



Social Media and Some Notes When Using

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ABSTRACT: The world currently exists, moves and develops as a "flat world", which is both unified, contradictory, cooperative and struggling. Participating in that process is the great role of the mass media, which is now the power of multimedia and, more specifically, social media. Thanks to the exploitation and application of outstanding achievements of information technology, social media exists on digital platforms with many faces. However, besides the outstanding advantages compared to other types of multimedia communication, social media also has disadvantages that users need to be aware of when using. The article is going to investigate the relationship between social media and social networks. Besides, a number of advantages and disadvantages of social media are also indicated clearly, which serves as the basis for the author to propose certain measures to improve the social network environment as well as reduce inconvenience to users. In the article, the Code of Conduct on social networks promulgated by the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam is analyzed to help users to be aware of ethical standards of behavior on social networks as well as maintain and develop personal freedom, business freedom, and non-discriminatory service providers at home and abroad, contributing to building a safe and healthy social network in Vietnam.

KEYWORDS: Communication, multimedia communication, Social media, Social network.

The fourth industrial revolution as the foundation for social media has had a strong development, having a great impact on social life in most countries in the world and in which Vietnam is no exception. Social media has become a popular term with diverse features, bringing many advantages but also many limitations that can cause inconvenience to users.

1. The relationship between social media and social networks

Social networks were formed and appeared in the last decade of the twentieth century. Specifically, the introduction of the Classmates.com network address in 1995 opened the door for the strong development of major social networks later. After Classmates.com, it is necessary to mention prominent networking sites such as SixDegrees in 1997, Friendster in 2002, MySpace and Facebook in 2004.

According to the Oxford dictionary, a social network is a network of social interactions and personal relationships. The birth of social networks also marked the development of social relationships as well as personal relationships. Social networks became a tool to share information or something between people with the same interest.

In Vietnam, because social networks have only appeared for more than a decade now, there have been not many documents to build a theoretical framework on social networks.

According to Do Dinh Tan (2017), social network is a virtual society with two main components that make up that is the members and the connection between those members. Social network is an Internet service that allows members to connect with similar interests regardless of space and time.

There is an inclusive relationship between social media and social networks. However, in terms of conceptual content, there will be common points in technology.

Social media and social networks are both Web 2.0 websites, which allow users to create and post information. However, the term social media has a broader meaning, encompassing both media and communication content, while social networking emphasizes more on the tool used. This difference can be understood as mass media as a means to transmit information, while tools are types such as books, newspapers, advertisements, music tapes, etc. Thus, social media is a means of information transmission, and the main tools are social networking sites, such as Facebook, YouTube, Zalo, TikTok,...

In fact, social network is now called synonymous with social media and many researchers also consider social networking and social media as one. Social media uses social network as delivery channels.



2. Advantages and disadvantages of social media

Social media contributes positively to the development of people's awareness, thinking and life skills. Using social network as its main tool, social media is increasingly becoming a place to provide news and knowledge about all areas of social life. With just a few simple steps, users can always receive timely and up-to-date information on the areas and issues they care about. Besides, social media also has the form of gathering into groups and fanpage to educate people, such as communication, psychology, sports, cooking, ... Users have the basic skills needed in modern life without going to classes or paying tuition fees. Thereby, social media help people to grasp the knowledge, skills and trends of the society and apply them for work and life.

Social media is easy to use, convenient and low cost. People just download free applications on mobile devices and they can easily use social networks to carry out communication activities quickly and conveniently at low cost. This fee is only to maintain a convenient Internet connection in communication activities.

Social media meets the needs of posting people's feelings and thoughts. With a free account, users can freely post their shares, thoughts and feelings in different forms such as videos, texts, photos, etc. to satisfy the need to share information and personal preferences.

Social media spreads information rapidly and exponentially. With interactive programs integrated in social networking tools such as: Like, share, comment, tag, follow, etc., social media has allowed information to spread from one individual to thousands of other individuals and from that individual perspective to millions and hundreds of millions of others.

Social media is a source of news for the press. Social media is not only seen as superior to traditional media in many events, but it is also seen as a valuable source of information for newspapers and Internet users. According to Do Dinh Tan (2017), "According to the survey results of the American magazine PLOS One, in the US, UK and Canada, 70% of the news retrieved by traditional media appeared previously on Twitter".

Many people refer to the Internet and social networking sites as "the 5th power", after the four powers recognized by the Western world: executive, legislature, judiciary and press powers. "the 5th power" – this new power has become a great power, going beyond the administrative or technical management measures of a country. It is interesting that that power is not evenly divided among countries but focuses on large companies mainly from the US led by corporations such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

Social media has high responsiveness. With the default interactive programs available on social networking platforms, it is easy for the public to respond to information quickly and instantly. The public feedback is collected based on two results. The first result is qualitative information, which includes the number of likes, shares and views. The second result is quantitative information, which includes public comments. Thereby, managers can easily grasp and adjust their communication activities.

In Vietnam, media agencies, businesses, social organizations, and individuals all use social networks, set up fanpages or channels YouTube, Instagram, etc. to post information along with traditional media in order to attract attention and receive feedback of the public.

Information on social media is difficult to control and easy to be fabricated. Grasping the needs and tastes of the public, the advantages of social networks, media agencies have created more social media (fan page, YouTube channel, TikTok, ...) to transmit and reach, attract the interaction of the public quickly and effectively. However, this also creates the danger that these channels can be spoofed, misinformed, unidentified and difficult to control. According to vtgo.vn, VTV's 24h Motion fanpage alone has more than 200 fake pages, although the leader of the 24h Motion program contacted the owners of the fake pages to request removal, but still received no response. When reporting to facebook, many other fake pages appeared.

In order to prevent fake news sites, the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam has coordinated with media agencies to actively detect and handle those who create and distribute fake information, require social networks to implement anti-fake news measures on their platforms, as well as raise awareness of social network users. Especially, on January 12, 2021, the Department of Broadcasting, Television and Public Electronic Information announced the establishment of the Vietnam Anti Fake News Centre. The centre has the task of receiving, detecting, evaluating and labeling fake news, publishing information confirming fake news on the website <http://tingia.gov.vn>. Besides, it proactively detects information trends with a large number of people sharing and interacting to evaluate, appraise, and label fake news (if any) to warn people not to share. The centre also gives instructions on how to recognize, prevent and deal with fake news. In addition, it also provides a hotline number 18008108 to receive public feedback on the problem of fake news so that it can be resolved in a timely manner.



There is a risk of personal information being disclosed or sold to third parties. To be able to connect with the online community, users are required to expand account settings to be public. Therefore, personal information is easily stolen. This can be the cause of potential dangers to users' private lives, especially young people. There have been many cases of young people "showing off" their private lives on social networks through photos and videos. However, there are no strict regulations and they can become victims of sexual harassment, bullying by malicious rumors spread on social networks, cursing, insults, attacks, ... of pathological people.

Social media can have a negative impact on the behavior and lifestyle of users. With the rampant information on social networks, there are a lot of deviant information, such as uncultured statements, offensive comments, vulgar words, lewd images, links to unhealthy pages ... This is an incalculable danger because it has impacted and affected the psychology, behavior, lifestyle of users, especially young people.

3. Some notes when using social media

On June 17, 2021, the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam issued Decision No. 874/QĐ-BTTTT on promulgating the Code of Conduct on social networks (with 9 articles in 3 chapters). The Code is issued to create conditions for social networks in Vietnam to be maintained and developed in a healthy way, ensuring personal freedom, business freedom, and non-discriminatory service providers at home and abroad, in accordance with standards, practices and international treaties to which Vietnam has acceded. At the same time, the Code is aimed at building ethical standards of behavior on social networks, educating awareness, creating positive habits in the behavior of users on social networks, contributing to building a safe and healthy social network in Vietnam.

Thus, the Code of Conduct on social networks has actually taken effect. However, to specify the notes when using social media, users need to:

Strictly and seriously comply with the provisions of the law, namely Law on Press, Law on Cybersecurity, Code of Conduct on Social Networks and Regulations on Journalism Ethics. When using a social network, even if it is simply to communicate personal images or to promote products and services, users must first fulfill their responsibilities before the law without doing what the law prohibits. Users must be ethical and cultural when using social networks.

Behave properly in accordance with diverse and multidimensional information. Many people consider social networks to be personal diaries. However, in the virtual society, there are many complicated relationships, temptations and dangers that make it impossible for users to predict where the information will be transmitted and how it will affect them. According to Article 12 of the Law on Information Technology under Vietnamese law, statements or images that are depraved, violent, anti-national, slanderous, defamatory, etc. are prohibited. Users must be careful when speaking about politics, religion, racism, ...

With just one click, information will be posted beyond the control of individual users. With the screen capture function, both computers and mobile devices can easily capture the screen as "evidence", so it will be difficult for users to "dismiss" or deny if there is a "mistake". Therefore, it is necessary for users to be careful with their statements. The content shared on social networks must ensure that it does not violate the law, fine customs and does not bring disadvantages to users.

Be equipped with methods to deal with bad and toxic news. Information on social networks can be produced and distributed by bad people who are politically insensitive. Therefore, users need to have the knowledge and skills to distinguish real and fake information, and be careful when sharing these types of information. For example, information praising some policies of the old regimes (in fact, these policies are intended to serve the rule of colonialists, imperialists and henchmen), one-sided information, untested information related to religion, ethnicity, etc. Specific information can be inferred about regional discrimination... Because the cover of this information is attached to real details, events and individuals, viewers can easily believe it without realizing the hidden meanings or not being aware of the possibility of being misrepresented or distorted...

Ensure information security in cyberspace. Using social networks has many potential risks, such as personal information disclosure, bullying, defamation, harassment, intimidation, exploitation for personal gain, installation, account theft and distribution of computer programs that are harmful to the operation of computer networks that may affect themselves, organizations and the community. If users lack understanding and knowledge about using social networks, they may unknowingly abet the above behaviors. For example, a friend who you don't know well or haven't contacted for a long time, sends a message asking for a loan in different languages, or sends you a link asking you to click on a link to receive a valuable prize. If you are careless, you can



transfer money or click on that link. This action can make you a victim, accidentally lose money or spread viruses not only on personal computers but also on other computers in the office if there is an internal connection. When surfing Facebook, if there is a link to a porn video or curious information, people may click on it and then be attacked by a virus...

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