

Social networks
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levels. initially



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Initially social networking happened at family functions where all relative and friends would conglomerate under one roof. Social networking has always been prevalent; it is just that in these times the face of social networking has changed. Where earlier the process was long drawn, involving a chain movement where in one person led to another through a web of social contacts, today the process is highly specialized. Communication has been instrumental to a large extent to the growth of social networking. With the advent of Internet and the cell phone a lot of social interaction is captured through email and instant messaging. Today there are a lot of online social networking sites where individuals volunteer information about themselves and their social networks.

Social networking allows for like-minded people to interact with another. An online social networking site is a place where a user can create a profile and build a personal network that connects the user to other users. What used to be just a niche activity has today taken the proportions of a global phenomenon that engages tens of millions of Internet users. Online social networks are ideal for exchanging ideas, views, and garnering public opinion; although, these are restricted to the users of the social network. Popular social networking sites, like Orkut, MySpace and Face book are changing the Internet scene. Another social networking programme is that used by a company called Amway. The company operates on the system of multi level marketing. Members make new members and get monetary benefits on the purchases made by down the line members.

Members sell the company's products through social networking. And the members of the company itself constitute a large network, which members use for other businesses as well. The Amway model has been so effective that it has been copied by several other businesses. Social networking sites have recorded phenomenal growth rates. These networks allow individuals to leverage the connections they establish within the social network to achieve a broader objective like job search, a real estate search, a holiday trip plan, etc. A social network allows independent artists, music labels and video content owners to upload share and sell their content to a community of users with interests in the particular media. Users in turn benefit by being able to sample, hear, download and share songs with friends and other members.

Social network groups like Orkut help people get in touch with people they have lost touch with. They also help people to stay in touch despite their geographical distances. Social networking is important as far as an individual's personal and professional development is concerned. The social network sites have emerged as a powerful and effective means for people to not only link and get linked but to use these services as effectively as possible. The growing popularity of these networking sites only proves the simple truth - Social networking has arrived!