NEW TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION IN NEW MEDIA

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Since the Internet has exploded due to the development of Web browsers as well as the development of communications Technologies such as broadband, digital subscriber line (DSL), and satellite communications. Groups of people communicate via email, chat, and use such services as MSN, Friendster, America Online (AoL), Geocities, and Yahoo! Groups. Other examples of online communities are collaborative encyclopedias like Wikipedia. Web logs (Blogs) like Slashdot.com and LiveJournal allow users to create their own content and also to comment on the content of others.[1]

In the last few years, both technological and social changes have changed everything. These changes have resulted in a temporary branching of the web into three distinct paths. The web has been fragmented into these channels:[2]

1- The reference web: The traditional web people use to extract information they need when they need it.
2- The collaborative web: Where individuals can share information and the internet's original promise of turning every body into a Publisher is fulfilled.
3- The broadband web: Where the growth in high-speed access turns the web into audio and video venue

Recent developments in web technologies have introduced a range of exciting new tools for communication in New Media.

1- RSS (Really Simple Syndication)

RSS is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated digital content, such as blogs, news feeds or podcasts. Users of RSS content use software programs called "feed readers" or "feed aggregators". The user subscribes to a feed by entering a link to the feed into the reader program. The reader can then check the user's subscribed feeds to see if any of those feeds have new content since the last time it checked, and if so, retrieve that content and present it to the user.[3]

2- Blogs (Web logs)

A blog (short for web log) is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order. The term "blog" is a portmanteau, or, in other words, a blend of the words web and log (Web log). "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.[4]

3- Wikis

A wiki is a website that allows visitors to add, remove, edit and change content, typically without the need for registration. It also allows for linking among any number of pages. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for mass collaborative authoring. The term wiki can also refer to the collaborative software itself (wiki engine) that facilitates the operation of such a site, or to specific wiki sites, including the computer science site WikiWikiWeb (the original wiki) and online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia.[5]

4- Podcasting

A podcast is a digital media file, or a series of such files, that is distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on portable media players and personal computers. A podcast is a specific type of webcast which, like 'radio', can mean either the content itself or the method by which it is

[1] Potentials of Information Technology in Building Virtual Communities, Encyclopidea of Multimedia Technology and Networking, (Ed.) Margherita Pagani, Idea Group Inc. 2005. p.836-839.

[2] Holtz, S. The impact of new technologies on internal communication Strategic Communication Management, Special report. Melcrum Publishing , 2006, p.1.

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS

[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki

syndicated; the latter is also termed podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster. The term "podcast" is a portmanteau of the name of Apple's portable music player, the iPod, and broadcast[1]; a pod refers to a container of some sort and the idea of broadcasting to a container or pod describes the process of podcasting. More about the name itself can be found in the history of podcasting article.[6]

5- Social tagging (folksonomies)

A folksonomy is a user generated taxonomy used to categorize and retrieve web content such as Web pages, photographs and Web links, using open ended labels called tags. Typically, folksonomies are Internet-based, but their use may occur in other contexts. The folksonomic tagging is intended to make a body of information increasingly easy to search, discover, and navigate over time. A well-developed folksonomy is ideally accessible as a shared vocabulary that is both originated by, and familiar to, its primary users. Two widely cited examples of websites using folksonomic tagging are Flickr and del.icio.us, although it has been suggested that Flickr is not a good example of folksonomy.[7]

Because folksonomies develop in Internet-mediated social environments, users can discover (generally) who created a given folksonomy tag, and see the other tags that this person created. In this way, folksonomy users often discover the tag sets of another user who tends to interpret and tag content in a way that makes sense to them. The result is often an immediate and rewarding gain in the user's capacity to find related content. Part of the appeal of folksonomy is its inherent subversiveness: when faced with the choice of the search tools that Web sites provide, folksonomies can be seen as a rejection of the search engine status quo in favor of tools that are created by the community.

Blogs

Blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of most early blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual although some focus on photographs (photoblog), sketchblog, videos (vlog), or audio (podcasting), and are part of a wider network of social media.

The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Barger on 17 December 1997. The short form, "blog," was coined by Peter Merholz, who jokingly broke the word weblog into the phrase we blog in the sidebar of his blog Peterme.com in April or May of 1999.This was quickly adopted as both a noun and verb ("to blog," meaning "to edit one's weblog or to post to one's weblog").

Early weblogs were simply manually updated components of common websites. However, the evolution of tools to facilitate the production and maintenance of web articles posted in reverse chronological order made the publishing process feasible to a much larger, less technical, population. Ultimately, this resulted in the distinct class of online publishing that produces blogs we recognize today. For instance, the use of some sort of browser-based software is now a typical aspect of "blogging". Blogs can be hosted by dedicated blog hosting services, or they can be run using blog software, such as WordPress, Movable Type, blogger or LiveJournal, or on regular web hosting services, such as DreamHost.

Weblogs were distinct in both form and content from the Web journals that had preceded them. At the time, journals were personal accounts chunked into individual pages—one entry per page, one page per day, as if a paper diary had been transplanted to the Web. By contrast, Weblog entries were short, usually containing links to the larger Web and appearing together on one long page. Many were updated throughout the day. Weblogs were also distinct from

[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcast
[7] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folksonomy

e-zines, which were published on a schedule, like paper periodicals, and contained longer original articles and artwork. E-zines required planning, organization, and a certain level of skill in layout, typography, and the other elements of Web design. By contrast, Weblogs were rudimentary in design and content. Indeed, many zinesters disdained the new form, arguing that the Web would soon be filled with pages of links, all pointingto one another—with no original content anywhere.[8]

Blogs represent self-organizing social systems that can help many persons to:[9]
1) interact collaboratively,
2) learn from each other by exchanging ideas and information,
3) solve collective problems.

Blogs are used for political purposes in the State.[10]

It is expected that tools such as blogs and wikis, because they allow people to organize and collaborate among themselves, will foster among the people discussion and deliberation, led by influentials. The conversational style of blogs, combined with their easy accessibility, suggests that Internet users will continue to adopt them at increasing rates. It is also likely that blogs and wikis will increasingly be used. Some media blogs are http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/index.html, http://blog.milliyet.com.tr, http://blog.haberturk.com

Create a Blog
In recent years, tools have been developed to make blogging much easier and more widely accessible—effectively (as Blogger, a weblog service provider,

advertises) "pushbutton publishing for the people." [11] Blogs have been featured extensively in the popular media and have entered political campaigns, news organizations, businesses, and classrooms. Recent estimates place the number of sites calling themselves blogs at over 1.3 million, and growing rapidly.

Blogs written by individuals or small groups, rather than heavily trafficked blogs such as those associated with political campaigns or major news organizations. Blog sites devoted to politics and punditry, to news, and to sharing technical developments, receive thousands of hits a day.[12]

It has found three primary types of blogs: individually authored, personal journals, "filters" (because they select and provide commentary on information from other websites), and "knowledge logs."

The majority of blogs in their sample (70%) were of the personal journal, "online diary" type.

Why would so many people post their on the most public communication medium in human history, the Internet? Diaries have long been written and stored in secret; the classic diary is a volume whose privacy is secured by lock and key. Nardi and others argue that blogs are more like radio shows than they are like diaries.[13]

Blogs are strikingly like radio, and indeed, an early blogging software package was called Radio UserLand. Just as with radio, the blogger can broadcast messages of their own choosing, without interruption.

[8] Blood, Rebecca. How Blogging Software Reshapes The Online Community, Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.54.

[9] Kavanaugh, Andrea. and others. When Opinion Leaders Blog: New forms of citizen interaction Digital Government Conference, May 21-24, 2006, San Diego, California.

[10] Kavanaugh, Andrea. and others. When Opinion Leaders Blog: New forms of citizen interaction Digital Government Conference, May 21-24, 2006, San Diego, California.

[11] Bonnie A. Nardi ; Diane J. Schiano ; Michelle Gumbrecht. Blogging as Social Activity, or, Would You Let 900 Million People Read Your Diary? Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.222.

[12] Bonnie A. Nardi ; Diane J. Schiano ; Michelle Gumbrecht. Blogging as Social Activity, or, Would You Let 900 Million People Read Your Diary? Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.222.

[13] Bonnie A. Nardi ; Diane J. Schiano ; Michelle Gumbrecht. Blogging as Social Activity, or, Would You Let 900 Million People Read Your Diary? Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.230.

As the newest arrow in the quiver of online communication tools, the affordances of blogging are currently being worked out by millions of users, and tool-makers are adapting blog features to this use.

Blogging software allows three levels of privacy. The most private blog is password-protected. The most public blog is listed by the user's blog service and will be easily found by search engines. An unlisted blog is less likely to be found but is not fully private; it is unlisted by the blogging service's directory (similar to an unlisted phone number). Such a blog cannot be found without knowing theURL, although there is a way such blogs can become public. If the blog contains a link that someone clicks on, the new webpage will receive the URL as the "referrer," and it is possible for the "unlisted" blog to be picked up by search engines. Since most blogs contain links that anyone might click on, unlisted blogs are not secure, although they may remain relatively invisible if they link to sites that few people access and if the links are not activated often.[14]

In our study, people typically found blogs through other blogs they were reading, through friends or colleagues telling them about their blogs or those of others, or through inclusion of the blog URL in an instant message profile or a homepage. Blogging software reserves a portion of the screen for lists of blogs and many of the blogs we investigated had a list of other blogs presented to readers. There are also sites devoted to "blogrolling" which select and present interesting blogs.[15]

Some of the motivation objects to blogging are followings:
1. Update others on activities and whereabouts
2. Express opinions to influence others
3. Seek others' opinions and feedback
4. "Think by writing"
5. Release emotional tension

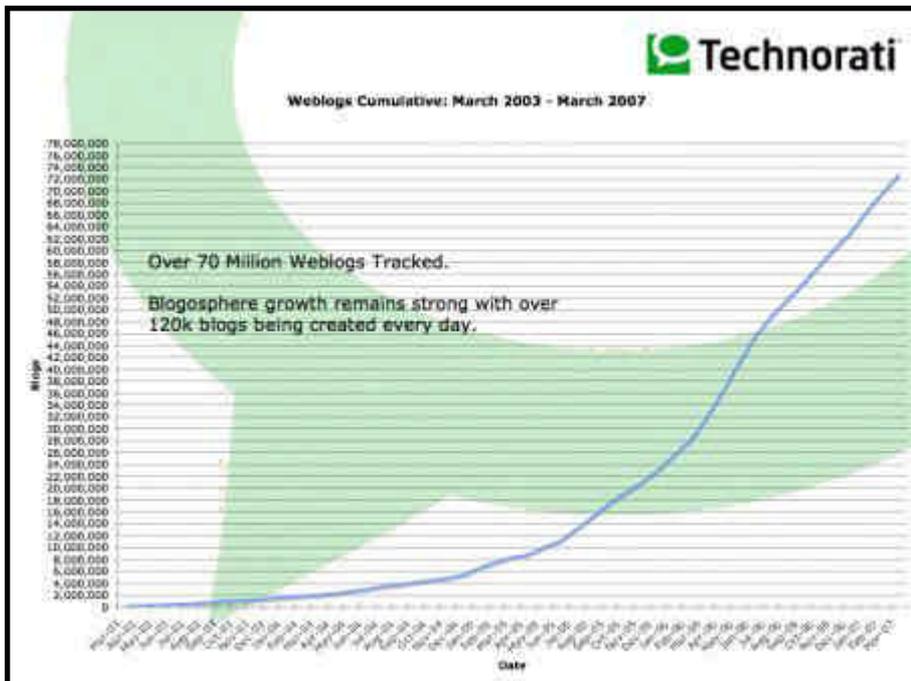These objects were not mutually exclusive; some blogs were motivated by more than one.

Fig. 1

[14] Bonnie A. Nardi ; Diane J. Schiano ; Michelle Gumbrecht. Blogging as Social Activity, or, Would You Let 900 Million People Read Your Diary? Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.223.
[15] Bonnie A. Nardi ; Diane J. Schiano ; Michelle Gumbrecht. Blogging as Social Activity, or, Would You Let 900 Million People Read Your Diary? Communications Of The ACM, December 2004/Vol. 47, No.12, p.224

Blogging Softwares

Once exotic blogging technology is also part of mainstream social communications. A commercial market has emerged to supply instant fill-in-theblanks blog pages and other blog-editing and –broadcasting software. It's cheap, and some blog sites even host bloggers for free. As easy to use as a word processing program, the technology spares users from the tedious process of hand-coding their postings and links. Anyone can be up and blogging in minutes.[16]

Several blogging software packages, some free, some commercial, are available for easy download. This software can be used for purposes other than blogging, such as homepages, although we did not investigate those uses. Our informants used a range of systems including Blogger, MovableType, Xanga, Radio UserLand, and Blurty. Three informants wrote their blogs directly in HTML because they preferred more control over formatting. Some informants had started on Blogger and upgraded to MovableType, a more powerful system. Some used only the most basic features of the blogging software; others used more advanced features to track who was reading their blog, to collect statistics on the number of hits they received, to discover who linked to their blogs, to change the format of the blog, or to post photos. One informant used his own software to include his location and current MP3 selection on each post. During the course of the research several people moved to the use of more advanced features as their blogging activities developed. Two informants wrote Perl scripts to add photos and track visitors.[17]

Technorati is known widely for its quarterly State of the Blogosphere reports, analyzing the trends around blogs and blogging.[18]

Technorati, reports almost 4.2 million Weblogs worldwide as of October 2004, up from about one million a year earlier. And a 2003 Pew/Internet survey estimated that more than 53 American adults, or 44% of Internet users, had used the Internet to publish their thoughts, respond to others, post pictures, share files, and otherwise contribute to the content available online.[19]

Technorati is now tracking over 70 million weblogs, and we're seeing about 120,000 new weblogs being created worldwide each day. That's about 1.4 blogs created every second of every day. (See Fig.1.)

Conclusion

It is expected that tools such as blogs and wikis, (next futuristic tools) because they allow people to organize and collaborate among themselves, will foster among the people discussion and deliberation, led by influential. The conversational style of blogs, combined with their easy accessibility, suggests that Internet users will continue to adopt them at increasing rates. It is also likely that blogs and wikis will increasingly be used.

Internet will be used by more and more people and affect those because it is highly powerful. Some researches should be made to reveal to how the new media influence its users.

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[18] http://technorati.com/weblog/2007/04/328.html

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