



Course information 2020-21

IS3183 Management and Social Media

General information

COURSE LEVEL: 6

CREDIT: 30

NOTIONAL STUDY TIME: 300 hours

Summary

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 organisations. The course combines theory and case study examples that illustrate the variety of contexts in which social media companies are active today.

Conditions

Prerequisite: If taken as part of a BSc degree, the following course must be passed before this course may be attempted:

- MN1178 Business and management in a global context

Aims and objectives

The aim of this course is to:

- Analyse how social media contribute to the making of the contemporary digital, data-based economy
- Analyse how social media platforms engineer social participation
- Critically assess the role which current computing and communication technologies play in transforming user platform participation into revenue generating services
- Analyse the types of services social media platforms develop for platform users and third parties
- Evaluate the role of technical design and information architecture in the making of the services produced by social media platforms
- Analyse the business models pioneered by social media and the ways these models change business practices
- Critically assess the relevance of customisation and personalisation as a service strategy in the digital economy
- Analyse the technical and organisational preconditions of the sharing economy and the ways this is likely to develop in the immediate future

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- Investigate the shifting nature of the Web and the direction along which social media take the digital economy and the development of the Internet.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course students should 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 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 that active user participation plays in the current transformation of the Web and the digital economy
- Evaluate recommender systems in general and personalisation as a ubiquitous service strategy in particular
- Think critically and creatively about the emerging digital world marked by the presence of social media and the type of services they produce

Essential reading

The key text of the course is:

Parker, G.G., M.W. Van Alstyne and S.P. Choudary Platform revolution. (London: Norton, 2016) [ISBN 9780393249132]

Other essential 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: 77-90.

Alaimo C. and Kallinikos J., 2017. *Computing the Everyday*, The Information Society 33/4, (Forthcoming, July 2017).

Anderson, C. (2008). *Free: The Future of a Radical Price*. London: Random House, Chapter 2, pp. 18-33 (ISBN 978-1-9052-1147-0).

Boyd, D. M. and N. B. Ellison 'Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 2008, pp.210–30.

Constantiou, I. and Kallinikos, J. (2008). *New Games, New Rules: Big Data and the Changing Context of Strategy*. *Journal of Information Technology*, 30/1: 44-57.

Kallinikos, J. and N. Tempini 'Social data as medical facts: web-based practices of expert knowledge creation', *Information Systems Research* 25(4) 2014, pp. 817–33.

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Kaplan, A. M., and Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-6.

Konstan, J and Riedl, J. (2012) "Recommended for You". *Spectrum*, IEEE, 49(10), 54-61.

Leiner, B. et al. (2003) *Brief History of the internet*, Internet Society
(www.internetsociety.org/internet/what-internet/history-internet/brief-history-internet)

Teece, D. J. (2010). Business Models, Business Strategy and Innovation, *Long Range Planning* 43 (2,3), pp. 172-194.

Zittrain, J. (2008) *The Future of the Internet*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1, 2 and 4, pp. 7-35 and 63-100.

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen written examination.

Syllabus

The course covers a spectrum of themes including:

- A brief history of social media
- A description of social media as organisations, 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 data production on social media
- The operative logic of social media and the significance data assume in the making of most services social media deliver
- A description of the value creation process in ways that break with the traditional product-centric view of value, but also the more recent understanding of value as user product or service experience
- An account of the business models pioneered by social media , including the freemium model exemplified 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 organisations such as Uber and Airbnb
- The assessment of the value creation process of social media, featuring the generation, shaping and commercialisation of the data produced on social media
- A description of how social data is associated with big data
- Social media as organisations and the use of social media by business, corporations and public organisations.

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