



Course information 2017–18

IS3183 Management and Social Media

The course is about social media and the broader context of digital economy within which social media platforms operate. The course provides an analysis of social media as multi-sided digital platforms and the distinctive ways they serve the interests of a range of stakeholders, including platform owners, users, advertisers and third parties such as start-ups and data analytic companies. The course pays due attention to how user participation is engineered to procure data on users that sustain social media as business organizations. The course combines theory and case study examples that illustrate the variety of contexts in which social media companies are active today.

Learning outcomes

The course analyses the critical role social media platforms play in shaping the digital economy. Upon completion of the course, course participants will be able to:

- ✓ Analyse the technological, social and economic forces that make social media such ubiquitous and often powerful economic actors
- ✓ Critically assess the modus operandi of social media and the logic on the basis of which social media are able to sustain their business operations
- ✓ Investigate how user participation online is an essential force through which social media construct a range of services for third parties and for users themselves
- ✓ Link social participation to data production and assess the significance of data for revenue generating services
- ✓ Critically assess the importance of social data (data generated on social media as the result of user participation) as a distinct and critical form of big data and an important force of the digital economy
- ✓ Analyse the development of the Internet and appreciate the dominant role social media play in shaping the ways the Web is currently developing
- ✓ Critically assess the significance of social interaction and participation online and the role which active user participation play in the current transformation of the Web and the digital economy
- ✓ Evaluate recommender systems in general and personalization as a ubiquitous service strategy in particular
- ✓ To think critically and creatively about the emerging digital world marked by presence of social media and the type of services they produce

Prerequisites

MN1178 Business and management in a global context

Aims and objectives

- To analyse how social media contribute to the making of the contemporary digital, data-based economy
- To analyse how social media platforms engineer social participation
- To critically assess the role which current computing and communication technologies play in transforming user platform participation into revenue generating services
- To analyse the types of services social media platforms develop for platform users and third parties
- To evaluate the role of technical design and information

architecture in the making of the services produced by social media platforms

- To analyse the business models pioneered by social media and the ways these models change business practices
- To critically assess the relevance of customization and personalization as a service strategy in the digital economy
- To analyse the technical and organizational preconditions of the sharing economy and the ways this is likely to develop in the immediate future
- To investigate the shifting nature of the Web and the direction along which social media take the digital economy and the development of the Internet.

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three hour unseen written

examination.

Essential reading

(For full details, please refer to the reading list)

Tiwana, A. (2014). *Platform Ecosystems: Aligning Architecture, Governance, and Strategy*. London: Elsevier.

Additional reading

Alaimo, C. and Kallinikos J. (2016) "Encoding the everyday", in Sugimoto, C., Ekbia, H., Mattioli, M. (eds) *Big data is not a monolith: Policies, practices, and problems*, MIT Press.

boyd, D., & Crawford, K. (2012). "Critical Questions for big data". *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), 662-679.

Brynjolfsson, E. and McAfee, A. (2014), "The digitization of just about everything", in Brynjolfsson, E. and McAfee, A., *The second machine age*, New York: Norton, chapter 4, pp. 57-70

Bucher, T. (2015). "Networking, or What the Social Means in Social Media". *Social Media+ Society*, 1(1).

Gerlitz, C., & Helmond, A. (2013). "The Like economy: Social buttons and the data-intensive web". *New Media & Society*, 1-18.

Konstan, Joseph A and John Riedl. 2012. "Recommender systems: From algorithms to user experience". *User Modeling and User-Adapted Interaction* 22 (1-2): 101-123

van Dijck, J. (2013). *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*: OUP USA

Syllabus

The course covers a spectrum of themes such as the following:

- A brief history of social media
- A description of social media as organizations with special emphasis on the varieties of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Last.fm, Spotify, Tripadvisor etc.
- A description of the Internet ecosystem with special emphasis on the evolution of the Internet towards increasing levels of social participation
- A detailed account of how social media engineer user participation to make it the engine of social data production
- The operative logic of social media and the significance data assume in the making of most services social media deliver
- Social media as organizations and the use of social media by business and corporations and public organizations
- An account of the business models pioneered by social media, including the freemium model adopted by Spotify, the affiliated marketing model of social media for shopping, the hybrid model of Facebook featuring open participation and two sided markets, and the new (data) sharing economy of companies exemplified by companies such as Uber and AirBnB.
- The assessment of the value creation process of social media, featuring the generation, shaping and commercialization of the data produced on social media
- A description of how social data is associated with big data

Students should consult the *Programme Regulations for degrees and diplomas in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences* that are reviewed annually. The Prerequisites, Exclusions, and Syllabus are subject to confirmation in the *Regulations*. Notice is also given in the *Regulations* of any courses which are being phased out and students are advised to check course availability.