Web 2.0, like Napster and BitTorrent, are not even properly web applications!) We began trying to tease out the principles that are demonstrated in one way or another by the success stories of web 1.0 and by the most interesting of the new applications.

In 2004; a phrase Web 2.0 was first time used by O'Reilly Media and proposed second generation of World Wide Web. It emphasizes on the online collaboration and sharing among users. Internet based services such as social networking sites, wikis, Google earth, communication tools and folksonomies. O'Reilly Media in collaboration with MediaLive International used the phrase as a title for a series of conferences and since 2004 certain technical and marketing communities had adopted the phrase.

Link Building Techniques for Web 2.0

Keeping Web 2.0 and its link building in mind, following tips/techniques make Web 2.0 more interesting from an online marketing point of view. These links are very important in the search engine optimization and these put forward more link building opportunities for website owners.

1. Make your site and its content worth linking:

A good quality site having good design, useful and relevant content will attract links from good quality sites.

2. Write articles related to industry:

The good articles based on the news of your industry are particularly popular in the readers and these are easy to write. The articles sites like www.goarticles.com, www.isnare.com and www.ideamarketers.com often rank high in the search engine results and they can send targeted traffic to your site. It is also added here that you may like to submit your articles to social book-marking sites like www.digg.com, del.icio.us and www.technorati.com/. Whether your article gets elevated as number one spot on Digg etc then hundreds of bloggers looking for content, will visit your site and may like to link to your website.

3. P R with press:

Media has a vital role regarding general awareness / propagation etc and public relations will spread the word about your company news besides it will attract links to your site. Either you may hire a public relations consultant or like to write your own press releases and forward those to hundreds of journalists, bloggers and media outlets through PRweb (www.prweb.com) or PRnewswire (www.prnewswire) etc.

4. Start your own Blog:

You should start your own blog and regularly post useful, practical information, make your execution flawless, make sentences with good

grammar and punctuation. You'll be surprised to have a response and to get people to engage in discussion and link back to your site, whatsoever you sell or provide service. Create your own free blog at www.blogger.com

5. Build your own Directory:

Directory organized by topic into categories is the most convenient way to find people and business therefore you should build your own directory of sites although it is an old technique regarding attracting links but it still works very efficiently. The directory will provide useful information to your visitors and also builds in coming links to your site.

6. Submit your site to other directories:

You may like to forward insertion of your site in other directories. Before submission, you must satisfy yourself about the quality of the directory in which you are going to submit your link. Click here to see a current list of the best internet directories.

7. Sponsor Charities:

You may consider making a donation to charities along-with providing products or services free to charities that are relevant to your industry. It may provide few quality links, attract free publicity and you can even write / submit press releases about your charitable activities / tendencies.

8. Sponsor Sports:

You may like to sponsor the sports events. It will promote awareness regarding your business activities through their media campaign.

9. Local Network:

You may like to join your local chamber of commerce, trade promotion bodies and the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org). They will list you on their sites and reciprocally you will receive a high-quality links.

10. **Social Networking Sites:**

Social networking sites such as YouTube (www.youtube.com), FaceBook (www.facebook.com) and MySpace (www.myspace.com) allow people to upload content such as their videos or personal profiles. These are wildly popular with young people; marketers are starting to invest in social networking advertising. These sites facilitate companies to reach a younger, arguably more fickle audience that is beginning to ignore traditional advertising. Unilever, for example, promotes its Axe deodorant on a MySpace page dedicated to what it calls "Gamekillers"—people who interfere with a young man's efforts to find dates. You can set up pages on MySpace or Squidoo but it pays to keep the concept fresh, as Volkswagen learned with its 2005 launch of a MySpace profile for a character in its commercials. Already, Volkswagen marketers told *The New York Times*, the "Helga" profile is losing appeal as other marketers have invaded MySpace.

11. **Paid Advertising:**

You may want to think about pay-per-click on Google, Yahoo or MSN to sell your products and build awareness regarding your brand. You may create a few links from relevant content sites but that may not be enough to generate sales. Pay-per-click advertising and/or paid advertising on other websites is an effective way to drive traffic to your website.

Popular Web 2.0 Websites

Social media or Web 2.0 can be broken down into many categories or topics. The most popular categories are Social Networking, Social Bookmarking and News Submission websites.

Social Networking – online communities where people build home pages based on their interests. These websites are highly customizable using modules or widgets to easily add content to the web page. People can add video, audio, pictures, blogs,

Category: Internet Directories

Description: Internet directories are like the yellow pages of the internet. Websites are stored in these directories and the search engines use these directories to find where the website is located. The Google Page Rank is included in this list. Try to get links in as many of these directories as you can.

dmoz (open directory project) 8
Yahoo! Directory 8
Librarians' Internet Index 8
Inc.com Recommended Start-Up Resources 7
Nature.com Recommended Links 9
About.com Other 8
BBBOnLine 8
Business.com 7
Uncover the Net 6
Best of the Web 7
JoeAnt.com 6
eHub by Emily Chang Submit Other 6
FreeIndex 6
Environment Directory 7

Audioholics Buying Guide 5
Fast Company Talent & Careers Resource Center 7
Yudkin's Recommended Publicity & Marketing Resources 5
Wheelock College Recommended Websites 6
Salt Lake County Library Recommended Sites 6
New Zealand Tourism Online 6
Eat Well Guide 6
American Library Association Great Web Sites for Kids 6
Princeton University Outdoor Action Program Guide to Outdoor Resources on
the Web 3
Essential Links to Sports Resources 6
Lycos Directory 6
Jayde 6
CSS Beauty Submit Other 7
HealthWeb 7
Blender Submit Other 7
Chiff.com 6
Encyclopedia of Psychology 6
Internet Vibes 6
CyberSleuth Kids 6
International Travel Sites Directory 5
Podcasting Directory 7
Wi-Fi Free Spot Directory 6
Cal State LA Recommended Music Websites 7
Fraser Valley Regional Library Recommended Websites Submit 5
The Good Web Guide UK 6
Pharmacy Choice 5
SkateboardDirectory.com 5
CSS Remix Submit 6
Starting Point 8
Education World Submit 8
The Paleontology Portal Submit 7
PageTutor.com 6

Get a Freelancer 7
Bed and Breakfast Inns Online 6
George Mason University Walter E. Williams Recommended Websites 5
Iowa State University Diversity & Ethnic Studies Recommended Websites &
Research Guides 6
Abacus Construction Index 5
Wheelock College Selected Websites Submit 4
UMDNJ Recommended Core Collection of Web Sites for Hospital Libraries 4
Jefferson College Recommended Websites 5
S. John Vindekilde Recommended Websites 4
Loudoun County Librarian Recommended Websites 6
California State University, Los Angeles Web Resources 4
Cornette Library Recommended Websites 5
Quackwatch Interesting Web Sites 5
Religion Online Recommended Resources Submit Other 4
Madison Metropolitan School District Library of Student Recommended Sites 5
Gotham Gazette Recommended Arts Links Submit Other 3
Stripers Online Fishing, Boating, and Outdoor Resources 4
World Website Directory 5
V7N Web Directory 6
Dexigner Design Directory 6
Design Directory 6
Freelance Designers 6
Apparel Search 5
Elib.org Shopping Directory 6
Art Search 5
Artist Quotes 5
Surfing the Net with Kids 7
Kids Online Resources 5
ReligiousResources.org 5
CancerIndex 6
Design Interact Submit
Ottawa Start 6

Category: Social Networking/Communities

Social Networking like social bookmarking provides the fuel for the Web 2.0 Revolution. Social Networking is defined as an online community where users share similar interests and interact with each other via e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, blogging etc.

Many of these interest oriented sites group the users into nodes that define their role as part of the group. These sites provide the end-users with many different opportunities to express themselves and interact with members who share similar traits.

By using these mediums to interact, it could be considered virtual mingling as most will hang around a site and wait for people of certain traits to appear. Once they arrive they start to interact with them on a personal level.

Taking a look at these types of sites you can easily identify the appeal and popularity of it. Two examples of very popular social networking sites are MySpace and FaceBook.

MySpace offers users the ability to host their own profile pages and generate the content that they want on it. MySpace also allows users the ability to add videos and music that they considered to be good. There are also multiple levels of user interaction from forums, to personal messages, to email to instant messaging. There can be a virtual conversation in almost all of these mediums.

The allure for MySpace is the ability to see pictures of people and read all about them and then go and try to connect with them via the internet. This is the social aspect of it. The virtual mingling has its benefits as someone might see someone in their area that they might think is attractive and they can instantly try to communicate with them.

Sometimes this can be a mutual connection, which is a good thing, other times it can be something that the end-users will end up having to remove their account over abuse.

Thankfully this is the exception and not the norm as MySpace has integrated some pretty neat tools to help combat abuse and prevent people from getting to out of hand.

Facebook has a lot of similarities to MySpace in terms of its social networking aspect and its propensity for personal interests. Users at Facebook can upload information onto their profiles and interact with others on a virtual basis.

Facebook however has a decidedly different following than MySpace. Facebook was started by Harvard students as a social aspect for colleges, it quickly spread to other Ivy League schools and before long was including many different colleges and even high schools. This provided a very different demographic than MySpace as most members were college students or graduates.

Both Facebook and MySpace has changed the way that we interact online but using a collaborative social effort in exhibiting our own personal interests. These sites as well as others have become very popular due to their nature. Facebook and MySpace easily valued at over \$1 billion dollars apiece don't plan on going anywhere soon.



www.myspace.com

Description: MySpace allows people to upload content such as videos or personal profiles. Wildly popular with young people, marketers are starting to invest in social networking advertising. MySpace offers easy to use very customizable. Users agree to have some of the best experiences.

MySpace Overview

MySpace is the most well known social network site on the internet and it's got users from every corner of the world. It's been around the longer then the other popular social networking sites which is one reason it remains the top dog in the market still, but others are catching up with the traffic MySpace receives.

MySpace has always been one of the most user-friendly sites and even a computer beginner could customize their profile to their liking. You can add tons of things to your MySpace profile and there all super easy to add, normally requiring only a click or two. Like most of the popular social networks its audience is worldwide and of all ages, it's great for friends and family to meet and stay in touch will each other as well. MySpace is now beginning to start to implement some of the more technical features that other social sites have and it's probably good thing if they want to remain the number one social networking site on the internet.

Features

- Pictures
- Music
- Video
- Forums
- Groups

- TV
- + a lot more

MySpace has just implemented a new profile editor which makes it very simple to edit your profile whenever you choose to. You can add pictures of yourself, music, video plus a ton of other things. You can find great backgrounds and graphics on a lot of MySpace generator sites around the internet. There are literally hundreds of these sites you can find that will allow you to use things on their site to pimp your profile. MySpace is all about having a unique profile and updating it all the time so that your friends and family know what you're up to.

You can also use forums and groups to meet people you've never met before that share the same interests of you. I've used groups many times on MySpace to find people that share the same hobbies as me and you can find great conversation in some of the active areas of the site. MySpace I believe is still the best social networking site out there but Facebook is definitely catching up to them and I like the applications a lot better on Facebook. We'll see who makes more improvements as time continues to pass, but for now MySpace will stay at the top of my list.



www.facebook.com

Description: Facebook started out as a college student-only social network. Facebook is similar to MySpace as it allows people to upload content such as videos or personal profiles. Wildly popular with young people, and now over 50% of the members are over 40 years old!

Facebook Overview

Facebook has now been a social networking website for awhile now, but what most people don't know is that Facebook started out just for college students to interact. As college students starting passing the word around it became one of the most popular websites on the internet. Facebook saw the potential and opened membership up to everyone so now millions of people around the world use Facebook as a means to socialize. Apart from meeting and socializing with people there is a lot more that you're capable of doing on Facebook and more new features are added everyday. Facebook has a very modern and sleek looking template that is very easy to navigate through which is one reason it's become so popular over time. A lot of people that use social networks aren't very knowledgeable when it comes to navigating a computer screen, but Facebook does its best to make the user experience enjoyable.

Features

- Show Pictures of Yourself
- Invite anyone with an email
- Share stories
- Great for meeting people

- Amazing Applications
- Groups
- Chat - Private Messages
- + a lot more

Friends and family can all get together in one place and talk on Facebook which makes it really cool and one of the best ways families can keep in touch with each other. The news feed that displays as your homepage once you sign-in to your profile is where the magic happens. You can view all the new things happening on your friends and families profile from one direct interface which makes keeping up with all the gossip as easy as reading one page.

There are many settings that can be chosen when setting up your profile which limits the people who will be able to see your profile. If you only want your friends and family to be able to view your profile then you're able to choose that setting. This will make your profile guarded and also everything on your profile including your pictures. For safety and security reasons it's best to have your profile on limited status so that only friends can see it, as there is no reason for any strangers to be looking at your profile.

When you join Facebook you also join what's called a network, you can join multiple networks as well and what it does is allows people from the same network to find your profile easier. Networks consist of cities, countries and even schools. So there is always a network that you can join and then anyone else from the network will be able to view your profile easier. It's great for finding old school mates simply because you can search through any school network so as long as the person joined the network you'll be able to find them on Facebook.



www.linkedin.com

Professional Social Network: Presently the premier business social networking website with free and paid subscriptions. LinkedIn is the best to update your network of contacts automatically as people move from one job to other.

LinkedIn Overview

LinkedIn is a social network that is designed to allow businesspeople to network with each other and to keep in touch with former colleagues. Most social networks started out catering to one audience and then grew into huge worldwide networks catering to many audiences. LinkedIn is focused on the business world and they're constantly adding new features to their website to make it easier to communicate with prospects and colleagues.

The first thing you should do once you create your profile with LinkedIn is to find all colleagues and classmates that you've lost touch with. With millions of people now using LinkedIn there is a chance that your old colleagues and classmates will be on the system which would allow you to get back in touch with them very easily. The power of social networks is incredible and although the idea behind LinkedIn isn't unique, the way they have marketed and targeted their network is unique. Because LinkedIn has remained focused on a specific niche, it's continuing to grow while most social networks that cater to the general audience are losing traffic because of their lack of focus. Facebook and MySpace seem to be the exception to the rule but their content is becoming increasingly diluted and people are spamming each other with promotions, further degrading the experience.

You can find jobs and list jobs on the LinkedIn network which means you'll always have the inside scoop on all the new jobs and businesses that are being started. Having this information is invaluable and could lead to a great job with a

huge salary down the road. You can also ask and answer questions which is a great way to demonstrate your expertise. When you answer questions, people will regard you as an expert in your field and hire you or offer you a job. Since the network is filled with experts in business you can get some great advice from a highly qualified audience. You'll usually find very in-depth answers that can help you when you're starting your own business or furthering one you've already established.

With so many professionals under one roof LinkedIn is definitely the most targeted business networking site you could join. You can also subscribe to premium memberships that give you more options to further your networking. Facebook and MySpace are more popular social networking websites, but LinkedIn's business focus makes it the place to be if you want to build business relationships.

More Social Networking Links:

www.mashable.com

www.bumpzee.com

www.mybloglog.com

www.topix.net

www.experienceproject.com

my.opera.com/community/

home.services.spaces.live.com

www.conduit.com

www.awesomemillion.com

www.twango.com

www.wetpaint.com

www.bebo.com

www.vox.com

www.xuqa.com

www.ning.com

Category: Start Pages

Start pages are web pages you can customize with your favorite content. When you open your browser your Start Page is the initial page that opens. You can add your favorite news sites, your email, sports scores, weather, your horoscope and just about anything else that interests you. You get your favorites in a snapshot view so you can quickly keep up to date on what's going on.

Start pages have been around for a while but the introduction of widgets, or snippets of code, has taken them to a new level of functionality. Entire applications can be added to your start page now when it used to be just links to other websites.

A new browser, Flock, was recently introduced that takes internet browsers to the next level. Flock is being developed by Marc Andreessen, who created the Netscape browser in the mid 1990's that revolutionized the internet. Flock is designed to work with social media websites and integrates many powerful tools right into the browser.



www.flock.com

netvibes

www.netvibes.com

Description: Netvibes has been an interesting Web 2.0 website with the release of numerous different products in its space. Briefly, start pages provide a roaming

desktop that can host all of the user's most common web information such as news, weather, e-mail, RSS feeds etc and all in a single user-controlled web page. Netvibes has been growing month by month by offering things like extremely polished look and feel localization in many different languages and open API. It is critical to allowing others to add and build upon the Netvibes platform and its result shows clearly in the Netvibes product.

More Start Page Links:

www.igoogle.com

www.yahoo.com

www.pageflakes.com

www.live.com

www.goowy.com

Category: Social Bookmarking

Social Bookmarking has become all the rage in the recent Web 2.0 Revolution. With a collaborative effort of users around the globe it has created an interesting and relevant alternative to the existing search engine search model.

What is Social Bookmarking? Social Bookmarking can be defined as a collaborative location where users can bookmark, tag and group URL's that they deem to be of worthy content. This gives it a different spin in comparison to the search engine algorithms because it is all human edited.

Now this doesn't necessarily provide end-users with a perfect system as there are ways that crafty netpreneurs can try to game the system by getting people to bookmark and tag their URL's to higher rankings, but for the most part the user-edited system is a solid model that should be followed for years to come. It does provide an interesting insight into the different perspectives that are out there.

Digg is one of these social bookmarking sites. The way Digg works is relatively simple. You sign up with them and create an account. Once you create an account you can bookmark and tag any URL you like. If others in the community find that URL to be worthy they can "Digg" it. This basically gives them a thumb up in terms of acceptance. If the end-user does not like the URL it can bury it essentially giving it a thumb down.

With this type of thumbs up or thumbs down approach the system can use the collaborative effort of the masses to help decide which URL's should be listed on the front page , and which stories should be given top billing. If you do manage to get yourself listed on the first page for a bit you are in for a big surge in traffic as there are many members that utilize Digg.

Del.icio.us is another similar social bookmarking site. It uses the collaborative effort to provide end-users with the most relevant topics on the different items. Del.icio.us has a decidedly more search engine feel to it and it doesn't offer the end-user the option to be able to bury a URL. It does however rank the search

tags by the number of members who have saved the link to their bookmarks. This provides a similar way of ranking URL's direct relevance to the search tag. The more people decide to save that tag, the higher up in that ranking the tag will show.

As with Digg if you have the opportunity to be listed on the first page or in the hot listings you will be blessed with a nice little traffic surge that many would love to have.

As you can see Social Bookmarking is a very powerful tool for the use of traffic generation, and it looks as though it is here to stay.



www.digg.com

Digg Review

Digg is a website that allows individuals to report on interesting content and information. Digg users then vote on the stories that they like the best. The more people that vote on a story, the higher it is ranked. Having one's website on the first page of Digg can generate millions of visitors. If you were to visit the site, you will find that most of the top stories are about current events or about general topics. Look closely and see if you can somehow connect your sites subject to a current event.

There are no official editors on Digg, instead, the readers act as the editors. Digg allows individuals to share news stories, videos and podcasts. Digg is a good place to generate back links and also get some free traffic. Some people complain that Digg readers are not necessarily buyers and so it can be a waste of time for internet marketers. I do not agree. If you submit enough good stories, you will begin to be seen as an expert in your field. This will increase the likelihood that people will eventually buy from you. Digg users are usually at the website to get good information, they are not there to buy anything, and so simply linking to a sales page may not be very successful. Instead, it is important to give them what they are looking for, information. Once you do that on a regular basis, they may trust your opinion enough to make a purchase from you.

There a couple of ways to benefit from Digg. You can add your own stories and link back to your website or you can pay someone to do it for you. Some people submit websites to social networking and social bookmarking sites for a fee. It generally does not cost a lot. Depending on how many sites you want your website listed to, the fee can cost anywhere from \$3-\$20 (or more). The more people that you can get to vote on your site the better. Also, consider the

keyword and subject that you want to use. A subject that is not particularly popular may allow your website to be able to reach the front page with only a few votes. In these cases, you can open up a few Digg accounts and vote for yourself. You also ask your friends or email list to vote on your website as well.



del.icio.us

Del.icio.us Review

Del.icio.us is a good example of social bookmarking. They were one of the original players and continue to be relevant. The site allows individuals to bookmark their favorite sites. This allows online marketers to showcase their websites for other members and also to build back links.

To make the most of Del.icio.us, it is important that you use your tags wisely. That means to use those that are relevant so that your site shows up when someone looks for that topic. Tag selection is also important for your back links. You will want relevant keywords that you want to get ranked for.

Internet marketers sometimes create multiple accounts and add their own sites to their favorite lists. The more people that favorite your site, the higher it ranks on the site. If it gets enough votes, it can end up on the Del.icio.us' Hot List which could result in lots of page views. If you would rather not go through the trouble of multiple accounts, you can always ask your friends to vote for your site, or you can pay someone to do it for you. Some individuals have access to hundreds of accounts and will be willing to favorite your site for a fee. This might be worth the effort if you can improve your rankings on the site.

Del.icio.us allows users to type in keywords so that they can search for blogs on topics that they are interested in. The initial hope was that people would see your listing, read your description and then click on your website. That worked pretty well in the beginning. That's because, while there were many sites listed, there weren't that many listings in certain categories. Today that has changed. There are millions of websites indexed on the site and the chance of your site being seen for very long has greatly decreased.

However, social bookmarking is still worth the effort because you can get some really powerful back links and you may pick up some additional viewers. Make sure that the title of your listing is exciting and makes people want to click. Also, be sure that it contains any keywords that you are looking to get ranked for. Don't link directly to a sales letter but instead to a page that has valuable information or that is engaging and entertaining. You want to build followers for your website. Don't have a one and done mentality. If they like your website and it has something to offer, not only will they come back but they will tell other people about it. It is much cheaper to keep the visitors that you have and build by word of mouth, then it is to try to attract new ones.



www.stumbleupon.com

Description: StumbleUpon is a search engine like Google and it can help you in finding the material you're looking for using keywords but social bookmarking sites can let you directly harness the collective intelligence of other users on the web who share their personal interests with you. StumbleUpon reports that it has over 1.7 million registered users and still growing because it makes easier to find new content.

StumbleUpon Review

StumbleUpon is a really cool social networking site that requires a download. You install the StumbleUpon tool bar which allows you and other users to recommend websites that they think are cool and interesting. Of course, it also allows internet marketers to recommend their own websites.

StumbleUpon has a feature that will select random sites that they think you will like and pulls them up for you to view. They are able to do this because when you sign up you pick topics that you are interested in.

To get started, you need to visit the website, download the free software and then select a username and password. Pick the subjects that you are interested in. Once you have done this, you press the "stumble upon" button. There is a database of over 300 million sites. Simply rate the sites that you like.

Internet marketers should type in their websites address and once it is pulled up, stumble it. StumbleUpon will ask you a little about the website. Try to make your description as exciting and neutral as possible. To really see results it is important that you get as many votes as possible. The more people that vote on your site, the more that it will be shown. One easy way to accomplish this is to pay or bribe other people to stumble your site. You can offer them something for free. There is software that you can use to do this for you. You may also want to

head over to Digital Point Forum and pay one of the people that are offering StumbleUpon submission services. You will want to make sure that your website is interesting, funny and even a little outrageous. These are the types of sites that people tend to stumble more often on their own.

Using StumbleUpon is a really good and quick way to get a lot of people to view your site. However, while it may be able to generate traffic, some internet marketers complain that this traffic does not convert well. People look but don't buy. To increase your chances for sales, try to offer a way to fix some type of common problem. Try a little hyperbole, don't lie, but make your site too good to pass up. You also may want to monetize the site with AdSense instead of trying to sell a product. You may have a better chance of getting people to click links on your site for more information then convincing them to actually pull out their wallet and buy something.



Technorati Review

Technorati is one of the founding members of the social bookmarking movement. It was one of the very first blog search engines. Originally, users would simply add a link to their blog and provide tags so that people can find it. Individuals interested in a particular subject, would simply plug in keywords or tags and a listing of related blogs would appear. This was really cool back then. Technorati allowed other people to view blogs on a particular subject and also helped to generate a strong back link. Today, Technorati is still a blog search engine but it is also much more. There is now a World Live Web component where blogs comments and links are updated and made available to the public. Individuals can also add news stories and posts, which are known as "citizen media".

There are over 100 million blogs listed on Technorati. This is evidence that the site is still relevant. The site has several different categories where blogs and stories can be added and viewed. They include Business, Politics, Entertainment, Sports, Technology, Pictures and Videos.

To best use Technorati, be sure that when you add a post or your link that you choose the correct tags. People will look for various subjects using the tags. Tags are sort of like keywords. For example, if you have a weight loss website, you would want to add tags such as diet, diets, weight loss and lose weight. This way, when someone is looking for blogs on how to lose weight or diets, they will hopefully see your blog listed.

One disadvantage about Technorati is that there are so many blogs listed, that yours can easily become lost. However, you never know, someone may view it and you might receive some traffic, just don't expect a ton of traffic. To increase views add others peoples blogs as your favourites. This might prompt them to take a look at your site too, especially if it is related. Another way to benefit from Technorati is to pay other people to "favorite" your blog. This will give you more authority and will increase the exposure of your blog. There are many people that

offer this as a service. You can find individuals that are willing to do this for you at various marketing forums. Digital Point forum is a good place to look.

Technorati is a good place to get the news from the perspective of the people. It can also be an effective way to drive some traffic to your site. The more that your website is chosen as someone's favorite, the higher it will rank which increases the likelihood that it will be seen. Be sure to choose your tags carefully and correctly so that people who are interested in your subject will be able to find your blog.

More Social Bookmarking Links:

www.trailfire.com

www.ma.gnolia.com

www.listible.com

socialposter.com

onlywire.com

wists.com

clipmarks.com

clipfire.com

simpy.com

Category: Social News



Best Offering: www.netscape.com which is now www.propeller.com

Description: Netscape has been selected as the best amongst the all peer production news sites. Netscape regularly delivers news on their front pages those are authentically remarkable and has attracted a large number of audiences and they forward their comments, very regularly. Netscape presently provides the best overall merge of news content. The site was recently renamed Propeller and continues to be one of the most popular news websites.

More Social News Links:

www.newsvine.com

www.reddit.com

www.plugin.com

marktd.com

www.newsfactor.com

www.quizilla.com

shoutwire.com

votigo.com

Propeller Review

As social networking sites go, Propeller is one of the older social networking sites. It used to be known as Netscape. Propeller is one of the most powerful social networking sites around. Google loves it and gives it a lot of respect. In fact, depending on your keyword, you can see your comments and site ranked on the Propeller website in as little as a few minutes.

Propeller allows individuals to submit stories on whatever subject that they want. Internet marketers used to link from the site to EzineArticles to boost their article rankings in the search engines. Propeller has caught on to that and has since banned the practice. It is best to link from the site to your very own website. Make sure that your website has some relevant information to the article you are linking from. It doesn't have to be Wikipedia, but it should be informative. Then simply place some relevant advertisements or product reviews on the page your redirecting them to. You could also simply add your affiliate link or sales page and hope to profit off of some good rankings but you probably won't get many votes using this approach.

Members vote on stories that they find interesting, most are not likely to vote on sales pages so you miss out on the opportunity to benefit directly from the community. Linking to an actual website allows you to use Propeller as a one way link that can help boost your rankings.

To make yourself well known and to build up goodwill, make sure that you vote on other's people stories and that you leave comments. These are called social networks for a reason. They are a place where people are social and communicate with each other. The more that you communicate and the more that you have to offer, the chances increase that you will build up a good reputation. A good reputation lends itself to credibility which in turn leads to sales. You have to play the game correctly. Give and you will receive.

When submitting stories to Propeller make sure that you properly optimize them. This means adding the word or phrase that you want to get ranked for in the title

and throughout the post. Lastly, add a link to your website. Make sure that you place it in the right category and use tags that people will be looking for your site under and which you would like to get ranked for. Propeller can be extremely powerful. Don't abuse it by spamming.

NewsVine Review

NewsVine is a very popular online news source. It is one of the newer social networking sites. If you have not been on the internet for very long, you may not understand the power that these sites have. They can generate traffic to your website through users that frequent the social networking site and also help with search engine optimization. Many times, websites that are listed on the top social networking sites will also become ranked in the search engines. They also provide powerful back links that can help your own site get good rankings. If you have been involved in internet marketing for a long time, then you probably are already aware of this and you may just want to learn more about the particular website, NewsVine.

NewsVine provides readers with information on the latest events and happenings in our world. They get news directly from the AP wire. They are sort of in the same vein as CNN or any other major online news source, though they are obviously not as well known. Besides news, the website also can be used to help marketers generate leads and make sales.

NewsVine has a separate part of their website that allows users to contribute stories from their particular region and also submit links, very similar to Digg. Individuals can leave comments on the stories or links that you submit. You may do the same. Once a story is added, NewsVine readers can vote on it. The stories with the highest votes will move up the vine, even to the first page. The stories that reach the first page get a great deal of page views.

To take full advantage of websites like NewsVine, it is important to follow good social networking etiquette. Namely, this includes not going for the hard sell in your story. Sure, sometimes story contributions are picked up by the search engines, but not too many people like a hard sell and this type of marketing certainly will be not be seen as favourable from the NewsVine community. Instead provide some valuable and interesting information and then place a link back to your site. Make sure your site has some additional content. Five to ten pages will suffice. Of course you need to monetize your page. You can so by

adding AdSense and affiliate links. Put them at a prominent place on your website and even write some reviews. This allows you to provide value first, make the sale second and build up your reputation in the community as well.

Category: Video Sharing

What is YouTube?

YouTube is a fully functional web video serving portal. It can easily be considered the most bandwidth consuming website on the planet with its 1 million dollar plus hosting budget. YouTube is a free membership social video site that allows its users to upload their own videos on to the website and display them for all to see.

One quick glance at the site and you can see the instant appeal. There are countless millions of videos on a countless number of topics easily accessible from one indexed search bar. You can probably find videos on almost every single topic or subject out there if you tried. The videos range in nature from comedy, to business, to drama, even some that borderline adult in nature. YouTube was recently purchased by Google in its attempt to capture the Video market share that YouTube had enjoyed in its quick meteoric rise to the top of most internet monitoring traffic sites. No other site had ever seen such a quick rise to the top of these charts. Given its social nature and seemingly never ending content you can easily see why so many people can get lost into a site of this nature.

Humans are naturally people watchers. We watch celebrities and gossip about their every move, it is only natural that a site that gives anyone and everyone the opportunity at their 15 minutes of fame would easily be amongst the most popular sites on the planet.

Hop online. Join YouTube, bring a video with you and have some fun. You will not regret it.

What is Revver?

Revver runs under a very similar model as YouTube with the exception of one small thing. You get paid for the traffic that you generate with your videos. If you have a knack at creating great traffic generating videos you will want to head on over to Revver because they will give you a cut of all the ad revenue that they generate from your video.

This in and of itself makes it a little bit better than YouTube as you stand to enjoy some monetary gain from this exposure if you know what you are doing. There are some people who have made a very solid residual income from creating popular videos on the site. It is not unheard of to support yourself using this model either.

So if you have a knack for creating videos that attract attention and are looking for a little extra cash you should head over to Revver and join it. Bring your videos along with you and enjoy the monetary compensation that comes with it. Hint: Videos of the comedic nature tend to bode better than the others.



Best Offering: www.youtube.com

More Video sharing Links:

www.uncutvideo.aol.com

www.jumpcut.com

www.video.google.com

video.yahoo.com

There are hundreds of other video sharing websites with more appearing every day. Submitting your videos to these sites can generate massive traffic to your website or blog instantly. Search Google for “video sharing website” and you’ll see what I mean.

If you want to save a lot of time you can automate your video submissions by using a great tool called [Traffic Geyser](#). You can upload one video to [Traffic Geyser](#) and the system will automatically upload your video to the most popular video websites on the internet. The system also strips out the audio from your video and turns it into podcast. It submits the podcast to the most popular podcasting websites automatically. Talk about instant traffic!!



Category: Podcasting websites

Podcasting can be defined as the transfer of a variety of different digital media via the internet. These files could be in the format of video or mp3 in nature. The term pod comes from the phrase "Portable on Demand" Hence POD. It also became a household term when the Apple Corporation created their famous portable MP3 players the iPods.

Here is how it works:

The Podcaster makes the media available to the masses via upload to a web server. Once that is completed the podcaster announces the availability of this file via feed usually in atom format. It can be broadcast to the public or kept private for only a few individuals to enjoy.

A specific type of software known as a Podcatcher or reader is then used to convert the data from the atom format into a readable format. From there the media can be transferred to your desktop. Once the file is on your desktop you can easily sync the files with your iPod with the use of your iPod synchronization software.

Once the files are transferred to your iPod you can enjoy them wherever you go. This is what makes Podcasting so popular, the ability to enjoy digital media on the go.

As the iPods grew in their storage size and technology they also expanded from mp3 player into a complete portable entertainment option. This added technology allowed video to be transferred to it and played wherever. This added benefit created a need for websites that had this type of media readily transferrable to the iPod device thus the term Podcasting became a household name.

The Apple iPod has been one of the hottest selling technological devices of all time and has grown in popularity year by year. Many websites have taken advantage of this by Broadcasting or Podcasting different media files such as movie clips, music video clips and songs. These sites leverage the popularity of the iPod to increase their traffic.

Podcasting continues to be a preferred method of transfer amongst iPod owners and it shows no sign of slowing down any time soon. With the increasing popularity of video sharing sites such as YouTube there has been an increase in the number of podcasting sites as well. The access to different digital media available on any number of channels has made it very easy for Podcasters to Podcast their media.

Podcasting can be syndicated in a variety of different forms and manners making it a very popular alternative to the basic streaming media format.

Podcasting can attribute most of its success to the strength of the iPod.
Podcasting can be dated as far back as 2004.

Top podcasting links

www.apple.com/itunes/

www.podbean.com

www.getapodcast.com

www.zencast.com

www.odeo.com

Category: Blogs

Description: A **blog** (a [portmanteau](#) of **web log**) is a website where entries are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning *to maintain or add content to a blog*.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal [online diaries](#). A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on [art \(artlog\)](#), [photographs \(photoblog\)](#), [sketchblog](#), [videos \(vlog\)](#), [music \(MP3 blog\)](#), [audio \(podcasting\)](#) are part of a wider network of [social media](#). [Micro-blogging](#) is another type of blogging which consists of blogs with very short posts.

There are two ways you can set up your blog, You can set up a blog on your own webhosting server or you can use blog services like blogger.com or Wordpress.com. Wordpress.com is the website where you can set up your own Wordpress blog on their servers for free. Wordpress.org is the website where you can download the latest version of Wordpress to install on your own webhosting account. You can also get support for your blog and download thousands of Wordpress templates at www.wordpress.org.

You can literally set up a blog in minutes on these free hosted blog sites like blogger.com and Wordpress.com. The downside is that you are limited in the functionality of the blog. You can upload your own templates to these free blog services but many of the advanced customization features are not included. If you are just learning how to blog and don't need the advanced features of a blog then this is the quickest and easiest solution.

If you're serious about blogging and want to really get your blog noticed, then you should install Wordpress on your own webhosting server. Many webhosting companies include Wordpress on their servers and you can install it in seconds just by clicking on a button in your webhosting control panel. Some of these

hosting companies include www.godaddy.com, www.hostgator.com and www.netbizexperthosting.com

The advantage of running your own installation of Wordpress is because of the hundreds of widgets that are being developed by open source programmers. Widgets are scripts of code that can easily be installed on your blog adding tremendous functionality and the ability to easily tap into the powerful social media websites. Using widgets you can drive tons of traffic to your blog automatically every time you make a post. You can also build your own social networking communities.

Top blog websites



www.blogger.com

Free blog service from Google provides an easy to use interface. Highly rated and very popular.



www.wordpress.com

Free blog service from Wordpress, an open source-based product. Highly rated and very popular. You can set up a free blog on their web servers or download free software and run the blog on your own webhosting account.



www.typepad.com

Another hosted blog service. Highly rated and very popular.

Other blog services

www.livejournal.com

<http://www.peopleconnection.aol.com/blogs>

www.xanga.com

www.greatestjournal.com

www.clearblogs.com

www.bloghi.com

home.blogware.com

Bonus Wordpress "How To" videos



[Click here to see how to set up your own Wordpress blog from your webhosting control panel](#)



[Click here to see how to download and install an FTP program so you can add themes and widgets to your Wordpress blog](#)



[Click here to see how to use FTP to upload themes to your Wordpress blog](#)



[Click here to see how to make a post in your Wordpress blog](#)



[Click here to see how to add pictures to your Wordpress blog](#)



[Click here to see how to submit your blog post to the social bookmarking websites using Social Marker](#)

Category: Tools/widgets/directories

Description: Miscellaneous websites, tools and directories that have high Alexa rankings and high page ranks.

hubpages.com

www.squidoo.com

slashdot.org

www.clubvibes.com

upcoming.yahoo.com

www.meetup.com

www.blogowogo.com

www.craigslist.org

www.myfeedz.com

www.ratepoint.com

www.scribd.com

www.spicypage.com

ClickComments

outpost-earth.com

www.technorati.com

www.traffick.com

www.blogcatalog.com

www.icerocket.com

co.mments.com

blogflux.com

www.43places.com

www.43things.com

www.43people.com

www.blinklist.com

allconsuming.net



How To Build a Squidoo Page

Squidoo is a new social site with a twist. The benefit of creating a Squidoo lens is monetary in nature as they share the advertising revenue with you based on the traffic that your page and site generates. This is an added bonus to anyone who knows how to get some real traffic to their Squidoo Lens.

Before you can begin to build your Squidoo lens you will have to have an account with Squidoo. You can easily sign up for a free membership with a username and password associated with an email account. You are allowed to have 10 lens/pages per email account. You will receive a confirmation email and once confirmed your account will be activated and you will be able to create your own lens.

Before you start creating your own lens it would be a good idea to do some research on the topic that you would like to create. There are many different niches out there that you can target but not all niches are created equal. Some have much higher values for Pay Per Click and some have better values for affiliate programs or digital products. You will have to identify the niche that you would like to create your lens prior to its creation. This will help optimize the process as well as give you the maximum results.

Now that you have signed up for Squidoo you will want to log-in and go to make a lens. You will want to optimize it to your niche. You will have to find some of the top keyword search terms that are searched for by using a keyword tool. Use those terms in your lens title for example if you have chosen dog training as your niche you will want to include the phrase dog-training as the name of your lens.

Once you have created your URL you will need to select the category that best suits your niche. Next you will have to select the rating for your lens. Unless you have something that is x-rated or very adult you will most likely have G rated

content. Next you will have to add your keywords to the lens. This will help the search engines identify what your page is about and possibly help you get ranked for that term. That is not a given but it is a possibility. You should pick your best 3 terms and input them at this stage.

You should now be given the option to edit your Squidoo lens. Take a look at the content that you want to add. A good idea would be to take a look at other sites that are related to your niche to get some ideas as to the layout and the content. Another smart idea would be to add links to other related sites as well as to your sites as well. Make sure that they are related links though. Do not add a sports link to a dog training site. It would not be related and most likely you will not receive any good traffic from it.

Change the lens to reflect your own personality. After all this should reflect you and give it that personal touch. Don't expect to become a millionaire off of one lens but if you create enough lens's you can expect to receive a decent residual return over time.



Twitter Review

Twitter is a relatively new social networking site. It is a little bit unique in its approach. Essentially, it asks its user to answer the following question "What are you doing?" This allows family members and friends to keep track of each other. Twitter is sort of like a combination of email and IM. People can talk almost instantly but can also go back and forth by following each other.

To begin using Twitter, individuals need to set up an account by creating a username and password. After doing that, check and they need to check and see if they know someone. It is helpful to know some people already on the site in order to participate. If one does not, they can send out invitations. Some people will respond and accept invitations from people that they do not know while others will likely ignore those invitations because they don't know who the person is who is sending them. That's ok, just keep sending them out. You will get some yes's. To improve your chances, sign up to follow other people and then ask them to follow you.

In 140 characters or less, you will need to answer the question, "What are you doing?" Now this can be used to actually keep your family, friends and loved ones updated on what you are doing, but it can also be used to earn money. For example, your answer to what you are doing could be "making money with this cool new program," "updating my work at home blog," "just got done reading this great book on whatever". Many smart internet marketers are alerting people to updates on their blogs and on products that they are trying to sell. The goal here is to promote yourself, your blog or website without sounding like you are trying to sell something.

You will also need to make a lot of friends and have them follow you. One way to do this is to either already know a lot of people and send out invitations or to begin following people. Remember, after you sign up to follow other people, they

will often return the favour and begin following you. After they sign up for your list, you can provide them with your own updates. Vary your responses. Do not try to sell something every time. People will begin to ignore you, especially if the products you are trying to sell are crap. Only push high quality products that either you have tried yourself or that you know for a fact, are really good. Mix it up and provide fun, catchy and interesting updates as well.



Slideshare Review

Slideshare is a very unique social networking site that allows individuals to share presentations. People interested in your slide show can download it and then embed it into their website or blog. This allows other web users to view them. Slideshare is sort of like an article directory on steroids. Typically, articles are a few hundred words of plain text. With Slideshare, you can add pictures and effects to make the words come alive. It gives you more time to convince the person viewing your presentation to purchase from you or to at least visit your website for more information.

Slideshare has categories that include "Most Viewed," "Most Embedded," "Most Downloaded" and "Most Favorite". If your site makes the first page, your slide show will be available to huge number of viewers. On the About Us page, Slideshare encourages users to generate business leads with their Slideshow. They are not anti-commerce. However, it is likely that viewers of the slide shows are looking for interesting information for themselves and their readers and are not likely looking for blatant advertising. Therefore, make sure that your slide show provides something of value. Making people laugh is of great value and these types of slide shows do very well. Those that are informative and can help individuals solve a problem also tend to be very popular. Remember, if your information really helps someone, they will likely look forward to your next slide show. This is how you build a following and a reputation on social networking sites. Provide value and don't sell. It is also a good idea to take a look at other people's slides and leave positive and informed comments. Everyone loves compliments and the chance will increase that they take some time and check out your website as well. A comment like "Nice site" with a link to your own website or slideshow will not likely generate a response, instead leave a comment that actually suggests that you viewed their slide show.

Since you will be working with slides, try to add more than just text. Add pictures and video so that you engage your audience and going through your slide show is both informative and exciting. You will find that if you provide viewers with great information (information that they would have gladly paid for) for free and you present it in a way that is engaging and exciting that people will begin following your work and viewing your websites. Remember to also reach out to other members. Read their slide shows and make good comments and they will likely return the favor.



Scribd Review

Scribd is another new social networking website. It seems that some very savvy and smart individuals are taking what is best about social networking and then putting their unique spin on it with great results. Scribd is a community where documents can be shared. It allows individuals to self publish, distribute and share their documents with other people.

Users can share eBooks, white papers, photos, school work and even essays. Documents can be uploaded in a number of formats including jpg and PDF. Documents can even be embedded into blogs and websites. There is no limit in storage space and Google tends to index Scribd sites pretty fast.

There are some rules that must be abided by when using Scribd. It is best to read their terms of service. It's important to note that no type of marketing material or marketing efforts is allowed in the comments that you leave. This means you can not sell products or services to people in your comments. There is also a policy against copyright infringement. You can not republish other people's articles or content like you can with article directories. Don't upload any blatant marketing materials, advertisements, keyword spam filled articles that "take away from the Scribd experience." If you are caught breaking the rules twice, your account will be shut down.

Even with all of the rules, the potential to generate leads using Scribd is huge. It will require just a little bit more work than simply posting your link and adding a few sentences about your product. To be successful, you need to get people excited every time you add a new document. It is important that you take some time to research a topic and come up with a really great short report. Don't go for the sale in the document. Place a link to your website for more information and send them to a page on your website that gives them relevant information to the topic you are commenting on. Make sure that the information continues the

conversation that is going on. It can leave them hanging a little bit, but not too much. Internet users are getting smarter, they can sniff out an obvious sales pitch. They will not appreciate you wasting their time with fluff reports designed to drive them to some sales page. Instead give them great information and they will be more than happy to visit your website for more information. They will probably even purchase something because they trust you and know that what you are selling is even better than what you gave away for free.

Category: Article Directories

www.ezinearticles.com

www.goarticles.com

www.isnare.com

www.about.com

www.ideamarketers.com

www.articlecity.com

www.articlefeeder.com

www.impactarticles.com

www.articlealley.com

www.selfgrowth.com

www.articleavenue.com

www.linksnoop.com

www.articlecentral.com

www.articlehub.com

www.articlesfactory.com

www.articlelocker.com

There are thousands of articles sites on the internet and they are constantly changing. These sites currently have a Google Page Rank of 8 or above but that can change. To save a ton of time and submit your articles to the highest ranked sites automatically consider using a tool like [Article Submitter](#).





If you want someone else to submit your articles for you try Isnare.com They will submit your articles to hundreds of websites for a small fee. You purchase credits that allow you to have them submit the articles for you. The more credits you buy the cheaper the cost.

Price	Number of Credits / Number of Articles to Distribute
\$10	5 Article Distribution Credits (distribute 5 articles at \$2/article)
\$18	10 (+2 bonus) Article Distribution Credits (distribute 12 articles at \$1.5/article)
\$38	25 (+4 bonus) Article Distribution Credits (distribute 29 articles at \$1.31/article)
\$49	40 (+8 bonus) Article Distribution Credits (distribute 48 articles at \$1.02/article)
\$71	65 (+12 bonus) Article Distribution Credits (distribute 77 articles at \$0.92/article)
\$100	100 (+20 bonus) Article Distribution Credits (distribute 120 articles at \$0.83/article)
Platinum	Distribute 300 articles per month with lots of benefits for \$59.95/mo. recurring.

Make A Plan

Now that you've learned what Web 2.0 and social media are, it's time to make your plan. You have to map out your strategy for using Web 2.0 to promote your business. Without a plan you'll spend many hours getting sucked into useless Facebook conversations, reading Twitter updates on your phone, and reading blogs that have nothing to do with your niche. Social media can suck you in and before you know it two hours have passed and you haven't done anything productive to earn money. Everything you do on social media websites should be done for a reason which is to build relationships that will turn into cold, hard cash for your business.

Will you have a blog and a website or just a blog? Or just a website?

Most small businesses have a website today. There are many different types of websites on the internet today.

Brochure website

This is essentially an electronic version of your business card. It's a one page website with your logo and your contact information. It gives you minimal exposure on the internet.

Lead generating website

These websites are used to generate leads for your business. You want to collect contact information so you can follow up with the prospect to start building a relationship. Most lead generating websites try to collect your name, email address, and your telephone number. To get the website visitor to give you this information, you must give them a reason to enter their information. Most people offer a free report that gives them valuable information that solves a problem for them. Many companies now offer free "hot to" videos that show you how to solve a problem. After the visitor reads the free report or watches the video, you follow up with a series of emails that give them more helpful tips to solve their problem.

If they provided their telephone number, you can follow up with a phone call to discuss the problem they're trying to solve.

Ecommerce website

These websites sell your products. Amazon.com, Buy.com, and Walmart.com are all ecommerce websites. These sites make it easy for you to research products and compare features and prices before you make your purchase. Many people research products online and then go directly to the brick-and-mortar store to make the purchase. Others purchase products directly from their computer so they don't have to waste time driving to and from the store. Online shopping is growing in popularity every day and you need to add it to your sales process as soon as possible.

Informational website

An informational website provides valuable information to the website visitor in the form of articles, videos, audios or by providing a way for them to search for information in a database. www.wikipedia.com is a great example of an informational website where users can search for information and even add their own content to the website.

Decide the purpose of your website and blog

It's time for you to decide the purpose of your website so you can design it properly. Your website and/or blog need to be an integral part of your marketing plan. In fact your website and/or blog should be the central point of your marketing process.

Your website can be a combination of all of the above types of websites. You can generate leads by driving traffic to an article on your website and collecting their name and email address if they want more information. By providing lots of valuable information for the website visitor you can build a strong relationship and eventually sell them your products and services.

Schedule time to do your social networking

Social networking is considered marketing for your business. The reason most small businesses fail is because they don't spend time marketing. Set aside at least 3 hours per week for social networking/marketing. Spend one hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday making connections with prospects. Pick one method, whether it's social bookmarking or social networking and focus all of your effort there.

If you choose to focus on LinkedIn then become a LinkedIn expert by spending a few minutes every day on LinkedIn. Answer some questions that people are posting. Ask some provocative questions. Find some old colleagues that you went to school with or worked with. Build your network slowly by spending 10-15 minutes a day connecting with people. You can even add a LinkedIn widget to your IGoogle.com start page so you can see questions that people are asking by just glancing at your Start Page occasionally throughout the day. I built a large following on LinkedIn with minimal effort by connecting to a few old friends and answering a few questions a week. I even picked up some new clients without even trying.

If you choose to do social bookmarking, then pick Digg or Delicious and focus your effort on that. Bookmark everything you come across during the day. You can build a great resource guide for your prospects and clients by referring them to your public bookmarks in Digg or Delicious.

The bottom line is to stay focused on one social marketing task until you can spend just 5-10 minutes a day on that task. Then add a second, then a third. Manage your time and don't get consumed in being too social unless it's making you a fortune!. Many internet marketers spend all day online being social and they earn thousands of dollars a week by building relationships and selling affiliate products.

How to Make Money With Your Blog

First off, unique content is always a good thing – Google loves it and so do readers. The quality of the writing however is open to interpretation. If you want regular readers who Stumble your site and come back every time you post then you will need articles or posts that people enjoy reading and go away saying ‘hey that was a fantastic idea/post/joke, I will bookmark that or sign up for an RSS feed’. This should normally be something you’ve either written yourself or you’ve paid a ghost writer to write or post on your behalf.

There are 5 main categories we’ll look at to make money with your blog.

1. Selling advertising
2. Selling other peoples products
3. Soliciting contributions
4. Marketing your services or products
5. Deepening your customer relationships.

If I was to ask anyone to name a company that was synonymous with the word ‘web’ or ‘internet’ I bet they would say Google. The big G is by far the biggest advertising company in the world. Lots of people would say ‘but they are a search engine aren’t they’ – to tell the truth not really. They only really show you the stuff they want you to see. They index every page they come across and then choose what to show you when you come to a page. They choose what is at the top of the page and what isn’t even shown. What they do good is sell advertising.

Advertising by using contextual ads on a blog is by far the most common means of making money off your blog. You place a simple bit of code on your site (after signing up to the advertisers service) and it will show ads that fit your content. So if you were writing about televisions your ads would show ads for televisions and so on. People click on the link in the ad and you get paid. Mostly pennies but they all add up.

Affiliate programs are also a really good way of making money with your blog. Let's think if you were talking about the latest album from a top singer on your blog, you could easily put up a link or picture that would take them to either Amazon or CD Baby and you would make money when they buy the CD.

Using the old cap in hand trick – you could easily put a quick button on your blog asking for donations. Paypal can help you with this and you would be pleasantly surprised how many people donate.

If you have a product or you offer a service – keep a blog about it, tell people what you sell or that you will make a bespoke website for them – again a very direct way of making money from your blog.

Something most people don't think about – a blog can also be a way of keeping your customers 'in the loop' of the happenings of your company. Keep them informed, give them a chance to comment - they will stay a customer for years to come!

What's my next step?

A popular way to get your name out on the internet these days is to comment on other people's blogs. The process is very simple. Find popular blogs, make compelling comments, and add a link back to your website or blog when you fill out the comment form and you've joined the conversation. This is a great way to generate traffic back to your website or blog by leveraging the traffic of an already successful blog.

The best approach is to follow the conversation that's going on in the blog and add your two cents. Don't just leave a comment like "I agree" or "Nice post Jason". Add a different perspective, create some controversy, or add some value to the conversation. Make people notice you so they'll want to click on your name in the comment to learn more about you. Magically they'll visit your website or blog to see what you're all about.

Use keyword tools like [WordTracker](#) to research the most popular keywords for your niche. Start by entering a keyword phrase in [WordTracker](#) and you'll see how many people search for that keyword phrase every day. [WordTracker](#) will also give you a list of variations of that keyword phrase so you can find "long tail" keyword phrases that have 4-6 words in the phrase. These "long tail" phrases have fewer daily searches but your competition is much less.

Here are 10 easy ways to find popular blogs on the internet

1. Do a search on Google for your keywords plus the word "blog". For example if you're looking for blogs about personal development search Google for "personal development blog"
2. Add the word trackback to your Google search. A trackback is a blog component that automatically "pings" another blog when a new post or comment appears on a blog. Search Google for "personal development trackback" to find high quality blogs

3. Add the word "typepad" to your Google search. Search Google for "personal development typepad" to find high quality blogs based on Typepad software which is a popular blogging software.
4. Add the word "wordpress" to your Google search. Search Google for "personal development wordpress" to find high quality blogs based on Wordpress software which is a popular blogging software.
5. Set up a Watchlist in the Blogger Central section of www.technorati.com
Blogger Central is a great resource in itself showing you the hottest tags and blogs containing those tags.
6. Use blogsearch.google.com to find blogs in your niche. Blogsearch is a search engine just for blogs.
7. Check out www.blogcatalog.com It's a comprehensive blog directory where you can promote your blog, find niche blogs, join BlogCatalog Groups, or join in on Blog Discussions. Add the BlogCatalog widget to your blog.
8. Sign up at www.mybloglog.com. Join some communities in your niche and add the MyBlogLog Widget to your blog.
9. Go to www.blogger.com and watch Blogs of Note and also search for blogs in your niche
10. Download a free copy of Comment Sniper at www.commentsniper.com.
You can search blogs using keyword phrases and you get a comprehensive list including Page Rank and Alexa ranking. It also lets you set up alerts so you receive immediate notification of new blog posts.
11. Bonus! Download a free copy of Comment Kahuna at www.commentkahuna.com. A lot like Comment Sniper but this one lets you comment directly on your ideal blogs right from the application.

Keyword Research Videos



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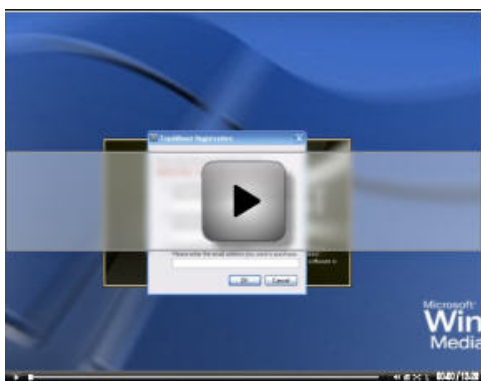
[Click here to learn how to use Google Trends](#)



[Click here to learn how to use Wordtracker](#)



[Click here to learn how to use Google Hot Trends](#)



[Click here to learn how to use Google's Free Keyword tool](#)

How To Tell If It's A Good Blog

You've found a list of blogs in your niche and you're ready to start commenting to build a relationship with their readers. How do you know if this is a good blog to comment on? There are a number of factors that determine if this is the right blog for you to comment on.

1. How many other people are commenting on this blog? If nobody else is commenting on the blog then it's not a popular blog so don't waste your time. If there are a few comments, try adding your two cents and see what happens.
2. How much traffic does this blog get? Go to Alexa.com and enter the URL of the blog to see how popular this blog is. Look for blogs with low Alexa rankings. The lower the better and you want to comment on blogs that are in the top 100,000 if possible. You can download a toolbar for your browser that makes this easy. I use the Firefox Addon Search Status which gives me instant traffic results at the bottom of my browser window. There's also a toolbar for Internet Explorer that works well. Check out Alexa.com for the right toolbar for your browser.
3. What is the Google PageRank of the blog you want to comment on? You want to comment on blogs that have a high Google PageRank which means the site is considered to have high quality content in Google's eyes. Making comments on high PageRank sites will also improve your website or blog's Google ranking. You can download the Google Toolbar to determine the PageRank of the website or blog you're visiting. The Search Status Addon for Firefox provides both Google Page Rank and the Alexa rating in one tool.
4. When you find a popular blog to comment on, read the blog posts and the quality of the comments. Do you want to be associated with this crowd? Don't comment on a popular blog that you can't relate to. If you're a management consultant looking to connect with C level executives, commenting on a blog that's popular with 20-something programmers won't help you. Your comments

will go over their head and their comments will be in lingo that you don't understand. Look for blogs with comments coming from your target audience.

5. Remember to read past posts and comments so you get into the flow of the conversation. You want to continue that existing conversation and add value to the conversation. You don't have to agree with what's being said and it's okay to state an opposing opinion. In fact, being controversial is a good way to attract attention.

6. Be professional and be honest. Don't try to be someone you're not when commenting on blogs because people will read right through you. Remember that you're trying to build long-term relationships with these readers so they'll visit your blog or website so they'll hire you or buy your products.

7. Remember to always use your real name when commenting and add your URL to the comment form. If you don't feel comfortable using your real name and URL then you shouldn't be posting on that blog.

8. Don't try to sell your product or services in your comments. Just continue the existing conversation and answer questions or add value that demonstrates your expertise.

9. Don't add your website URL in the comment. It's okay to add a URL to another website that adds value to the conversation but promoting your own website will turn people off. It is okay to direct them to your website if you're directing them directly to an article you wrote that solves their problem.

10. Find a few quality blogs and websites and participate on a regular basis so you build a relationship with the readers. It's better to focus your effort on 2 or 3 high quality blogs than to spread yourself over 20 blogs where you're only making a few comments.

Follow these steps and you'll have traffic to your blog or website in no time. Remember it's all about continuing the existing conversation and adding high quality comments that demonstrate your knowledge and expertise. It's not about promoting your products and services. Build a strong relationship and you'll have clients for life!

How To Find Good Blogs Video



[Click here to learn how to find good blogs to comment on](#)

Conclusion

Well this is not the conclusion, but just the beginning. Think of this process as planting seeds that will grow over time. You'll need to water and fertilize your seeds to make them grow. You need to nurture your plants as they grow and mature. If you forget to water them or neglect them, they will die or disappear.

The same thing can be said about your clients. You must slowly build a relationship with them and nurture that relationship over time. The best relationships develop over time and often last forever. Once you solidify the relationship with them and they trust you, they'll keep coming back for more over and over again. Plus they'll tell all of their friends about you and they will in turn become raving fans of you and your products and services.

You must consider the time you spend on developing relationships with social media and web 2.0 as part of your marketing process. Dedicate at least 30 minutes per day at least 3 days per week to this process and in no time you will see results. The more time you spend the more you will reap. Your name will be splattered all over the internet (in a good way!) and you'll be considered an expert in your field.

Think of marketing as a journey not a destination. Consistency is the key to successful marketing so make it part of your daily routine. Do a little bit every day and it will soon turn into a habit for you that will reward you with more clients and more money!

This ebook/video series is a living document and resource website. As I learn new techniques to use the internet to market your business I will be updating this ebook and I'll constantly be adding new "how to" videos. As you come across new techniques and websites/communities that work for you, please share them with me so I can add them to my updated version of the course. I will give you full credit for your suggestions and I'll add a link to your website in the ebook. It's a free backlink and advertising source for your business!

Good luck and don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Also join our forum at www.netbizexpert.com/forum so you can meet others that can help you to success on the internet!

Thanks again for purchasing The ABC's of Social Media Success and I'll see you on the internet.

Ted Prodromou

Appendix

1.1

History of Web

Web is a shortened term of “World Wide Web” and the first Website appeared on-line in 1991. Subsequently CERN (*European Organization for Nuclear Research*) announced on 30 April 1993 that the WorldWideWeb would be free to everyone.

A Website is a collection of web pages, typically common to a particular domain name or sub-domain on the WorldWideWeb on the Internet. All publicly accessible websites are seen as constituting a mammoth “WorldWideWeb” of information.

World Wide Web

The WorldWideWeb (www) describes the wide-area hypermedia information retrieval initiative aiming to give complete access to a large world of documents. In this document everything is online regarding www and is linked directly or indirectly. It includes executive summary of the project, mailing lists, policy, news and frequently asked questions (FAQ).

Netcraft is an Internet monitoring company that was tracking Web growth since 1995 and has reported that there are currently 106,875,138 websites in January 2007, with their domain names and contents on them as compared to just 18,000 websites in August 1995. Today there are at least 200.000,000 websites and counting.

1.2

Types of Websites

Here are few examples out of so many types of websites. Each website is specializing in a particular type of content or use.

1. Archive Site: The archive site is devoted to preserve valuable electronic content threatened with destruction. (e.g. Internet Archive has preserved billions of old along-with new web pages since 1996 and Google Group was archiving over 850,000,000 messages posted to Usenet news/discussions since 2005.
2. Blog or Web Log Site: The blog site is devoted to log online readings or to post online diaries which may include discussion forums (e.g. blogger, Xanga)
3. Business Site: The business site is devoted for promoting a business or service.
4. eCommerce Site: The commerce or eCommerce site is used for purchasing goods etc. (e.g. Amazon.com and alibaba.com)
5. Community Site: The community site is devoted where persons with similar interests communicate with each other, usually by chat or message boards. (e.g. MySpace etc)
6. Database Site: This site is devoted to search and display the specific database's content. (e.g. Internet Movies Database and Political graveyard)
7. Development Site: The development site is devoted to provide information and resources related to Software development and Website etc.

8. Directory Site: The directory sites contain varied contents those are divided into categories and sub-categories. (e.g. Yahoo Directory, Google Directory and Open Directory Project)
9. Download Site: The download site is strictly devoted for downloading electronic content such as software. (e.g. Game demos or Computer wallpaper etc)
10. Employment Site: The employment sites are used by the employers to post job requirements for the positions to be filled and job seekers can locate and fill out job applications. In addition they can submit their CVs etc. (e.g. jobs.com, jobsite and jobstreet etc)
11. Fan Site: The fan site is a vanity site on which the administrator is paying homage to a celebrity.
12. Game Site: The game site is itself a game or “playground” where many people come to play. (e.g. MSN Games and Pogo.com)
13. Gripe Site: The gripe site is devoted to the critique of a person, place, corporation, government or institution. (e.g. usatoday.com)
14. Humor Site: The humor site is devoted to amuse exclusively. (e.g. sofunny.com, atomic jukes)
15. Information Site: The information site contains contents that are intended to inform visitors but not for commercial and trade purposes. (e.g. crratu.com and ratemyprofessor.com)
16. Java Applet Site: The java applet site contains software to run over the web as a web application.

17. Mirror (Computing) Site: The mirror site is a complete reproduction of website.
18. News Site: The news site is similar to an information site but devoted to dispensing and disseminating news and commentary. (e.g. bbc.co.uk and cbsnews.com)
19. Phish Site: The phish site is created to acquire sensitive information by fraudulent means such as passwords and credit card details by masquerading as a trustworthy person or business by using internet. They use other's name.
20. Political Site: The political site is created on which people may voice their political views and news. (eg aboutpolitics.com and politicalresources.net)
21. Pornography (Porn) Site: The porn site shows pornographic images and videos.
22. Rating Site: The rating site is that on which people praise or disparage the contents and what is featured there. (e.g. ratemycar.com, ratemygun.com and ratemypet.com)
23. Review Site: The review site is provided to the people where they can post their review regarding some products or services. (e.g. ratemyprofessors.com, reviewcentre.com and newpages.com etc)
24. Search Engine Site: The search engine site provides general information and is intended as a gateway or lookup for other sites. (e.g. Google, and Yahoo)
25. Shock Site: The shock site shows images or other material that is intended to be offensive to most the viewers. (e.g. rotten.com and ratemypoo.com etc)

26. Web Portal Site: The web portal site provides a starting point, a gateway or portal to other resources on the Internet or an Intranet.
27. Wed Site: The wed site is provided to the people for a couple's wedding event, often sharing stories, photos and event information. (e.g. blissweddings.com and artsipirtgallary.com etc)
28. Wiki Site: The wiki site is devoted to the users collaboratively edit and upload their articles.
29. Affiliate: It is affiliate enabled portal that renders its customs together with syndicated contents from other content providers against an agreed fee. (e.g. Agencies, Advertisers and consumers)
30. Free Internet Lexicon and Encyclopedia: Most of government, educational and non-profit institutions have their informational sites.
31. Geodomain: The site refers to domain names that are the same as those of geographic entities such as cities and countries. (e.g. richmond.com and associatedcities.com)
32. Personal Homepage: The personal homepage is managed and run by an individual or a family or a small group that contains information or any content that the individual wishes to include.

In addition to above some websites may be included in one or more of these categories. A business website may promote the business's products where as they may also host informative documents such as white papers. So many business sites have the appearance of brochures and advertisement. There also appear numerous sub-categories of the above websites.

1.3

Competencies of Web 2.0 Companies

Here are the principal seven features of Web 2.0 regarding its competency. In future if any company claims that it's "Web 2.0," one can tests their features against the following list. The more points they score, the more they are worthy of the name of Web 2.0. There needs more emphasis that excellence in one area may be more telling than some small steps in all these seven.

- ❖ Services, not packaged software, with cost-effective scalability
- ❖ Control over unique, hard-to-recreate data sources that get richer as more people use them
- ❖ Trusting users as co-developers
- ❖ Harnessing collective intelligence
- ❖ Leveraging the long tail through customer self-service
- ❖ Software above the level of a single device
- ❖ Lightweight user interfaces, development models, & business models

1.4

How Web 2.0 differentiate from Web 1.0

Tim O'Reilly and John Battelle summarized key principles of Web 2.0 applications in their opening talk of the first Web 2.0 conference.

- the web as a platform
- data as a deriving force
- network effects created by an architecture of participation
- innovation in assembly of systems and sites composed by pulling together features from distributed, independent developers (a kind of “open source” development)
- lightweight business models enabled by content and service syndication
- the end of the software adoption cycle (the perpetual beta)
- software above the level of a single device, leveraging the power of The Long Tail

The phrase “Web 2.0” is used to one or more of the following.

- The transition of websites from isolated information silos to sources of content and functionality, thus becoming computing platforms serving web applications to end users.
- A social phenomenon embracing an approach to generating and distributing Web content itself, characterized by open communication, decentralization of authority, freedom to share, reuse and “the market as a conversation”
- A more organized and categorized content, with a far more developed deep linking web architecture than hither-to-fore
- A shift in economic value of the web, possibly surpassing that of the dot com boom of the late 1990s

- A marketing term used to differentiate new web based firms from those of the dot com boom, which (due to the bust) subsequently appeared discredited
- The resurgence of excitement around the applications of innovative web applications and services that gained a lot of momentum around mid 2005

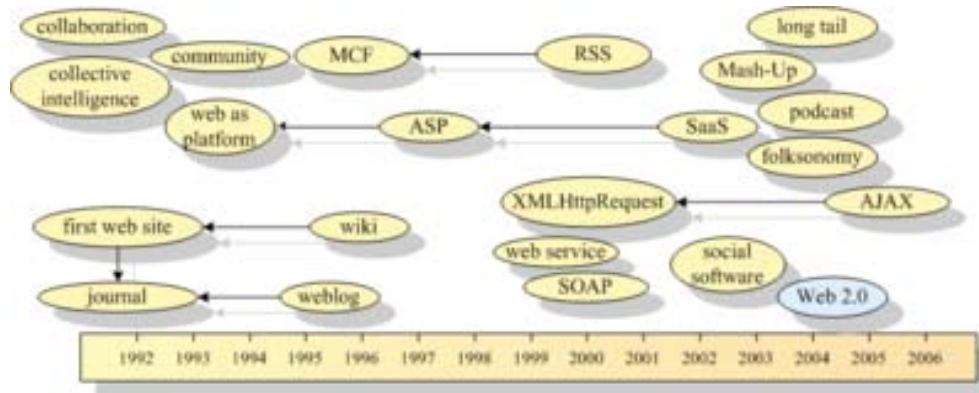
Some commentators associate the phrase “Web 2.0” with companies or products that embody their principles. Tim O’Reilly gave examples in his description of his “four plus one” levels in the hierarchy of Web 2.0:

- Level-3 Applications: The most Web 2.0 that could only exist on the Internet, deriving their power from the human interactions and network effects Web 2.0 makes possible and growing their effectiveness, when more people use them. O’Reilly has given as its examples: eBay, craigslist, Wikipedia, del.icio.us, skype, dodgeball and adsense.
- Level-2 Applications: These can operate offline whereas they gain advantages from going online. O’Reilly cited Flickr, which benefits from its shared photo-database and from its community generated tag database.
- Level-1 Applications: These are also available offline but whereas they gain features online. O’Reilly has given as its examples: Google Docs & Spreadsheets (its group-editing capability online) and iTunes (Its music-store).
- Level-0 Applications: These would work as well offline. O’Reilly has given these examples of MapQuest, Yahoo! Local and Google Maps. Mapping applications using contributions from users to advantage can rank as level 0.
- Non-Web applications: these are like email, instant-messaging clients and the telephone.

Examples of Web 2.0, other than those have been quoted by O’Reilly are digg, Shoutwire, last.fm and Technorati.

Time bar of Web 2.0 buzzwords:

The following image shows the age of some buzzwords sometimes used in Web 2.0 lingo and its dependencies.



Commentators see many recently developed concepts and technologies as contributing to Web 2.0, including weblogs, linklogs, wikis, podcasts, RSS feeds and other forms of many-to-many publishing; social software, Web APIs, Web standards, online Web services and many others.

Proponents of the Web 2.0 concept say that it differs from early Web development (retrospectively labeled “Web 1.0”) in that it moves away from static websites, the use of search engines and surfing from one website to the next, towards a more dynamic and interactive World Wide Web. Others argue that later developments have not actually superseded the original and fundamental concepts of the WWW. Skeptics may see the term “Web 2.0” as little more than a buzzword; or they may suggest that it means whatever its proponents want it to mean in order to convince their customers, investors and the media that they have begun building something fundamentally new, rather than continuing to develop and use well-established technologies.

Mind-Map of Web 2.0:

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Characteristics of Web 2.0

You know every “Web 2.0” website has some of the common characteristics that have been listed below. I use my own understanding and not any scientific method to get intuitive estimation.

1. **A Live Counter:**

“Web 2.0” is designed to help you regarding continually testing and improving the site. (e.g. traineo.com, crazyegg.com and gmail.com)

2. **Use of AJAX:**

The site is more “Web 2.0”, when the page refreshes in the lesser time. There are uses of features like search, suggest or drag and drop, make it even more “Web 2.0” and more users friendly. (e.g. gmail.com)

3. **Centered Layouts:**

It is rare to find a left aligned layout anymore in “Web 2.0”. (e.g. videoegg.com)

4. **Diagonal Strips:**

Usually diagonal strips appear in the background of “Web 2.0”. (e.g. techcrunch.com and designmeltdown.com)

5. **Highlighted Text:**

“Web 2.0” is enabling webmasters to create cool site tours. (e.g. amberjack.org)

6. **Big fonts in Headers and Text:**

Often big fonts are used in header and text to improve aesthetic of “web 2.0”. (e.g. 37signals.com)

7. **Big Footer:**

The big footer appears in “Web 2.0”. (e.g. linkedin.com)

8. **Big Buttons and text in forms:**

The big buttons and big text fields in forms are shown in “Web 2.0”. (e.g. digg.com)

9. **Trademark Round Flashes:**

These “sign-up” or “free” star shape graphics are everywhere in “Web 2.0”. (e.g. Sign-up graphic in traineo.com and Photoshop Tutorial in Web 2.0 Design Kit)

10. Reflections:

The reflections are shown usually in the logos. (e.g. fluxiom.com and Photoshop tutorial, planetphotoshop.com)

11. The “BETA” notice near the logo:

Some of the projects never escape the beta mode.... (e.g. rightautos.com)

12. A Tag Cloud:

This is must have a tag cloud. (e.g. 43things.com)

13. Use of Shades of Green:

Green is the color of Web 2.0 and a common choice for Web 2.0 websites. (e.g. ning.com)

14. The Word “Free” is often mentioned:

Most of Web 2.0 websites are free and depending on advertisements and donations to make money to meet the overheads. (e.g. wikipedia etc)

15. Instant Validation and Yellow-Fade Technique:

While editing something on the page a yellow light briefly spotlights the change when the page reloads. (e.g. 37signals.com; that had made it famous)

16. Member’s Thumbnails (Avatars) Featured on the Homepage:

Most of the Web 2.0 websites have a community. After all it’s all about social networking. (e.g. mybloglog.com)

17. Shades:

Shades are opted for Web 2.0 websites. (e.g. ning.com and Photoshop Tutorial in Web 2.0 Design Kit)

18. Cute icons:

The cute icons are presented in the Web 2.0 websites. (e.g. icons.com and itsdex.com)

19. Rounded Corners:

The rounded corners are presented in the Web 2.0 websites. (e.g. crazyegg.com and Photoshop Tutorial in Web 2.0 Design Kit)

20. Friendly and Funny Error Message:

When the server has not found anything matching the request and whether it is a temporary or permanent condition; funny message is displayed. (e.g. funny error 404 and sendcoffee.com)

21. RSS Feeds with the well-known “subscribe me” Buttons:

(e.g. feedburner.com)

22. Gradient Boxes:

(e.g. Photoshoplab.com; Tutorial in Web 2.0 Design Kit and caboodle.com)

23. Links with Highlighted Background on Mouse Over:

(e.g. flickr.com)

24. Neutral Colored Fading Backgrounds:

(e.g. edgeio.com)

25. A Link to the Blog:

(e.g. mobissimo.com)

26. A Lot of White Space that makes Text Easier to Read:

(e.g. linkedin.com)

1.6

Overview of Technology

The complex and evolving technology of Web 2.0 website includes server-software, content-syndication, messaging-protocols, standard-based browsers with plugins and extensions and various client-applications.

A plugins is a computer program that interacts with a main application to provide a certain, usually very specific function on-demand. Plugins are surely dependent on the services provided by the main application. Typical examples are plugins that

1. Read or edit specific types of files (Decoding of multimedia files)
2. Encrypt or decrypt email (for example PGP)
3. Filter images in graphic programs in ways that the host application could not do.
4. Play and watch Flash presentations in the web browser

The plugins are slightly different from extensions that modify or add to existing functionality. The main difference is that plugins generally rely on the main application's user interface and have a well-defined boundary to their possible set of actions.

Extensions generally have fewer restrictions on their actions and may provide their own user interfaces. They sometimes are used to decrease the size of the main application and offer optional functions. Mozilla Firefox uses a well-developed extension system to reduce the feature creep that plagued the Mozilla Application Suite.

These complementary and differing approaches provide Web 2.0 website with information-storage, creation and dissemination capabilities that go beyond what the public formerly expected of websites.

Typically, a Web 2.0 website may feature the following techniques:-

- Ajax-based rich Internet application techniques
- Non-Ajax-based rich Internet application techniques
- CSS
- Mashups
- Semantically valid XHTML markup and/or the use of Microformats
- Syndication and meaningful URLs
- Extensive use of folksonomies (in the form of tags or tagclouds)
- Weblog publishing
- REST or XML Web-service APIs
- Use of Wiki software either completely or partially

1.7

More Ideas Associated with Web 2.0

a) **Web-based Communities**

A large number of new online web-based communities and social networks have come into existence among the general public by these Web 2.0 websites. People work together in some of these websites run social software. Some other websites reproduce several individual's RSS feeds on one page. The syndication and messaging capabilities of Web 2.0 have encouraged, to a greater or lesser degree, a tightly-woven social fabric among the individuals. In the recent months and years, the nature of online communities has been changed. Web 2.0 either empowers the individual to give him an outlet for the "voice of the voiceless" or it elevates the amateur to the detriment of professionalism, expertise and clarity.

b) **Web-based applications and desktops**

The richer user-experience afforded by Ajax has encouraged the development of web-sites that mimic personal computer application, such as word processing, the spreadsheet and slide-show presentation. WYSIWYG wiki sites replicate many features of PC authoring applications. Still other sites perform collaboration and project management functions. Java enables web-sites that provide computation intensive video capability. Google, Inc. acquired one of the best known sites of this class, Writely, in early 2006.

Several browser-based operating systems or online desktops have also appeared. They essentially function as application platform, not as operating systems *per se*. These services mimic the user experience of desktop operating systems, offering features and applications similar to a PC environment. They have as their distinguishing characteristic the

ability to run within any modern browser. Numerous web-based application services appeared during the dot.com bubble of 1997-2001 and then vanished, having failed to gain a critical mass of customers. In 2005 WebEx acquired one of the better-known of these, Intranets.com, for slightly more than the total it had raised in venture capital after six years of trading.

c) Rich Internet Applications (RIA)

Rich Internet Applications are web applications that have the features and functionality of traditional desktop applications. Rich Internet Applications typically transfer the processing necessary for the user interface to the web client but keep the bulk of the data back on the application server.

RIAs typically:

- Run in a web browser, or do not require software installation
- Run locally in a secure environment called a sandbox
- Can be “occasionally connected” wandering in & out of hot-spots or from office to office.

Here are benefits of using RIAs that employ a client engine to interact with the user.

- Richer: They can offer user-interface behaviors not obtainable using only the HTML widgets available to standard browser-based Web applications. This richer functionality may include anything that can be implemented in the technology being used on the client side, including drag and drop, using a slider to change data, calculations performed only by the client and which does not need to be sent back to the server (e.g. an insurance rate calculator), etc.
- More Responsive: the interface behaviors are typically much more responsive than those of a standard Web browser that must always interact with the server.

Recently, Rich Internet application techniques such as Ajax, Adobe flash, Flex and OpenLaszlo have evolved that can improve the user-experience in browser-based applications. Flash/Flex involves a web-page requesting an update for some part of its content and altering that part in the browser, without refreshing the whole page at the same time.

d) Server-side software

The functionality of Web 2.0 rich Internet applications builds on the existing Web server architecture, but puts much greater emphasis on back-end software. Syndication differs only nominally from the methods of publishing using dynamic content management, but web services typically require much more robust database and workflow support, and become very similar to date fall under either a universal server approach, which bundles most of the necessary functionality in a single server platform, or a web-server plugin approach, which uses standard publishing tools enhanced with API interfaces and other tools.

e) Client-side software

The extra functionality provided by web 2.0 depends on the ability of users to work with the data stored on servers. This can come about through forms in an HTML page, through a scripting language such as Javascript, or through Flash or Java. These methods all make use of the client computer to reduce the server workload.

f) RSS

RSS is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated digital content, such as blogs, news feeds or podcats. The first and the most important step of evolution towards Web 2.0 involves the syndication of site content, using standardized protocols which permit end-users to make use of a site's data in another context, ranging from

another web-site, to a browser plugin, or to a separate desktop application. Protocols which permit syndication include RSS (Really Simple Syndication – also known as web syndication), RDF and Atom, all of them flavors of XML (eXtensible Markup Language). Specialized protocols such as FOAF and XFN (both for social networking) extend functionality of sites or permit end-users to interact without centralized web-sites. (e.g. microformats for more specialized data formats)

Due to the recent development of these trends, many of these protocols remain *De-facto* (rather than formal) standards.

g) Web Protocols

Web communication protocols provide a key element of the Web 2.0 infrastructure. Major protocols include Representational State Transfer (REST) and originally Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP).

- REST is a software architectural style for distributed hypermedia systems like the World Wide Web. REST indicates a way to access and manipulate data on a server using the HTTP Verbs GET, POST, PUT and DELETE.
- SOAP is a protocol for exchanging XML-based messages over computer network normally using HTTP. SOAP involves posting XML messages and requests to a server that may contain quite complex but pre-defined instructions for the server to follow.

In both cases above, an API defines access to the service. Often servers use proprietary APIs, but standard web-service APIs (e.g. for posting to a blog) have also come into wide use. Most of communications with web services involve some form of XML (eXtensible Markup Language).