

The political economy of communication

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



The Political Economy of Communication al Affiliation) Due to the conflict present between the process of conveying information and the actual process of communicating, it is prudent to adopt a social approach in analyzing communication in general. That is why Google and the strategies that it adopts offers a good opportunity for analyzing the importance of political economy and especially regarding communication. When analyzing the key activities of Google using Mosco's processes (commodification, structuration and spatialization), one must identify the relations of power that are part of the exchange, manufacture and distribution of resources/information (Lecture 5, Commodification).

By adopting Mosco's process of commodification, it is evident that Google's value addition outcomes from its advertising ventures can be directly linked to its commodification of the users of Google on an extensive level. Due to Google's online platform popularity and accessibility, a lot of firms use this venue as an advertising forum. The number of Google users are so many such that it makes the company an efficient advertising avenue for companies and in so doing, commodifies its users at a level above that of conventional advertising media. In addition, Google employs a valorization process that enhances its ability to reap more profits and revenue than conventional media platforms. Its commodification of the users is also identified via its ability to calculate the advertising costs accurately and personalizing strategies for advertisements, which are largely due to its unlimited access to consumer behavior data.

Also, the company's vague differentiation between serviced content and advertisements for goods and services on its platform, clearly results in the

intense commodification of its users and their online activities. However, the most intense commodification identified with the activities of Google has to be those related with its sale of keywords to advertisement companies. The advertisers then link the advertisements to the output of search data and are valued with regards to their popularity on the Google online platform. This behavior of intense corporate capitalism at the expense of the rights of consumers (privacy) has been termed as commodification of user behavior at its worst, and highlights the importance and relevance of PEC/M in modern times.

Besides advertisements, Google maps and its application constitutes part of the company's main activities and revenue sources. In accordance with Mosco's definition of spatialization, it is mainly concerned with the distribution of power across space and time. An analysis of the dominance of Google in map markets and emails offers an ideal opportunity to analyze this phenomena. In order for Google to become the leader in map markets, it embarked on well laid-out strategies of purchasing smaller companies/competitors (Lecture 6, Spatialization).

By doing so, the company took sole ownership of the activities of the acquired company and reduced the number of competitors in the market. Its acquisition of companies such as Keyhole Inc., which were involved in remote sensing and geospatial activities, enhanced its monopoly in the market, coupled with the ownership of the Geoweb market using efficient business strategies. Monopolies are an effect of extreme capitalism and have adverse effects on the quality and pricing of commodities, since the absence of competition among companies inhibits innovation. Therefore, that is why

Google's terms and conditions and market dominance limits user access to Geoweb, even though it is free.

According to Vaidhyathan, the interaction between society and technology and the importance of technology as a tool for facilitating social change, encompasses the process of structuration. Google's crowd sourcing activities such as Google-enabled online libraries of books and consequent easy access of information are an ideal example of structuration. Nowadays, courtesy of Google, it is very easy to get information on any subject, leading to a situation where people benefit from the hard work and intelligence of others without contributing. Simply, people are benefiting from the crowd sourcing activities of Google. Even though crowd sourcing attempts to create a more efficient system, there are undesirable side effects such as reduction of employment levels emanating from the shift from paid labour to volunteer labour. This shift has an adverse effect on many careers and professions like teaching (Vaidhyathan, 2011).

Reference List

Lecture Notes.

Vaidhyathan, Siva. (2011). *The Googlization of Every-thing (AND WHY WE SHOULD WORRY)*. University of California Press.