



The Use of Social Media Tools by Students, Consumers, and Small Businesses: Dangers in New Social Norms

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Overview

- Dangers in using online social media tools
- Three perspectives ...
 - Students
 - Consumers
 - Small Businesses



Principal Theme

*Nothing is private
in cyberspace*



Students

- Oversharing
 - Posting TMI
 - Every young person one day will be entitled automatically to change his or her name on reaching adulthood in order to disown youthful hijinks stored on their friends' social media sites

Eric Schmidt, Google CEO



Students: Oversharing

Stacy Snyder:
Truth and Fiction



Drunken Pirate

Did this picture, which 25-year-old Stacy Snyder posted on her MySpace page, get her kicked out of school before she could complete her teaching degree?



Students: Oversharing

Stacy Snyder:
Truth and Fiction

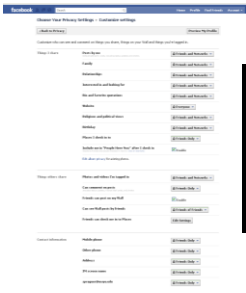
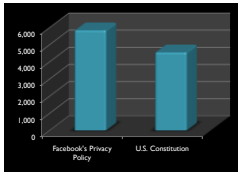


Drunken Pirate

Ms. Snyder is guilty of oversharing:
She criticized her supervisor in a MySpace posting
Ms. Snyder's unsatisfactory rating in professionalism is one of the reasons she was denied a teaching certificate



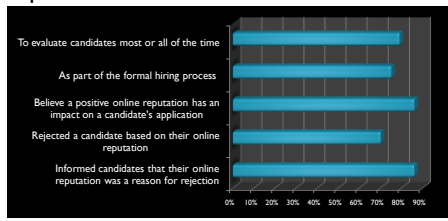
Facebook Privacy

Category	Count
Facebook's Privacy Policy	~5,500
U.S. Constitution	~4,500

Students: Oversharing

HR/Recruitment professionals using online reputational information:

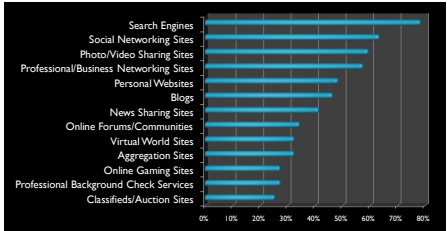


Statement	Percentage
To evaluate candidates most or all of the time	~85%
As part of the formal hiring process	~75%
Believe a positive online reputation has an impact on a candidate's application	~85%
Rejected a candidate based on their online reputation	~70%
Informed candidates that their online reputation was a reason for rejection	~85%

Source: Microsoft Online Reputation Study, Jan. 2010

Students: Oversharing

Sources for online reputational information:

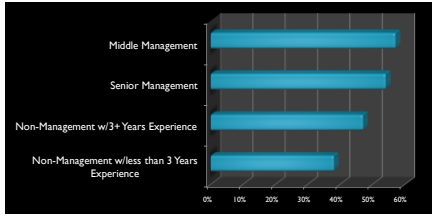


Source	Percentage
Search Engines	~75%
Social Networking Sites	~70%
Photo/Video Sharing Sites	~65%
Professional/Business Networking Sites	~60%
Personal Websites	~55%
Blogs	~45%
News Sharing Sites	~40%
Online Forums/Communities	~35%
Virtual World Sites	~30%
Aggregation Sites	~25%
Online Gaming Sites	~20%
Professional Background Check Services	~15%
Classifieds/Auction Sites	~10%

Source: Microsoft Online Reputation Study, Jan. 2010

Students: Oversharing

Online reputational information & job role:

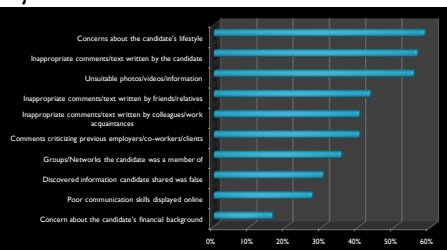


Job Role	Percentage
Middle Management	~55%
Senior Management	~50%
Non-Management w/3+ Years Experience	~45%
Non-Management w/less than 3 Years Experience	~40%

Source: Microsoft Online Reputation Study, Jan. 2010

Students: Oversharing

Online reputation and its role in candidate rejection :



Reason	Percentage
Concerns about the candidate's lifestyle	~55%
Inappropriate comments/text written by the candidate	~50%
Unsuitable photos/videos/information	~45%
Inappropriate comments/text written by friends/relatives	~40%
Inappropriate comments/text written by colleagues/work acquaintances	~35%
Comments criticizing previous employers/co-workers/clients	~30%
Groups/Networks the candidate was a member of	~25%
Discovered information candidate shared was false	~20%
Poor communication skills displayed online	~15%
Concern about the candidate's financial background	~10%

Source: Microsoft Online Reputation Study, Jan. 2010

Consumers

- Loss of anonymity
 - All web activity is tracked
- Astroturfing
 - Are all reviews/comments authentic?

Consumers: Social Network Data

- Social networks contain valuable information that can be used to
 - Identify "influencers"
 - Identify bad credit risks
 - Uncover fraud
 - Predict crimes and rowdy parties



Consumers: Web Tracking

- Cookies
 - Tiny files placed on your computer by websites to track your actions and interests
- Flash/Zombie/Ever cookies
 - Can't be deleted
 - Automatically regenerate after deletion
- Beacons
 - More sophisticated version of cookies
 - Collect more data, such as text typed



Consumers: Web Tracking

- Personalized retargeting
 - aka "commercial surveillance system"
 - Every time a person goes shopping, visits a Web site or buys something, the database gets another entry
 - None of the tracking is visible to consumers



Consumers: Web Tracking

- Advertisers are moving away from overt ads
 - Now paying a premium to follow people around the Internet
- In one experiment, 50 of the most popular websites were visited
 - Result: over 3,000 tracking files installed
 - 2,200 were installed by 131 companies in the business of tracking consumers to build profiles



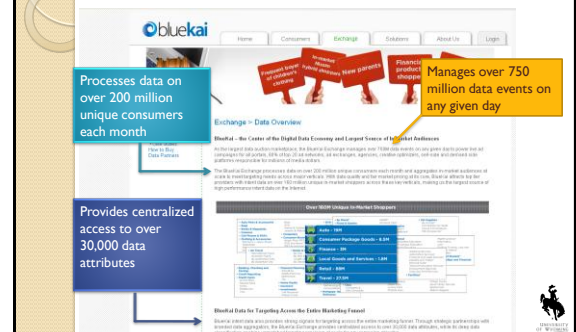
Consumers: Web Tracking



The screenshot shows the bluekai website with navigation tabs for Home, Consumers, Exchange, Solutions, and About Us. Below the navigation is a section titled "Exchange - Data Overview" which includes a table of data and a description of the platform's capabilities.



Consumers: Web Tracking



The screenshot is similar to the previous one but includes callout boxes with arrows pointing to specific parts of the website. One box states "Processes data on over 200 million unique consumers each month" pointing to the "Exchange - Data Overview" section. Another box states "Manages over 750 million data events on any given day" pointing to the "Data Overview" table. A third box states "Provides centralized access to over 30,000 data attributes" pointing to the "Data Overview" table.



Consumers: Beware Astroturf

Teen "Hauler" Blair Fowler—aka "juicystar07"



Consumers: Beware Astroturf



FTC Disclaimer: All items were sponsored by Marshalls, and this video is part of their back to school campaign. All opinions are my own, and I picked out all the of items



Small Businesses

- Astroturfing from the other side
- Using social media
- Social media and employees
- Customer privacy



Small Businesses: Astroturfing

- Updated FTC Endorsement Guidelines
 - Endorsers must disclose any connections with marketers
 - Marketers *and* endorsers can be liable for
 - Failing to disclose connections
 - i.e., receipt of any free merchandise, coupons, etc.
 - False statements made by endorsers



Small Businesses: Social Media Use

- Small to Medium-Sized Business use of social media
 - Facebook 69%
 - Twitter 44%
 - YouTube 32%
 - LinkedIn 23%



Small Businesses: Social Media Use

- Major advantages
 - Support research & competitive intelligence
 - Improve customer service
 - Drive PR. & marketing initiatives
 - Directly generate revenue



Small Businesses: Social Media Use

- Major concerns
 - Privacy and data loss
 - Malware infections
 - Employee productivity
 - Reputation damage
 - Network performance



Small Businesses: Social Media Use

- Social media policy in place?
- Active monitoring?
- Training?
- What are you trying to prevent your employees from doing?
 - Playing games
 - Publishing inappropriate content
 - Installing unapproved software



Small Businesses: Employees & Social Media

- According to one survey
 - 62% of small to medium-size businesses ban personal use of social media at work
- Can/should you monitor employees' personal social media accounts?
 - Can you fire/reprimand an employee for inappropriate comments about your business on their personal accounts?



Small Businesses: Employees & Social Media

- Naïve
 - *School Superintendent resigns over Facebook posts*
 - Posts critical of school board were tagged private
 - But a "friend" forwarded them to the board



Small Businesses: Employees & Social Media

- Stupid
 - *Colorado Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Bureau Employee in Hot Water over Tweets*
 - Oversees animal neglect and abuse cases for the state
 - Online handle: "Skinnyhorse"
 - Sample tweets:
 - "eat more polar bears"
 - "success over animal rights is the best revenge"



Small Businesses: Employees & Social Media

- Best advice:
Never send an email or post a message that you don't want your boss to read



Small Businesses: Employee Privacy

- Always a good idea to notify employees
 - All communications/computer activity monitored
 - No personal privacy in any work-related communications
- Invasion of employee privacy
 - Unauthorized access of purely private communications
 - Made/stored on systems not controlled by the employer




Small Businesses: Customer Privacy

- Individual customers/users don't have much recourse for violations of online privacy policies
- A few exceptions
 - Facebook Beacon
 - Google Buzz



Small Businesses: Customer Privacy

- But, businesses must still craft policies with care
 - FTC may become involved
 - Failure to comply with own privacy policies can be a deceptive trade practice
 - Just ask 
 - May not be able to sell your data to others



Small Businesses: Customer Privacy

- If you collect & store any "Personal Identifying Information" (PII)
 - Name and/or address along with DOB, SSN, or account numbers
 - Most states require that
 - You must notify customers if you know of or suspect unauthorized access to unencrypted customer or employee PII
 - Law in customers'/employees' state of residency applies
 - Not necessarily where business is located or operates

