

# Rising of Social Network Websites in India Overview

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## Summary

In present scenario, the use of the Internet for Community network is a popular method among youngsters. Community network is also known as Social network. The use of collaborative technologies such as blogs and Social Networking Site (SNS) leads to instant online community in which people communicate rapidly and conveniently with each other. Moreover, there is a growing interest and concern regarding the topological structure of this new online social network. Now days Social Networking is growing rapidly all over the world, India is one of the biggest growing markets for Community network. The basic aim of the research is to find out the growth of Community Network or Social networking Websites in India.

### Key words:

*Community Network, Social Network, Social Networking Websites, Definition, Rising*

## 1. Introduction

The first social network site, SixDegrees.com, was launched in 1997. In India, Orkut topped among the social networking websites with a user share of 64 percent (Madhavan, 2007). Social networking websites provide rich information about the person and his network, which can be utilized for various business purposes.

Now days there are many web sites dedicated to the Social Networking, some popular websites are. Face book, Orkut, Twitter, Bebo, Myspace, Friendster, hi5, Bharatstudent.com. Social network sites are also called 'social networking sites' to emphasize relationship initiation, often among strangers.

Some of the main implications of social networking sites are:

- They provide a base for a new teacher-student relationship with more interactive sessions online.
- They promote the use of embedded advertisements in online videos.
- They provide a platform for new artists to show their profile.

Social networking websites may be defined as sites that allow users to build a profile that will be made public within an enclosed system. Social networking websites also allow users to display some of the other users they

communicate with and they allow them to view lists of other members found within the system. It should be noted that the main purpose behind creation of a social networking website is to enable persons to avail pre-existing connections. Social networking websites have also been created for the purpose of initiating friendships between strangers. (Acquisti & Gross, 2006)

## 2. Definition

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social network services as web-based services which allow individuals to Construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, Communicate with other users; and View the pages and details provided by other users within the system

The social networking websites have evolved as a combination of personalized media experience, within social context of participation. The practices that differentiate social networking sites from other types of computer-mediated communication are uses of profiles, friends and comments or testimonials—profiles are publicly viewed, friends are publicly articulated, and comments are publicly visible (Boyd, 2007).

Users who join Social networking websites are required to make a profile of themselves by filling up a form. After filling up the forms, users are supposed to give out information about their personality attributes and personal appearances. Some social networking websites require photos but most of them will give details about one's age, preference, likes and dislikes. Some social networking websites like Facebook allow users to customize their profiles by adding multimedia content. (Geroimenko & Chen, 2007)

## 3. Objective

The basic objective of this research is to analysis about the awareness and frequency regarding the use of social networking websites in India.

## 4. History

The first social networking websites was launched in the year 1997 Sixdegrees.com. This company was the first of its kind; it allowed user to list their profiles, provide a list of friends and then contact them. However, the Company did not do very well as it eventually closed three years later. The reason for this was that many people using the internet at that time had not formed many social networks hence there was little room for maneuver. It should be noted that there were also other elements that hinted at Social network websites. For instance, dating sites required users to give their profiles but they could not share other people's websites. Additionally, there were some websites that would link former school mates but the lists could not be shared with others. (Cassidy, 2006)

After this there was the creation of LiveJournal in the year 1999. It was created in order to facilitate one way exchanges of journals between friends. Another company in Korea called Cyworld added some social networking features in the year 2001. This was then followed by Lunar Storm in Sweden during the same year. They include things like diary pages and friends lists. Additionally, Ryze.com also established itself in the market. It was created with the purpose of linking business men within San Francisco. The Company was under the management of Friendster, LinkedIn, Tribe.net and Ryze. The latter company was the least successful among all others. However, Tribe.net specialized in the business world but Friendster initially did well; this did not last for long. (Cohen, 2003)

The most significant companies of social networking websites are Friendster, MySpace and Facebook

### 4.1 Friendster

Friendster began its operations in the year 2002. It was a brother company to Ryze but was designed to deal with the social aspect of their market. The company was like a dating service, however, match making was not done in the typical way where strangers met. Instead, friends would propose which individuals are most compatible with one another. At first, there was an exponential growth of the Comply. This was especially after introduction of network for gay men and increase in number of bloggers. The latter would usually tell their friends about the advantages of social networking through Friendster and this led to further expansion. However, Friendster had established a market base in one small community. After their subscribers reached overwhelming numbers, the company could no longer cope with the demand. There were numerous complaints about the way their servers were handled because subscribers would experience communication breakdowns. As if this was not enough,

social networks in the real world were not doing well; some people would find themselves dating their bosses or former classmates since the virtual community created by the company was rather small. The Company also started limiting the level of connection between enthusiastic users. (Boyd, 2004)

### 4.2 MySpace

By 2003, there were numerous companies formed with the purpose of providing social networking service. However, most of them did not attract too much attention especially in the US market. For instance, LinkedIn and Xing were formed for business persons while services like MyChurch, Dogster and Couchsurfing were formed for social services. Other companies that had been engaging in other services started offering social networking services. For instance, the YouTube and Last.FM were initially formed to facilitate video and music sharing respectively. However, the started adopted social networking services. (Backstrom et al, 2006)

### 4.3 Facebook

This social networking service was introduced with the purpose of linking friends in Harvard University in 2004. Thereafter, the company expanded to other universities then colleges. Eventually, they invited corporate communities. But this does not mean that profiles would be interchanged at will. There are lots of restrictions between friends who join the universities social network because they have to have the .edu address. Additionally, those joining corporate network must also have the .com attachment. This company prides itself in their ability to maintain privacy and niche communities and have been instrumental in learning institutions. (Charnigo & Barnett-Ellis, 2007)

Some other social networking services entered the market even though most of them did relatively well in non-English speaking countries. Some of them include Orkut in Brazil, Lunar Storm in Sweden, Grono in Poland and Cyworld in South Korea. (Choi, 2006)

## 5. Social network website in India

A leader in measuring the digital world, released a report on the top social networking sites in India, finding that visitation to the site category increased 51 percent from the previous year to more than 19 million visitors in December 2008. The study also found that global social networking brands continued to gain prominence in India during the year, with Orkut, Facebook, hi5, LinkedIn and MySpace each witnessing significant increases in visitation.

“Social networking continued to grow strongly in India this past year, with several of the top global brands carving out a more prominent position,” said Will Hodgman, comScore executive vice president. “While there is certainly room for several players in the social networking space in India, the sites that have the right blend of having both a strong brand and cultural relevance will be best positioned for future growth.” (RESTON, VA, February 17, 2009 – comScore, Inc. (NASDAQ: SCOR))

In India, Orkut topped among the social networking websites with a user share of 64 percent (Madhavan, 2007). Social networking websites provide rich information about the person and his network, which can be utilized for various business purposes. Comscore in its report tracked the top social networking sites in India, and found that global social networking brands like Orkut, Facebook, hi5, LinkedIn and MySpace continued to gain prominence in India during the year. They elaborate that Orkut is the most visited social networking site in India Facebook is second most popular Indian social networking site with 4 million visitors, up 150 percent versus year ago. The third most popular social networking site is Bharatstudent, with 3.3 million visitors (up 88 percent) followed by hi5 with 2 million visitors (up 182 percent). Some other popular networking sites in India are ibibo, Myspace, LinkedIn, PerfSpot, BigAdda and Fropper.

## 6. Growth of Social Network sites in India

India now ranks as the seventh largest market worldwide for social networking, after the U.S., China, Germany, Russian Federation, Brazil and the U.K. According to ComScore

The total Indian social networking audience grew 43 percent in the past year, more than tripling the rate of growth of the total Internet audience in India.

More than 33 million Web users in India aged 15 and above, visited social networking sites in July 2010, up 43 percent over 2009. This group accounted for 84 percent of the country's overall Internet audience.

Will Hodgman, executive vice president of Asia-Pacific for ComScore, said in the report: "The social networking phenomenon continues to gain steam worldwide, and India represents one of the fastest growing markets at the moment.

"Though Facebook has tripled its audience in the past year to pace the growth for the category, several other social networking sites have posted their own sizeable gains."

The social networking juggernaut last year had intensified efforts to expand its presence in India, adding Hindi and five other India dialects to its language support in a bid to close the gap against Orkut, which had dominated the local social networking scene.

## 7. Social network sites in India December 2008 vs. December 2007

Orkut is the most visited social networking site in December 2008 with more than 12.8 million visitors; an increase of 81 percent from the previous year. Orkut's audience was three times the size of its nearest competitor in the category. Facebook.com (comScore)

7.1 Table 1 Rise of Social Network sites in India

Social Network Websites	Total Unique Visitors		
	Dec-07	Dec-08	% Change
Orkut	7,123	12,869	81
Facebook.com	1,619	4,044	150
Bharatstudent.com	1,736	3,269	88
hi5.com	714	2,012	182
ibibo.Com	1,970	990	-50
MySpace Sites	352	741	110
LinkedIn.com	293	513	75
PerfSpot.com	2,106	433	-79
BIGADDA.com	515	385	-25
Fropper.com	256	248	-3

## 8. Social network sites in India July 2010 vs. July 2009

Social networking websites are continuously growing prominence in India. Facebook is growing 12 percent, to capture the top spot in the category with 20.9 million visitors. Orkut ranked second with 19.9 million visitors (up 16 percent vs. year ago), followed by BharatStudent.com with 4.4 million visitors (up 3 percent). Twitter.com had the highest rate of growth among the top five social networking sites, increasing 239 percent to 3.3 million visitors. Yahoo! owned two of the top ten social networking sites: Yahoo! Pulse (3.5 million visitors) and Yahoo! Buzz (1.8 million visitors)

8.1 Table 1 Rise of Social Network Sites in India

Social Network Websites	Total Unique Visitors		
	Jul-2009	Jul-2010	% Change
Facebook.com	7,472	20,873	179
Orkut	17,069	19,871	16
Bharatstudent.com	4,292	4,432	3

Yahoo! Pulse	N/A	3,507	N/A
Twitter.com	984	3,341	239
LinkedIn.com	N/A	3,267	N/A
Zedge.net	1,767	3,206	81
Ibibo.com	1,562	2,960	89
Yahoo! Buzz	542	1,807	233
Shtyle.fm	407	1,550	281

## 9. Conclusion.

Social network offers people great convenience for social networking. It allows people to keep in touch with friends, reconnect with old friends, meet new people, and even conduct business online. You can find people with similar interests as you and get to know them better, not in India even if they are in a different country. Every day people are joining the Communities network. And the social network is rising not even in India, all over the World.

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