SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT

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About me

• Associate Professor at Vestfold University College, Norway, Faculty of Business and Social Science
• Research group: Regional innovation
• Since 2004, research on:
  • e-democracy, e-participation, e-government
  • Public sector innovation
Content

• Some observations, but also based on:
  • Two research projects
  • Collaboration with municipalities
Web 2.0

• Collaboration
• Sharing
• Interoperability
• User-centered design

• Fun
Web 2.0

- Primarily tools for individuals
- But not only..
The Web 2.0 world

- Blogs
- Twitter
- Facebook, LinkedIn, Plaxo
- YouTube
- Flicr
- Wiki
Users of Web 2.0

• Individuals
• Organizations
• Politicians
• Government
• Business
Why is Web 2.0 interesting?

• Web 2.0 has regular users
• What web sites have regular users?
• NOT MANY!
• Most web sites have only sporadic users, e.g. municipal web sites.
• Information on demand
Why is Web 2.0 interesting

- Newspaper web sites attract regular users
- Social media also attract regular users
- Some users access such web sites several times a day.
Web 2.0 mission

• The whole motivation for Web 2.0 is based on individuals:
  • Sharing
  • Collaboration
• But is there a potential for business and governments
• YES! DEFINITLY!
Web 2.0 opportunities

- Innovation
- Customers may take part in product development
- Citizens may take part in policy making
- Web 2.0 may be the facilitator
Some Norwegian numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>1.156.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nettby (Net city)</td>
<td>818.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>453.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biip.no</td>
<td>426.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>215.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origo</td>
<td>130.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>46.675</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: webMagasin, 04/2009, based on research by Halogen
New groups of users

- Recent report on national TV:
- The older are taking over Facebook
Steps in utilizing social media

A maturity model approach

- Build network
- Inform network
- Mobilize network
- Interact with network
Politicians

• More than individuals..
• Politicians have embraced the internet
• Obama campaign, fundraising
• Norwegian prime minister
• What they use:
  • Blogs
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • YouTube
Business utilization

• Use social media to know your customers
• Inform them about new products and services
• Mobilize them through campaigns
• Interact with them to get feedback
Business utilization

- It is impossible to ignore social media
- Your products or services are discussed
- From observation to dialogue
Government utilization

- Show the value of registering
- Inform them
- Mobilize them
- Interact with the citizens
Blogging project

• Municipal elections 2007
• Context: Revitalization of democracy through directly elected mayors
• Vestfold county: 5 municipalities was selected as participants
• 32 candidates for mayor
Why blogging

• Unfiltered opinions
• No discrimination
• Immediate dissemination
• Possible interaction with voters
Numbers

- 31 out of 32 candidates used blogs
- 395 articles during the pre-election period
- 153 comments from readers (strict rules!)
- 4261 unique IP addresses
- 75000 page accesses to individual blogs
- 25000 page accesses to summaries
What we learned

• Dissemination is the biggest motivator
• Created some headlines in regional and local media (Press/local radio used blogs)
• Support organization was necessary
• Small impact on election result, but some citizens gave nice feedback
Municipalities on Facebook

• Two sources:
  • Collaboration with City of Larvik, Norway
  • Research on uptake by municipalities since February 2009
Municipalities on Facebook

• The number of municipalities using Internet as a communication channel with their citizens is steadily increasing.
• Data collected by the author in November 2009 showed that 26 Norwegian municipalities were actively using Facebook to interact with and inform their citizens.
• Alltogether 73 municipalities were present on Facebook, but the remaining profiles were either established by third-parties or used for employees.
Case example: City of Larvik, Norway

- November 2008, discussion and implementation
- Target group: Age 18 to 30
- Targeted information
  - First use: To inform about a course for young mothers
  - DEMO
Mobilization

- Oil spill accident: Asking for volunteers
- Getting volunteers to read for old people
Interaction

• Ask what the citizens want
• This is particularly relevant to planning processes
Oops

• If you do not have a strategy, you may find yourself in a strange position
• Research on Municipalities on Facebook
• Very interesting results
The Dark Side of Social Media

• Everyone is watching you..
• Identity becomes relative..
• EXAMPLE / DEMO
• Abuse
• Social exclusion
What’s next

• Wiki has a great potential