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Making the Connection:
Digital Media and Intelligent Networking

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Abstract
Technology is integral to the media industry and with each new technological device the creation, production and distribution process has been transformed. The digital environment accelerates the desire for information and connectivity. This paper examines intelligent networking through the lens of media convergence or multimedia platform use by individuals and media organizations, with particular focus on the potential of social media. Secondary analysis of select data from two studies on online use and social media from the Pew Research Center was used to examine networking behavior. The secondary analysis found users are increasingly connected and find value in the networks that are developed through digital technologies.

Introduction
The digital era can be characterized as a time in which individuals and organizations are driven by a need to know, connect, create and share, which is enhanced by the digital capabilities of media in the 21st century. The ability to reach out and touch, according to the AT&T commercials from the past have increased the connection tentacles to tweet, to text, to blog or to post among the plethora of choices for digital connectivity. The debut of delivery devices such as mobile phones and digital tablets have resonated across communication and media industries to increase the ways emerging digital technologies influence content delivery as well as behavior of users. The media industry's response is to determine how to integrate mobile and tablet apps with their brand and other products. The desire to connect continues to expand with each new technological possibility. This drive for networking and connectivity is enhanced by the simultaneous development of digital technologies over the past couple of decades.

The purpose of this paper is to examine intelligent networking through the lens of media convergence or multimedia platform use by individuals and media organizations, with particular focus on the potential of social media. Intelligent networking is defined here as the use of media and communication technologies across various delivery platforms for unlimited digital connections to reach or foster niche and broad-based connections whether business, education lifestyle and media interests. Networking is often viewed from a technological perspective focusing on the hardware and software that connect machines and devices. Organizations thrive on their use of network systems: "Intelligent networks, therefore, are the systems of communication that organize, transmit and display information with the goal of improving organizational performance" (Gershon, 2011, p. 16-17). Secondary analysis of select data from two studies are used in this article, *Navigating News Online*/ Project for Excellence in Journalism and *Social Networking Sites and Our Lives*/Pew Internet & American Life Project, both are projects from the Pew Research Center. The research questions that guide this article focus on

the connections and intelligent networking that occurs digitally for frequent users of media platforms, mobile devices and tablets.

The three research questions guiding this analysis are: RQ1, what delivery channels are increasingly being used to connect and share information? RQ2, how do social networking sites influence behavior? RQ3, how do individuals stay connected to share news, social and political information?

Literature Review

The drive to be connected is enhanced by each new technological device that enters the market. The explosion of Internet use in the 1990s perhaps was a catalyst to the types of activities on mobile devices and most recently digital tablets that move at a pace beyond traditional print and broadcast outlets. Apple's iPad initially launched in 2010 attracts about 1% of global Internet traffic (Knowles, 2011). Internet use in the U.S. expanded rapidly over the decades from 124 million or 44.1% in 2000 to 239 million or 77.3% in 2010 (Internet World Stats, 2011a). World internet use is 2.09 billion or 30.2% globally (Internet World Stats, 2011b). Forecaster Paul Saffo's (1992) 30-year rule as the length of time for new ideas to be accepted may be surpassed by the simultaneous development of new technologies that continue to place new delivery devices at users' finger tips and is transforming behavior.

Research continues to examine how and why people use media and the relationship that individuals have with their media choices. Jackob (2010) examined the trust and dependency issues for users from the media they select. Hasebrink and Jutta (2006) studied the behavior of media users, how they combine media and what exposure they have to content for what they call a "media repertoire." They argue research "should develop a repertoire-oriented approach which focuses on how people combine contacts with different media and different kinds of content," (p, 369). The study found the repertoire approach provided insight on how people used old and new media for cross-media use and the links created by combining the types of uses in the media repertoire. In other words users, determine what gratifications they are seeking by engaging across new and old media.

The intelligent networking that occurs through Internet use has implications on the level of social capital attained (Boyajy and Thorson, 2007). "The Internet's influence on social capital is worth exploring as this medium has an ability to connect individuals globally that has not existed before," (2007, p. 3). Internet users make connections on many levels that allow access, exchange of information and coordination of activities that can be beneficial to all parties involved. Research on social network sites (SNS) has identified social capital benefits derived for users and their relationships (Steinfield, Ellison and Lampe, 2008). Sum, Mathews, Pourghasem and Hughes (2008) study of seniors and social capital through the Internet found benefits for seniors through a network of connectivity with others of similar age, economic and lifestyle issues.

Scholars continue to pursue the question of why people use a certain medium and Cooper and Tang (2009) identify seven factors that contribute to exposure to television. The statistical factors they found "ritualistic motivations, use of the Internet, audience availability, the cost of multi-channel service, age, instrumental motivations, and gender" explained 30.3% of audience variance in exposure to television and its qualities to educate, inform and entertain. There are values associated with media choices as Besley (2008) found, particularly entertainment television and the Internet. The connections to these media channels provide some type of social residue. Dimmick, Feaster and Hoplamazian (2011) used the theory of the niche to show how newer technologies such as mobile devices do not replace traditional media; however, the devices develop their owned connectedness and networks for users. Cultural factors also contribute to media use and the connections individuals make as Gezduci and D'haenens (2007) found in their study of media usage in the Turkish diaspora in Belgium. The survey found Turkish language abilities, religion and ethnic-cultural standing play a role in how media is used and for

what purposes for home language; however, for host language media use, fluency in Dutch and English, residency and educational level were important variables. Christensen's (2009) study of the connectivity of families in Denmark found that mobile phones are used as a network to create a "connected presence" between parents and children. Enoch and Johnson (2010) examined cross-media use behavior to assess not only what media devices are used but how simultaneous use affects users and their selections.

Hartman, Vorderer and Jung (2009) examined motivations for use with video games as a way to assess how individuals use networks to compete and connect with others in the gaming world. The Theory of Planned Behavior was used to assess video game use choices and found attitudes, social norms, and perceived behaviors as factors contributing to connecting to games and others using the digital devices (Hartman el al., 2009.) Another interdisciplinary area of scholarship that has resonance to intelligent networking is the increasing focus on understanding individual behavior and connections in the virtual world. The desire to be networked electronically has been transformed by online games and virtual worlds such as SimCity, Second Life or playing Scrabble with others through mobile devices. Arnason (2011) stated that qualitative and quantitative research will require more methods to examine user behavior in massive multiplayer online games (MMOGs). The virtual world has "environments that allow people to undertake various tasks, hunting, socializing, exploring, producing and consuming goods and generally leading a more or less full, rich and detailed life," (Castronova, 2002: 2 sited in Arnason, 2011, 98). Arnason argued that research challenges and focus must determine how to assess the virtual and "so-called real world" with online games from measuring time spent and places visited in a digital environment to reports of what types of uses and networking occurs among and between individuals and organizations in a virtual environment.

Vladar and Fife (2010) studied the growth of mobile social networking looking at web-based services in which users connected over mobile devices. The 2010 study of U.S. users, 900 on smartphones and 1050 online, found usage increased and "the popularity of social networks such as Facebook in the PC environment has supported the migration of this activity to the mobile device," (p.30). Elements that contribute to the increase include technology improvements, mobile devices compatibility with existing practices, value in the ability to communicate and stay in touch and "communicating with friends and relatives the #1 reason to use mobile data services," (p. 31). The motivations for using networks can vary culturally as Barker and Ota (2011) found in their study of white American and Japanese young women. Though both groups' motives were to communicate with peers virtually that they knew in their lives, American women also used photographs to illustrate how close they were to friends whereas Japanese women used Mixi diaries for a more private display of closeness to those they communicated with.

College students have been often considered the early adopters of online social networking with Facebook and MySpace while the growth of numerous networking sites such as LinkedIn, Twitter and others over the last five years have impacted all ages (King, 2009). King's study of pre-teens and teens in the San Francisco area found MySpace and Facebook continue to be the focus of their usage to build relationships, with the former being more colorful, flashy and appealing to their age group, the latter more static and requiring membership. Social networking sites support connectivity for relationships with motives that range from teaching and learning, to language, self-esteem and cultural experiences (Baker & Oswald, 2010; Bosch, 2009; Selwyn, 2009; Pearce, 2008).

The potential of intelligent networking is not lost in the workplace. Media organizations use social media to enhance the sharing and connecting to their products. However, increasingly all types of organizations are looking to connect to social networking sites for employment decisions, (Brown and Vaughn, 2011). Human resources professionals are using information collected from SNS on potential employees although the types of information available vary, especially if individuals are not using share sites. Clark and Roberts (2010) suggest that social

media sites are in the public domain, however, use of the networks as investigative tools for employment raise some ethical issues. They examined concerns such as accuracy with online character checks by employers using SNS postings for hiring decision making. Davis, Marist and Bing (2011) examined strengthens and weaknesses of Human Resources professionals deciding to look to social media networking for recruiting, hiring and decisions making regarding employment. Regardless of the motive or use of SNS it is apparent they are a growing phenomenon influencing many aspects of people's lives.

Networking

Intelligent networking from the individual perspective entails accessibility and connections that individuals select and engage in for communication. The utility of connections varies by individual and circumstances; however, there are some elements that are essential for the fulfillment of such connections. Those elements are personal satisfaction, organization, global and social capital. The types of websites and virtual communities that have been facilitated by the web are illustrative of the reach of networking. The Association of Internet Researchers (http://aoir.org/) is an organization of students and scholars from many fields that focus on various aspects of Internet use and societal implications. The international organization formed in 1998 when researchers whose scholarship focused on the digital tool and its possibilities connected the digital research community. The development of groups and organizations in the digital environment is indicative of those with shared interest using networks to connect.

Value of a Network

There is an inherent value to intelligent networking through digital media in which users find satisfaction in connecting to individuals and organizations whether in the pursuit of information, entertainment, or access to a plethora of data there are immeasurable benefits to accessing networks. Evens (2010) addresses value networks in business models in the television industry as different variables are used to attract users from creation to production. The values placed on media use vary from public values of new media, to cultural values, news values and reactions to connecting with others through various platforms (Giroux, 2011; Lee 2009; Ots, 2009; Bryant, Akerman and Williams, 2007). Three categories of significant benefit within a network with tentacles to other aspects of users' lives are connectivity, resources and social capital which are discussed in further detail below.

Connectivity

The growth of broadband facilitated ease and increased connectivity for users over the past decades with many variables determining what connections may be possible, according the Federal Communications Commission's *Measuring Broadband America* report (2011). The infant days of Internet use in the early 1990s raised concerns about accessibility and the digital divide in the U.S.; however broadband has increased connectivity although access may vary across economic levels. Questions raised center on whether all users have the same access and capabilities with the digital tool. We have advanced beyond the early dial up connections, and broadband and wireless usage provides instant connectivity. Within any network the ability to reach more people and places is the center of what makes the connections work.

Resources

The access to a plethora of people in a network provides a pathway to resources that can be shared and exchanged. One of the key powers of the Internet is interactivity in which all parties can engage with others. If an individual or organization in the network has a need for a resource it is through the connectivity of digital networks that the support is enhanced. The tag line for J-Lab, a center housed at American University in Washington, D.C., describes the center as "igniting news ideas that work." The organization is designed to facilitate a network of support by sharing ideas and innovations in the journalism practices and applications in a digital environment. J-Lab funds and supports projects with the J-Lab Network Journalism as one of those projects that supports collaborations between traditional news organizations with

entrepreneurs to develop ideas, best practices and share lessons learned. Media such as *The Oregonian, Lawrence Journal-World, The Miami Herald* and *The Seattle Times* have successfully partnered with community organizations to create digital projects. One of the projects funded by a $50,000 grant from J-Lab is the Northeast Kansas News Network, which was created by the *Lawrence Journal-World* to partner with four online local news providers to facilitate sharing and innovation of ideas in the community. Content will be shared among the partners and with others to increase the network of information in the community. "For us, this is a chance to help really develop the regional news ecosystem. These partners represent a wide variety of communities and all have as a goal to better inform their communities," according to Jonathan Kealing, Assistant Director of media strategy at The World Company, owner of the Journal-World (Kealing, 2011, par. 4).

Figure 1. illustrates the various media organizations and partnerships that have participated in the Networked Journalism project through J-Lab. The project, whether through broadcast or print organizations, has expanded networks of connectivity beyond and organization's usual boundaries.

Figure 1
Organizations participating in J-Lab's Networked Journalism project

Source: J-Lab.org, Networked Journalism project, retrieved from http://www.j-lab.org/projects/networked-journalism/

Social Capital

Development of social capital provides opportunities for those with certain connections to achieve or accomplish goals based on relationships and the ability to reach a large network of individuals and organizations. Social capital has many definitions and is often viewed as the relationships that connect individuals, increase access and the social benefits of being connected. Dominguez and Watkins (2003) state social capital is based on strengthens embedded in relationships that assist individuals providing resources and meeting different needs. The concept social capital is derived from the field of Sociology from scholars such as French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and American sociologist James Coleman and has expanded to studies in numerous social sciences (Portes, 2000) "Social capital became defined as (1) a

source of social control, (2) a source of family mediated benefits, and (3) a source of resources mediated by nonfamily networks" (Portes, 2000, p.3). The third area is more related to the types of connections individuals make for employment, financial and other information and resources through SNS and other digital connectivity. Numerous studies have observed social capital through use of the Internet, social networks, organizations, during disasters and economic benefits (Doerfel, 2010; Vergeer & Pelzer, 2009; Valenzuela, Park and Kee, 2009; Chai, 2010; Brooks, Welser and Hogan, 2011). Facebook was used to study the relationship between connection strategies and social capital among college students in a study by Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2011). The study of N=450 Midwestern college students found three connecting activities on the site that include: a) initiating, meet strangers and make new friends; b) maintaining, maintain existing ties; and c) social information seeking, learn more about individuals in which the participant has offline connections. When participants used information seeking on the networking site it demonstrated behavior identified as bridging social capital (Ellison, et al., 2011) Robert Putnam identified two types of social capital, bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital identifies the benefits of personal relationships. Bridging social capital was described as "the benefits derived from casual acquaintances and connections, [that] can also lead to tangible outcomes such as novel information from distant connections and broader world-views, (Putnam, 2000 as sited in Ellison, et al, 2011, p. 3). A longitudinal study on bridging social capital of SNS users found enhanced wellbeing and self-esteem as some psychological benefits of relationships. (Steinfield, Ellison, Lampe, 2008). Bridging social capital also has economic benefits as Zhang, Anderson and Zhan (2011) found in their analysis of longitudinal data from the National Survey of Families and Households. The networking that occurs for individuals through different organizations can improve economic well being. Research on social capital and social networks continue to point to benefits of connecting and building relationships both professional and personal (Zhang, et al., 2011).

In an intelligent networking environment the potential of social capital is enhanced by digital connections such as SNS because of the continuous ability to build on existing and new relationship. The connected presence that Christensen (2009) discusses expands the horizons for information and resources depending on the type and size of a network. For example, and individual using the social networking site LinkedIn to tap into a business network enhances information and access as the connectivity in the network grows. The reach can be unlimited when the value of social networks for individuals and organizations entail economic, business and other benefits from social capital. AT&T boasts it has the best networks for individuals and businesses through wireless connections placing people in touch at any level. One of AT&T's 2011 advertising tag lines "Rethink Possible" that focuses on businesses deems its network "a living breathing intelligence that's helping business rethink how to do business, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KLbvnKv67k). The need for increased connectivity is magnified in the marketplace by desires to be constantly in contact. "The AT&T network uses GSM (global system for mobile communications) technology, the world's most popular wireless phone technology," (ATT.com; 2011, p. 2). Media organizations also promote their content product as beneficial to those seeking different types of content and information whether on a business, professional or personal level. The Washington Post Co. in spring 2011 launched Trove (www.trove.com), a free, personalized website. The site serves as an aggregator of news and information. The customization factor allows user to personalize the network of news, headlines or areas of interest to connect and share. It is unclear what social capital will be gained from the personalized digital connection; however, it illustrates the potential that technology has for realigning relationships and experiences in a digital environment.

Data Analysis

Secondary analysis of select data from two studies conducted in 2010 by the Pew Research Center was analyzed to answer research questions in this paper. *Social Networking Sites and Our Lives* part of the Pew Internet & American Life Project used telephone interviews in October and November 2010 with N=2,255 adults 18 and older for random digit dialing on landlines and cell phones. The study is part of the Pew Internet & American Life Project from the Pew

Research Center (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011). *Navigating News Online* was conducted by the Pew Research Center examined 25 top news websites and users' behavior in four areas (Olmstead, Mitchell & Rosenstiel, 2011). The four areas are a) the path users take to get to top news sites, b) the length of time for site visits, c) how far do users go into a site, and d) where users go when they leave a site. Pew purchased data from the Nielsen Netview database which was reduced from a list of 5000 sites to identify news only sites to create the top 25 list. The first three quarters of 2010 was used for the analysis of the top sites.

Social Networking

RQ1 asks what delivery channels are increasingly being used to connect individuals. The phenomenon of social networking sites (SNS) continues to advance as networks of connectivity globally for millions. The Pew Center's Internet and American Life Project took a closer look at this phenomenon in the 2010 study of SNS users. Since 2008 those using social networks doubled, 59% of American adults state they use at least one SNS (Hampton et al., 2011). The social networking study provides insight into some of the behaviors of SNS users and the ways it contributes to their connectivity. Facebook is the leading SNS site with 92% of users followed by MySpace at 29%, LinkedIn at 18%, Twitter at 13% and other sites at 10% (Hampton et al., 2011, p. 13). In 2011, Facebook lists more than 750 million active users worldwide with about 50% of users logging on daily (Facebook Statistics, 2011). The average adult age of SNS users increased in 2010 to 38 from 33 in 2008 illustrating the popularity of SNS is not just generational. Table 1 provides a view of different age groups of SNS users on various popular networking platforms.

Table 1
The age distribution in percentages of use on social networking site

Age	MySpace	Facebook	LinkedIn	Twitter	Other SNS
65+	3%	6%	4%	4%	4%
50-65	10	19	23	13	19
36-49	17	25	32	24	21
23-35	42	33	36	34	28
18-22	29	16	6	26	28

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Social Network Site survey conducted on landline and cell phone between October 20-November 28, 2010. N=2,255 and margin of error is +/- 2-3 percentage points.

The table also illustrates in the 36-49 age group, which includes the average adult age 38 of SNS users; LinkedIn has the higher percentage, 32% to Facebook's 25%. Perhaps the business oriented networking on LinkedIn may have an appeal to an older age group. There are differences in users of SNS whether by age, gender, race and education. Gender differences revealed that women, 56%, are the majority of users on SNS as well as they are the majority of email users at 52% and bloggers at 54% (Hampton et al., 2011). Women are using the digital tools to make connections across several platforms and in ways that engage and facilitate interaction within their networks of communication. An analysis of the study addresses the frequency of uses of SNS that may illustrate the level of connectivity being sought by users. The two platforms that generate a greater frequency of use are Facebook and Twitter with 52% and 33%, respectively using their digital platform daily to connect and share with others in their network, whereas daily use was only in the single digits for MySpace, 7% and LinkedIn, 6%

(Hampton et al., 2011). As a locale of connectivity social networking platforms are a growing force.

Sharing and connecting digitally is also making use of tablet devices. Apple's iPad has captured about 1% of global Internet traffic, though other tablet manufacturers are on the market. (Knowles, 2011). Mobile devices are increasing in use as a platform and "the iPhone has the highest overall share of mobile browsing in the United States, with 2.9 percent of total web traffic, Google's Android platform came in second with 2.6 percent." (Knowles, par. 5.). It is too soon to assess how tablet usage is occurring with media, however, results from a 2010 survey at the Reynolds Journalism institute at the University of Missouri point to some interesting areas of use. Of the 1,600 iPad users surveyed, key findings included "affluent men between the ages of 35 and 64 who tend to be early adopters," more than four-fifths, 80.2%, of respondents were men, and 55.6% of respondents had household incomes of $100,000 a year (Fidler, 2010, par.3). About 70.2% stated they were very satisfied with the tablet device and keeping up with news and current events was the main use at 84.4%. When compared with other channels of connectivity, the study found:

More than three quarters (78.6%) of the users spent at least 30 minutes during a typical day consuming news on their iPad. Respondents spent a similar amount of time with other media at a much lower rate:

> **television (52.5%)**
> **personal computers (50.7%)**
> **printed Sunday newspapers (30.7%)**
> **printed weekday newspapers (18.8%).**
> (Fidler, par. 5)

Fidler's (2010) study is a multi-year project examining Apple iPad users' consumption of content. A white paper by Miratech (2011) examined the different reading patterns for print articles vs. tablet articles. The study found that readers skim iPad articles and read print articles at a greater rate. There was no significance in reading time: iPad, 1:13 minutes and print articles, 1:11 with print serving better for concentration and retention (Miratech, 2011).

User Behavior

In this paper, RQ 2 asked how social networking sites influence behavior, and identified some key findings in the Pew Research Center studies in this secondary analysis. The drive to remain connected is part of information gathering, and the *Navigating News Online* study identified 25 top news sites and examined what sites were used, how people reach the sites and what makes them leave (Olmstead, Mitchell & Rosenstiel, 2011). The study uses Nielsen's ranking of the top 25 news sites addressing average monthly audiences in 2010. Table 2 lists the top news sites and their rankings identified in the study. Interestingly, only two newspapers sites were in the top 10. Three sources were identified as the way users find news sites: aggregators, home pages and social media. An increasing driver of traffic to top news sites is social media, particularly Facebook:

> *… At five of the top sites, Facebook is the second or third most important driver of traffic. Twitter on the other hand, barely registers as a referring source. In the same vein, when users leave a site, 'share' tools that appear alongside most news stories rank among the most clicked-on links, (Olmstead et al., p. 2).*

Table 2
The Rank and Names of Nielsen's Top 25 Online News Sites

RANK	DOMAIN	RANK	DOMAIN
1	Yahoo@ News websites	14	Daily News Online Edition
2	CNN Digital Network	15	BBC
3	MSNBC Digital Network	16	Examiner.com
4	AOL News	17	Bing News
5	NYTimes.com	18	The Slate Group websites
6	Fox News Digital Network	19	Topix
7	ABC NEWS Digital Network	20	Boston.com
8	The HuffingtonPost.com	21	New York Post Holdings
9	Google News	22	Telegraph
10	Washingtonpost.com	23	Guardian.com.uk
11	CBS News Network	24	NPR
12	USATODAY.com	25	Chicago Tribune
13	LA Times	___	___

Source: Nielsen Company as cited in Olmstead, Kenny, Mitchell, Amy, & Rosenstein, Tom. (9 May 2011). Navigating News Online: Where people go, how they get there and what lures them away. Pew Research Center's Project of Excellence in Journalism.

Increasingly media and other organizations home pages utilize "share" buttons on navigation bars that include social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and other platforms. In the digital world the constant connection to others increases the sphere of a network and potential of influence. The study identifies "casual users" as those visiting news sites a few times a month and "power users" as visitors with 10 or more visits to a news site each month (Olmstead et al., 2011). If social networks are increasing in their ability to drive users to news sites, media organizations not only need to identify power users, but which ones come from social networking sites and the potential to tap into the digital networks of such users. Facebook is an SNS that:

> *evolved from a network for friends to share personal information to a way for people to share, recommend and ink together all kinds of information, including news. If searching for news was the most important development of the last decade, sharing news many be among the most important of the next. (Olmstead et al., 2011, p. 10)*

Twitter, found to have about 175 million accounts in 2010 did not have the same referral influence as Facebook. The study only showed about 1% of news site traffic being driven by Twitter (Olmstead et al, 2001). The small number might be the result of users being limited to 140 characters. Facebook with its reported 750 million users around the globe is an example of the force and influence social networking sites are increasingly experiencing as part of intelligent networks.

Staying Connected

Finally, RQ3 asked how individuals stay connected to find news, social and political information. The analysis of the two Pew Research Center studies illustrates areas where that influence is having an impact. It is common knowledge that social networking sites are having an influence on intelligent networks. The use of technology can be a driver to connectivity, for example, in 2010 28.3% of Internet users belonged to a community group up from 17.4% in 2008 (Hampton,

et al., 2011). In the *Navigating News Online* study, of the top 25 news sites, 11 were newspaper sites, six were network television or cable sites, one was a wire service, three were hybrid online-only sites, and four were news aggregators, (Olmstead et al., 2011). As mobile devices and e-readers such as the iPad proliferate the potential to expand connections increase (Fidler, 2010). Fidler's study of Apple's iPad tablet user habits indicates an increased use and connectivity for consuming news content, some 78.6% of users (2010). This analysis finds Facebook and other SNS as drivers to news sites with potential to connect to all types of content. Individuals in pursuit of news information are exercising numerous media for online news. As stated earlier in this analysis, casual users and power users of news sites were identified and the ways they connect and share information. Most users were found to be casual users, rating on average 77% of the traffic on the top 25 news sites clicking only once a twice a month; whereas the power users with 10 or more visits a month were on average about 7% of monthly visits. The study also found only six of the top 25 news sites ranked in the double digits for power users: CNN 17.8%; Fox News, 16.4%; Yahoo, 14%; AOL News, 13.4%; Google News, 12.6%; and MSNBC, 11.1% (Olmstead, et al., 2011).

It is apparent that people use news sites to seek information as well as the growing role of social networking sites such as Facebook in sharing and connecting people to news sites. How users make use of sharing through social networking sites has benefits for media organizations. Olmstead et al. (2011) found "Facebook shows up among the top destinations for every site studied," in their examination of the top 25 news sites (p. 18). Therefore, websites that use share tools can benefit from their use as drivers to connect users. Table 3 illustrates the reach of Facebook as a sharing tool for news sites, however it does not mean that all users leave the social networking site to share content (Olmstead et al., 2011). Since the table does not illustrate motives, users might leave Facebook for news sites out of curiosity or information seeking without linking others in the network to their electronic footprints.

Table 3
Traffic to and from Facebook Among Top News Sites

Website	Percent of Visitors leaving to Facebook	Percent of Visitors Coming From Facebook
Yahoo News	6.64%	2.05%
CNN	5.84	7.05
Huffington Post	4.48	7.96
Examiner	4.44	5.98
Chicago Tribune	4.12	2.17
Boston	4.02	3.75
ABC News	3.91	7.35
SFGate.com	3.82	5.74
Fox News	3.81	2.23
The New York Times	3.31	6.2
Washington Post	3.27	4.58
Topix	3.15	0.76
AOL News	2.73	1.09
New York Post	2.63	1.93
MailOnline	2.41	5.56
MSNBC.com	2.28	1.11
CBS News	2.15	3.22
LA Times	1.38	2.05
New York Daily News	1.38	3.61
USA Today	1.21	1.68
Google News	*	*

Source: Nielson Company and PEJ Research as cited in Olmstead, Kenny, Mitchell, Amy, & Rosenstiel, Tom. (9 May 2011). Navigating News Online: Where people go, how they get there and what lures them away. Pew Research Center's Project of Excellence in Journalism.

* Not registered in Nielsen's figures because fewer than 5 individuals came through or departed to Facebook from Google News.

In the *Social Networking Sites in Our Lives* study the use of social networking sites (SNS) were found as increasing individuals networks whether for social ties, support or political activity (Hampton et al., 2011). MySpace users were found to be more open to multiple viewpoints when considering issues. The sharing and connecting through the SNS not only exposes users to a wide array of connections it has not prohibited individuals from being open to different perspectives. The social capital, connections and increased access to information broadens the understanding for many uses networking sites. The study also found SNS contributed positively to civic engagement. There were 74% of Americans that belong to at least one voluntary or community group, which is up from 65% in 2008 (Hampton et al, 2011). Use of intelligent networking by SNS not only has economic and social capital benefits, but supports civic engagement through non-profits and other community groups. There is also a role for political engagement as part of networking and the study, which connected data during the November 2010 mid-term elections found people were politically engaged. Facebook users are political while LinkedIn users were the most to be engaged politically with 14% attending a political rally, 39% persuading someone to vote and 79% that intended to or did vote during the election

(Hampton et al. 2010). Social networking sites play a role in political activities through intelligent networking that expand social and political possibilities for users.

Conclusion

French poet and novelist Victor Hugo once stated “All the forces in the world are not so powerful as an idea whose time has come." Perhaps the time has not only come but continues to expand digitally for intelligent networking. Within and between networks individuals have the capability to create and share information, build relationships and expand connections. Digitization diversified the channels of connectivity which are used on multiple levels from the personal and social to business and economic. The social capital derived from intelligent networks crosses gender, age, education, social economic status, and numerous other areas. Technology often has been chided for alienating or limiting personal contacts. However, “if loneliness is measured by the deficit of social ties, we find no evidence that technology plays a negative role. On the contrary, the use of mobile phone and IM [instant messaging] are associated with larger overall social networks,” (Hampton, et al, p. 24) found in *Social Networking Sites and Our Lives*. As stated earlier in this analysis intelligent networking has the potential to allow individuals and organizations to create networks that enhance experiences where people work, play and live. Media outlets continue to provide share buttons on web sites and mobile devices for users to increase their connectivity. The connected presence Christensen (20009) found with mobile phones can be applicable to digital connections in social networks of all types. Technological developments have always had an impact on society, particularly the media industry, and this continues in the digital environment. Technology has transformed the way media and individuals engage with multimedia on multiple platforms and mobile devices with still untapped potential. This secondary analysis of two Pew Research Center studies found intelligent networks have value and benefit individuals through numerous platforms that build relationships, increase the sphere of influence, capitalize on social networking, and exploit media’s resources as individuals remain digitally connected.

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