

Social Networking

Common Uses for Social Networking Sites

- Share images and video
- Reconnect with old friends
- Provide status updates to all of your buddies at once
- Network and job search
- Solicit advice from industry professionals
- Meet new friends with common interests and hobbies

A Few Social Networking Sites to Know

- **Friendster:** a pioneering site – very popular in Asia.
- **LinkedIn:** has a business focus
- **MySpace:** seems to attract a younger crowd
- **Orkut:** owned by Google. It's huge in Brazil and India.
- **Facebook:** the “in” spot at the moment
- **Twitter:** “what am I doing right now” in 140 or fewer characters

Why should you pay attention?

- Social networking is here to stay. People may migrate from site to site, but they don't often give it up entirely.
- If you're not on a social networking site, you're missing out on opportunities to connect with others.
- Social networking is entertaining and more interactive than many pastimes.
- Your use of social networking sites, especially LinkedIn, may show employers (or potential employers) that you are plugged-in and forward thinking.
- Offers a platform from which you can freely express yourself to others

Possible Downsides

- Can be addicting and time consuming
- Tempting to reveal too much (and possibly regret it later)
- What happens to your information & media if the company goes belly-up?
- Potential employers may scour social networking sites to dig up dirt on you.

Privacy Settings

- Social networking sites typically give you the opportunity to determine who can see what information about you. The default privacy settings may not be right for you.
- Decide what your friends should see, what friends of your friends should see and what the general public should see. It may be different in each case.

A Few Other Websites with a Social Aspect

- **Internet Bookmarks:** delicious.com
- **Photographs:** Flickr.com
- **Book Collections and Reading:** Shelfari.com and LibraryThing.com
- **Book Discussions:** Booksprouts.com
- **Local Restaurants:** Yelp.com
- **Local Contractors:** AngiesList.com (\$\$)

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