Collaborative Organizations and Social Media

Framing Collaborative Organizations and Social Media

Dhiraj Murthy, Director
Social Network Innovation Lab
7050 College Station, Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Maine, 04011-8470, USA
http://socialnetworks.bowdoin.edu/cosm
snil@bowdoin.edu
### Framing Collaborative Organizations and Social Media

- Global reach
- Cost efficiency
- Potentially democratizing?
- Fosters increased innovation?
- Successful cases (e.g. virtual learning environments, music production, and software development in virtual teams)
The State of the Field

- In its infancy
- Weak in theoretical development
- Sometimes disconnected empirical work
- Quite established in our understandings of social movements and social activism (e.g. OWS and the Arab Spring)
Non-HCI and CSCW fields often see social media as more for ‘entertainment purposes’ rather than serious collaboration

There is a need to further the argument of ‘ecologies of communication’ (Turner 2010)

Different communication mediums are optimized for different tasks

Social media can be seen as ‘augmenting’ other, ‘traditional’ media (Jurgenson 2012)
Collaboration by Tweet?

- My own work has studied social media and scientific collaboration
- Twitter seems to be particularly useful for fleshing out project ideas with a network of latent ties
- Twitter seems useful for connecting/finding potential collaborators
- Twitter can provide a ‘mini peer-review’ of works in progress. It can act as a staging area for what will become publications.
- Twitter can provide input from senior figures who one would not contact via e-mail or other mediums
Collaboration by Tweet?

- @twytcf @chirajmurthy @bodyspacesoc but it is often at the expense of the variety of uses that do not perform direct relationships
- View conversation

- @twytcf @chirajmurthy @bodyspacesoc twitter appears to be a super source to draw social graphs because it's easy to catch the data, but... 1/2
- View conversation

- @twytcf @chirajmurthy @bodyspacesoc it wld be sad to miss the collective use of a # under the pretext that it doesn't give 'relations' by itself
- View conversation

- @twytcf @chirajmurthy @bodyspacesoc that's why I never start to draw a graph by 'cleaning' the isolated nodes, as it is often done 1/2
- View conversation
Barriers to Social Media and Collaboration

• Barriers include: a lack of technical knowledge (57%), prohibitive company policies (41%), and the amount of time needed to manage social media (TEC Project Report 2011)

• Conservativism in certain organizational contexts

• Intellectual Property/Copyright Protection

• Archival Issues

• Richness of media issues (i.e. Media Richness Theory which prioritizes face-to-face communication)
Some References