AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:
PRIVACY POLICY AND FEATURES

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AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:
PRIVACY POLICY AND FEATURES

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ABSTRACT

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are at the heart of many people lives, and the majority of both students and adults who use them to share information, keeping contact with old friends and meeting new acquaintances. However, the increasing number of action on online services also gives a raised to privacy concerns and issues. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is investigate the two SNSs i.e. Facebook and Friendster in terms of privacy policy and features, users’ preferences and needs as well as producing a guideline for good SNSs from users design perspective. In an attempt to achieve the objectives of this study, however, two different approaches were employed; first literature has reviewed for two SNSs for the comparative analysis, and secondly quantitative approach technique was used. Online questionnaire was designed and published on the web and the respondents were able to access and sent back respectively. The survey was limited only to one hundred respondents within the Universiti Utara Malaysia. Findings from this study reveal that there are significant differences and similarities between Facebook and Friendster privacy policy and features. However, Friendster has hidden users’ identity information by default to only friends, while Facebook has made it public to everyone. Results from survey in this study indicate that most of the respondents disclose information including personal and private information with public and friends, nevertheless, many respondents prefer to share their personal and private information with friends. Although, majority of respondents are aware of privacy setting changes, while they have notable attitude toward privacy protection as well as trust. This study usher a new era towards knowledge of social networking sites and the result can be use to the body of literature on information system with emphasis on privacy policy setting and features.
DEDICATION

This project is lovingly dedicated to the memory of my father,

to my mother, brothers, and sisters
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Table of Contents

PERMISSION TO USE........................................................................................................i

ABSTRACT.........................................................................................................................ii

DEDICATION.......................................................................................................................iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT........................................................................................................iv

Table of Contents...............................................................................................................vi

List of Tables...................................................................................................................x

List of Figures..................................................................................................................xi

List of Appendices...........................................................................................................xii

List of Abbreviations.......................................................................................................xiii

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION .....................................................................................1

1.1 Overview ....................................................................................................................1

1.2 Problem Statement ....................................................................................................4

1.3 Project Questions .......................................................................................................5

1.4 Project Objectives .......................................................................................................5

1.5 Project Scope .............................................................................................................6

1.6 Significance of Study .................................................................................................6

1.7 Organisation of the Project .......................................................................................6

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW .........................................................................8

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................8

2.2 Social Networking Concepts ....................................................................................8

   2.2.1 Social Networks .................................................................................................8

   2.2.2 Social Networking Sites (SNSs) .......................................................................10

   2.2.3 History of Social Networking Sites ................................................................11

2.3 Trust on Social Networking Sites ............................................................................14

2.4 Privacy on Social Networking Sites ..........................................................................14

   2.4.1 Privacy Issue on Social Networking Sites .......................................................15

   2.4.2 Privacy Concern on Social Networking Site....................................................17

2.5 Social Networking Sites in Malaysia ........................................................................19

   2.5.1 Rise of Social networking site in Malaysia ......................................................19

   2.5.2 Social Networking Site Awareness in Malaysia ..............................................20
2.6 Facebook.com ........................................................................................................... 22
  2.6.1 Facebook Features ............................................................................................... 22
  2.6.2 Privacy Policy on Facebook .................................................................................. 33
    2.6.2.1 How Facebook Receive and Use Information .............................................. 25
    2.6.2.2 Public Information by default ....................................................................... 26
    2.6.2.3 Deleting and Deactivating Account on Facebook ....................................... 26
      2.6.2.3.1 Deactivate .................................................................................................. 26
      2.6.2.3.2 Deleting .................................................................................................... 27
  2.7 Friendster.com ........................................................................................................ 27
    2.7.1 Friendster Features ............................................................................................ 28
    2.7.2 Privacy Policy on Friendster .............................................................................. 29
      2.7.2.1 How Friendster Receive and Use Information ........................................... 29
      2.7.2.2 Other Information Submitted by Members to Friendster ....................... 29
      2.7.2.3 Display of Members' Information ................................................................. 30
      2.7.2.4 Security ......................................................................................................... 30
      2.7.2.5 Third Party Advertising ............................................................................... 31
      2.7.2.6 Members Located Outside of Malaysia ...................................................... 31
  2.8 Summary ................................................................................................................ 31

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .......................................................... 32
  3.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 32
  3.2 Study Design .......................................................................................................... 32
  3.3 Comparative Analysis ............................................................................................ 32
  3.4 Online Survey ........................................................................................................ 33
  3.5 Source of Data ....................................................................................................... 34
    3.5.1 Population of Study ........................................................................................... 34
    3.5.2 Sample Size ....................................................................................................... 35
  3.6 Design of the Survey .............................................................................................. 36
    3.6.1 Instrumentation design ...................................................................................... 36
  3.7 Pilot Test .................................................................................................................. 38
  3.8 Method of Data collection ...................................................................................... 41
  3.9 Data Analysis ......................................................................................................... 42
3.9.1 Descriptive analysis ................................................................. 42
3.10 Summary ................................................................................. 42

CHAPTER FOUR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ............................................ 43
4.1 Introduction .............................................................................. 43
4.2 Popular Features on Two Social Networking Sites ......................... 43
4.3 Discussion/Analysis .................................................................. 46
  4.3.1 Categories under Comparative Study ...................................... 47
    4.3.1.1 Identity Information Disclosure ...................................... 47
    4.3.1.2 Networking Features ...................................................... 49
    4.3.1.3 Security ....................................................................... 51
    4.3.1.4 Advertising .................................................................. 52
      4.3.1.4.1 Social Ads ............................................................... 52
      4.3.1.4.2 Third-party application ............................................ 52
    4.3.1.5 Data Retention .............................................................. 52
    4.3.1.6 Collection of Non-User Personal Information ................... 53
    4.3.1.7 Account Deletion .......................................................... 53
      4.3.1.7.1 Deactivate ............................................................... 53
      4.3.1.7.2 Deleting ................................................................. 53
4.4 Summary .................................................................................. 57

CHAPTER FIVE ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS ......................................... 58
5.1 Introduction .............................................................................. 58
5.2 Response rate .......................................................................... 58
5.3 Statistical Analysis .................................................................... 58
  5.3.1 Section A: Social Networking Sites Characteristics .................. 59
    5.3.1.1 General Information ...................................................... 59
    5.3.1.2 Personal Information on Profile ..................................... 66
  5.3.2 Section B: Identity Information Disclosure and Networking Features..... 69
    5.3.2.1 Identity Information Disclosure ...................................... 69
      5.3.2.1.1 Sharing Information with Family .............................. 70
      5.3.2.1.2 Networking Features .............................................. 75
  5.3.3 Section C: Privacy and Data Security Concern .......................... 80
List of Tables

Table 2.1: The penetration rate in Asian countries .................................................. 20
Table 2.2: Facebook Privacy Policy Statements ...................................................... 24
Table 3.1: Summary of the Survey ........................................................................... 37
Table 3.2: Reliability Analysis ................................................................................ 41
Table 4.1: Common Features on two social networking sites .............................. 43
Table 4.2: Illustrating the comparative study between Facebook and Friendster in terms of privacy settings ................................................................. 54
Table 5.1: Respondent Social Networking Sites Characteristics ......................... 59
Table 5.2: Types of SNSs used by the users ............................................................ 60
Table 5.3: SNS Frequency of Usage ....................................................................... 61
Table 5.4: Types of People allowed to Access User’s SNS ..................................... 63
Table 5.5: Purpose of Using SNSs .......................................................................... 64
Table 5.6: Action Taken by Respondent on the misused of Information on SNSs ....... 66
Table 5.7: Personal Information on Profile ............................................................. 67
Table 5.8: Identity Information Disclosure with Family ....................................... 70
Table 5.9: Identity Information Disclosure with Friends ....................................... 71
Table 5.10: Identity Information Disclosure with Friends of Friends .................... 72
Table 5.11: Identity Information Disclosure with Stranger/Public ....................... 74
Table 5.12: Respondents toward Sharing NewsFeed/Updates on SNSs ................. 75
Table 5.13: Respondents toward Chatting Online on SNSs .................................... 76
Table 5.14: Respondents toward Searching their Profile on SNSs ......................... 77
Table 5.15: Respondents toward Receiving Message on SNSs ............................. 78
Table 5.16: Respondents toward subscribing their Profile on SNSs ..................... 79
Table 5.17: Respondents toward Add profile on SNSs ......................................... 80
Table 5.18: Respondents toward Privacy and Data Security Concern on SNSs ....... 81
Table 5.19: Respondents toward Privacy Settings on SNSs .................................... 84
Table 5.20: Respondents toward Privacy Policy on SNSs ...................................... 85
Table 5.21: Respondents toward Sharing Information with Third-Party ................ 86
Table 5.22: Respondent Demographic Characteristics .......................................... 88
List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Illustrating how group of individuals are connected socially ............................. 9
Figure 2.2: Timeline of the launch dates of many major SNSs ........................................ 13
Figure 3.1: The Research Design Methodology Framework ............................................ 33
Figure 5.1: Representation of SNSs mostly use ................................................................ 60
Figure 5.2: Representation of the Respondent Time Using Social Networking Sites ........ 62
Figure 5.3: Social Networking Sites Mostly Use ................................................................. 65
Figure 5.4: Representation of the Respondent Including Information on Profile .............. 69
Figure 5.5: Respondents toward Privacy and Data Security Concern on SNSs .............. 83
Figure 5.6: Representation of the Respondent Age Distribution ....................................... 89
Figure 5.7: Representation of the Respondent Gender Distribution ................................. 89
Figure 5.8: Representation of the Respondent College Name Distribution ....................... 90
## List of Appendices

Appendix A: Online Survey ................................................................. 108
Appendix B: Reliability Analysis ....................................................... 116
Appendix C: Descriptive Analysis ..................................................... 133
List of Abbreviations

SN: Social Network

SNS: Social Networking Site

UUM: University Utara Malaysia

SD: Standard Deviation

N: Sample of respondents

%: Percentage

Min: Minimum

Max: Maximum

Q: Question
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

“Social technologies never have predictable and absolute positive or negative effects, which is why social scientists dread questions like these. In considering the effects of social network sites, it is clear that there are many challenges to work through -- the increasing commercialization of this space, the need to construct strong privacy protections for users, and safety issues -- but I believe the benefits we receive as a society provided by these tools far outweigh the risks.”

(Ellison, 2008)

The evaluation of the Internet to its current phase commonly known as Web 2.0 has brought more opportunities as well as challenges for social application. One of the major opportunities is the wide availability of new online applications commonly described as Social Media and particular new online networking environments known as Social Networking Sites (SNSs) (Constantinides, at al., 2010). These Social Media have changed the way that keep people communicate, share information, publish, and create new knowledge, which can be done by promoting two ways communication between user and web content on the Internet. Apparently, it has enhanced the social aspect of creating content and sharing information through community-based websites. According to Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (2009), the example of Web 2.0 applications that are widely used today are:

i. Facebook and MySpace (social networking services)

ii. Friendster (social networking services and social gaming)

iii. Wikis (collaborative content)

iv. Flickr and YouTube (multimedia sharing)

v. delicious (social tagging)

vi. LinkedIn (professional networking)

vii. Blogspot and Wordpress (blogging)
The contents of the thesis is for internal user only
REFERENCES


Utz, S., & Kramer, N. (2009). The privacy paradox on social network sites revisited: The role of individual characteristics and group norms. Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 3(2), 1-11.


