

GETTING INTERACTIVE AND SOCIAL

There's a whole world of social interaction and online interactivity out there to explore. This guide will get you started.



Although we don't claim this guide is meticulous, it's a good place to start for newbies and those who wonder "what the hell everyone is talking about" when they hear people discussing Web 2.0 and social media.

This guide should also get you thinking about how your projects can engage audiences in an online or interactive space.

A

Aggregator: A web-based tool or desktop application that collects syndicated content or a "feed".

Augmented Reality (AR): Virtual reality that combines both real and imagined images in a real-time session. In AR, most of the images are real. This is often seen during sports games where the score board, or marks indicating distance or position, are integrated with the live action. Advanced AR technology (such as computer vision or object recognition) allows information about the surrounding real world of the user to become interactive and digitally usable.

B

Bandwidth: A data transmission rate; the maximum amount of information (bits/second) that can be transmitted along a channel.

Blog: Derived from the words “Web log”, blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or multimedia such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Blogroll: An assembly of blog URLs – blogs that the blogger is influenced by or reads regularly. The blogroll is usually displayed in the sidebar of the blog

C

Cloud Computing (or “the cloud”): The growing phenomenon of users who can access their own data from anywhere because it’s stored on the internet (such as gmail or Flickr) rather than being tied to a particular device.

Content Management Systems (CMS): Software suites offering the ability to create static web pages, document stores, blogs, wikis, and other tools. A CMS allows you to prepare and publish information online, without needing to prepare HTML code.

Crowdsourcing: Harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of those outside an organisation who are prepared to contribute their time online by providing content and solving problems.

D

Downstream: To send information from a network to the user.

E

Electronic Programming Guide (EPG): An application that allows the viewer to interactively select their television programming. EPG allows the viewer to also access summaries of shows, set recording times, show programme length and names of crew members, and select content via categories. More advanced EPG (also called Interactive Programming Guides -IPGs) applications enable the viewer to select shows to record over several weeks every time a show or a selected movie star appears on the schedule. Ultimately, EPGs will enable TV sets to learn the viewing habits of its user and suggest viewing schedules.

Embedding: Adding code to a website, provided by a source website (such as Flickr or You Tube) so that a video or photo originally found in one place can be displayed at another site. Many users embed videos or photos on their blogs while they are still being hosted by the original site.

F

Feed: Online content from various sites delivered to you at regular intervals, such as latest articles from a blog. This means you can read, view or listen to items from blogs and other RSS-enabled sites without visiting actually the site. You subscribe to an aggregator or newsreader. Feeds contain the content of an item and any associated tags without the design or structure of a web page.

G

Geotagging: The addition of location-based “metadata” to media such as photos, video, twitter entries, blogs or online maps. Geotagging can help users find a variety of businesses and services based by location.

H

Hashtag: A community driven convention for adding context to tweets. Similar to how you tag images on Flickr, you add them at the end of your twitter post by prefixing a word with a hash symbol (#). This enables users to have a dialogue about specific subjects. During the Federal election the hashtag #ausvotes became one of the most relevant twitter conversations and engaged a significant number of users posting about the same topic.

High-Definition Television (HDTV): Higher quality signal resolution using a digital format for the transmission and reception of TV signals. HDTV provides about five times more picture information (picture elements or pixels) than conventional television, creating clarity, wider aspect ratio, and digital quality sound.

HTML: The acronym for “HyperText Markup Language”, HTML is the predominant markup language for websites. To the non-initiated it can look like goobledy gook, however it provides a structure for each page and the symbols represent everything from font size, colour, type, background and spacing. Most people use a Content Management System (CMS) to edit web pages.

Hypervideo: A video stream that is displayed via embedded, user clickable anchors on a page, which allows navigation between the video and other online elements. Hypervideo combines video with a non linear information structure, allowing you to make choices based on the content of the video you’re your interests.

I

Interactive television (ITV or iTV): Describes a number of techniques that allow viewers to interact with television content as they view it.

Internet Protocol (IP): A connectionless protocol that allows data to be communicated across the internet. The data, referred to as “packets” is taken from the source host and delivered to the destination host solely based on their IP addresses.

Internet Protocol Television (IPTV): A system where a digital television service is delivered using internet protocol over a network, which may include delivery by a broadband connection. The television content, instead of being delivered through traditional broadcast and cable formats, is received by the viewer through the technologies used for computer networks.

K

Kismet: You’re reading this social media and interactive glossary - it must be fate!

L

Links: Highlighted text or images that, when clicked, jump you from one web page or item of content to another. Linking is another aspect of sharing, by offering additional content that acknowledges the value of other's people's contributions by linking to them.

Listening: The art of skimming feeds and blogs to see what topics are bubbling up. This can include setting up searches that monitor when you or your organisation is mentioned, such as with Google Alerts.

M

Mashup: A content mashup contains multiple types of media drawn from other sources to create a new work. Digital mashups allow individuals or businesses to create new content by combining multiple online content sources.

Meme: In the context of blogs and other kinds of personal web sites it's a list of questions that you saw and decided to answer on your own blog or social media page. Then someone else finds your online answers and decides to answer their own list on their blog or social media page. Eventually the same set of questions appear in numerous places with personal answers attached. Sometimes people or friends are tagged within the meme, indicating that they are being asked to answer the questions.

Metadata: Refers to any information that describes a media item such as a video, photo or blog post. This could include titles, descriptions, tags and captions.

Middleware: A software programme that functions as a link between two other programs, such as a web server and a database program. The intention is to connect software components or applications.

Micro-blogging: A form of blogging where the entries or posts are limited to a certain number of characters or words, such as Twitter.

Multiplatform: A software program that is developed for multiple operating systems.

N

Networks: Structures defined by nodes and the connections between them. In social networks the nodes are people, and the connections are the relationships that they have. Networking is the process by which you develop and strengthen those relationships.

O

Open Source Software: Source code that is freely available online that can be used within any computer software. It is made available with the understanding that users can study, change, and improve the software, and redistribute it in a modified or unmodified form. It is often developed in a public, collaborative manner. The meaning of open source has also begun to embrace other meanings, such as open source journalism or open source politics. What it's really referring to is the practice of collaboration and free sharing. Some recognisable open-source projects are the Linux operating system, the Apache Web server and the Firefox browser.

P

Platform: The framework or system within which online tools work. The platform could be a mobile phone or a piece of software with different modules such as blogs, forums, and wikis in a suite of tools. As more and more tools operate on the web, rather than on your desktop, people refer to “the internet” as the platform.

Podcasts: Online audio or visual recordings syndicated (usually episodically) on the internet and available to download to portable media players such as an iPod or through an RSS feed.

Q

Quantcast: A media measurement company that assesses the amount of traffic website receives, as well as data about the readership (demographics, psychographics, etc.) The web analytics service allows users to view audience statistics for millions of websites.

R

Real-Time Search: Real-time search is the concept of searching for and finding information online as it’s produced. The increase in use of social media combined with ever-evolving search technology coupled enable online activities to be reported as they occur. A traditional web search crawls and indexes web pages periodically and returns results based on relevance to the search query.

RSS: Short for Really Simple Syndication, RSS allows you to subscribe to a blog or other social media and for updated content to be delivered by an online feed. An RSS feed is a standardized page that includes full or summarized text, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorship. Web feeds allow publishers to syndicate content automatically and enables readers to subscribe to timely updates from frequently visited websites or to aggregate feeds from many sites into one place. RSS feeds can be read using software called an “RSS reader”, “feed reader”, “aggregator” or from a desktop or mobile-device.

S

Search Engine Marketing (SEM): A series of online strategies that, combined with SEO, helps to attract customers and generate brand awareness. SEM (sometimes called search marketing) is aimed at increasing a websites visibility typically through the purchase of pay-per-click ads and paid inclusion.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The process of editing and organising your website so it has the best chance of appearing near the top of search engine rankings for specific searches. The most common ways of optimising websites is to edit the contents, use significant words in the metadata and tags, and improving the site’s layout and design.

Social Media Marketing: Social media marketing is a term that describes use of social networks, online communities, blogs, wikis, or any other online collaborative media for marketing, sales, public relations and customer service.

Social Media Monitoring: Social media monitoring is monitoring and responding to social media mentions related to a business or brand.

Social Mention: Social Mention is a free social media search and analysis platform that aggregates user generated content from across the Web into a single stream of information.

Social Networking: Being part of an online community. A typical social network such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace or Bebo allows you to create a profile, add friends, communicate with other members and add your own media.

Streaming media: A video or audio file that can be watched or listened to online, but can't be stored permanently. This is sometimes also called webcasting. Traditional media companies like to stream their programmes so that they can't be distributed freely onto file-sharing networks

T

Tags: Keywords added to a blog post, bookmark, video or photo so you and others can find them easily through searches and aggregation. Tags enable search engines to capture information about web pages easily.

Tweet: A post on twitter. A Tweet is generally recognised as a noun, however people disagree on whether you "tweet" or "twitter" as a verb. RT stands for "retweet", which is added to the tweet if you are reposting another person's tweet.

Tweetup: A gathering of twitter users, whether formally organised or spontaneous. Users often include a hashtag, such as #tweetup or #fvaudience, when publicising a local tweetup.

Twitterverse: A "universe" of people who use twitter and their conversations that appears in that sphere. Twitterverse was preceded by the acknowledgement of a "blogosphere" to define blogs, the blogging community and all their online interconnections.

U

User Generated Content (UGC): User generated content, which can also refer to consumer generated media (CGM) or user-created content (UCC), refers to all forms of user-created materials such as blog posts, reviews, podcasts, videos, comments and more, opposed to traditional media producers such as broadcasters, advertisers and production companies.

V

Video Blog: A video blog (or vlog) is a blog the produces regular video content often around the same theme on a daily or weekly basis. An example of a successful video blog is Wine Library TV.

Viral Marketing: Viral marketing refers to marketing techniques that use pre-existing social networks to produce increases in brand awareness or to achieve other marketing objectives through self-replicating viral processes.

Video on Demand (VoD): VoD allows consumers to browse an online programme or film catalogue, to watch trailers and then select a recording for playback. The selected movie starts nearly instantaneously on your TV (via set top box) or PC. There is the ability to have trick play functionality (such as pause, slow-motion, rewind etc.) and content piracy is avoided through encryption.

W

Web 2.0: Web 2.0 is commonly associated with Web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design, and collaboration on the Web. A Web 2.0 site enables its users to interact with each other as contributors to the site's content, in contrast to web sites where users are limited to the passive viewing of information

Web Analytics: Web analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis, and reporting of Internet data for purposes of understanding and optimizing Web usage.

Webcast: A webcast is a media file distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology to distribute a single content source to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. A webcast may either be distributed live or on demand. Essentially, webcasting is "broadcasting" over the internet.

Widget: A widget is an element of a graphical user interface that displays an information arrangement changeable by the user, such as a window or text box. Widgets are used on both Web sites and blogs.

Wiki: A wiki is a website that allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked Web pages via a Web browser, enabling collaboration between users.

X

Extensible Markup Language (XML): An advanced computer language developed to complement HTML. HTML is about displaying information, while XML is about describing information.

Y

You: We can't encourage you enough to get involved and have a go. All of this is out there ready for content producers and creators to engage with. It's up to you what level you take it to.

Z

Zeitgeist: Become one with the ever growing online community and join the social media revolution.

The Who, the Where, the What...

This is a short guide to some social media and interactive tools available online. It is by no means exhaustive and the best way to understand these tools is to jump online and give them a go.

Social Media

Facebook: An online community for people to connect or re-connect with others. Enables people to share videos, pictures and information about themselves. One of the fastest growing social networks of the past two years.

LinkedIn: A professional online community used to network with fellow professionals; an online curriculum vitae sharing site.

MySpace: A site where people can meet others with similar interests, creating online communities by sharing videos, photos, and personal information.

Microblogging

Flickr: Online site for storing, sharing and commenting on photos.

Twitter - A micro-blogging community where posts and links are 140 characters or less. Users can “follow” each other as a way of subscribing to each others’ messages. Additionally, users can use the @username command to direct a message towards another Twitter user.

Tumblr: Tumblr lets users share content in the form of a blog. Users can post text, photos, quotes, links, music, and videos from your browser, phone, desktop, or email.

Twitter Related Services

Tweetdeck: A browser that you can download to view and interact with multiple real-time social networking feeds from their contacts on Facebook, Twitter and MySpace.

TweetFeel: Gathers recent tweets mentioning a search term and evaluates those tweets for positive and negative sentiment.

TweetMeme: A service that analyses tweets in real-time to determine the most popular links that are currently being shared, also allowing users to search and share links.

Tweet on the Street: Searches tweets in real-time to provide the latest rumors regarding both technology and celebrity news.

Twendz: Analyses posts on Twitter, using a keyword-based system to determine the real-time sentiment regarding trending topics.

Twitter Search: Twitter’s own search facility, which enables users to filter real-time information using search terms and a variety of advanced search operators.

Twitvid: A service that allows users to post videos to Twitter by creating a dedicated URL that will be included in their posts.

Trendsmap: An interactive world map that displays currently trending topics on twitter, presenting recent tweets and links for each topic.

Video sharing

YouTube: An online site for uploading and discussing videos; videos can also be embedded from YouTube onto other social media sites such as blogs or social networks. YouTube is a video-sharing web site where users can upload, share, and view videos. It is the largest video sharing site in the world.

Vimeo: A popular video sharing service in which users can upload videos to be hosted online and shared and watched by others. Vimeo user videos are often more artistic and the service does not allow commercial video content.

Livestream: A live broadcast platform, available in both free and premium packages, that allows users to stream live video anywhere on the web using a player widget.

Social news

Delicious: A social bookmarking site and a property of Yahoo! Allows users to quickly store, organize (by tags) and share favorite web pages. You can also subscribe to RSS feeds of other users and share a page specifically with another user.

Digg: Is a popular social news site that lets people discover and share content from anywhere on the Web. Users submit links and stories and the community votes them up or down and comments on them. Users can “digg” stories they like or “bury” others they don’t.

RSS or Aggregator Services

Almost.at: An news aggregator for sites such as Twitter, Flickr, Youtube in real-time. The site allows you to tag messages from other users who appear to be actually witnessing an event and that user’s future posts will be given prominence in search results.

FeedBlitz: An RSS service that makes it easy for those addicted to email.

FeedBurner: A Google tool allowing web sites, blogs and podcasts to “burn” content in a simple way for readers to subscribe (including email).

FriendFeed: An online platform that allows you to aggregate shared content in real-time. A users’ feed can be populated with content such as links, images and video, which can then be shared within groups or be published to websites, blogs or Twitter.

Google Reader: A popular aggregator, capable of reading Atom and RSS feeds online or offline.

Search Engines

Collecta: Claims to be one of the fastest real-time search engines on the web, gathering photos, videos, status updates, tweets, news articles, and blog entries as these items are posted.

CrowdEye: A real-time social search engine that allows users to see a snapshot of Twitter activity related to their search term, it also analyses tweets, retweets and links to determine important topics.

Scooper A real-time search engine that constantly indexes live updates from services such as Twitter, Flickr, Digg and Delicious.