

ITWP 2600 – Project 4

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Lego Mindstorms

Provide a definition and compare/contrast social networking and social media.

Social networking is the act of using social media and platforms to communicate or network with others. Similar to networking in general, your goal is to form new relationships and make new friends/contacts. A lot of the time you will seek people with similar interests or goals. If you wanted to start a business for grooming dogs you could use social networking to help spread the word or find pet owners who may need their dogs groomed. Social media on the other hand are the actual sites and platforms that host the user bases. If you want a place to share your photography, you might use a site like Tumblr or Pinterest to promote your content. There are tons of social media sites aimed at all kinds of different audiences. These sites are meant to be a meet up spot where people can connect online. Overall, these two concepts are similar but social networking is the act of connecting with others while social media is just the tool you use to accomplish this. These two ideas co-exist and work off each other.

As a toy manufacturer, Lego must always be sensitive to the needs of its customers, both children and their parents, which requires the company to pay close attention to changing preferences and trends. Visit the Lego Mindstorms Web site and identify specific social networking features. Based on what you learned in this chapter, write about 200 words in which you describe current developments in social networking that Lego will need to understand as it decides whether to continue, remove, or modify the social networking features you identified. In your discussion, identify at least two specific social networking features.

Two features I found regarding social networking right off the bat were the social media site links at the bottom of the page along with their fan robot section. The Fan robot section is an overview of some of the most successful fan creations that turned into cool robots. This part of the page is supposed to be a call to action that could inspire you to submit some of your own creations or attend an event where these are being shared. On the fan page they shared details of some past events like Lego World 2014/2016. Seeing this could notify you of an upcoming event and cause you to connect with other builders or attend the event. I think the more important feature though would be the links to social media sites. Following Lego on Twitter or Facebook is a great way to stay connected and find other people with similar interests. It seems like Lego is already doing this but the best way for them to stay competitive in a growing digital landscape is to amass a social media presence and keep their young customers interested in this way.

Lego provides a complete set of instructions with this product for building the basic robots. In about 200 words, explain how a new owner of this product might learn how to build and program complex robots using social networking elements provided by Lego.

I think new customers could browse all kinds of online blogs and videos for tutorials and information about their products. If you got a certain pack, there are likely hundreds of Youtubers that are uploading videos with new or creative ideas. Channels dedicated to these Mindstorms could keep you updated and be a great educational resource. If there was a Lego Youtuber, you could follow him and stay up to date with his weekly uploads to see what's happening in the scene. Past this, you could participate in online blogs/discussion boards where you could ask questions or view posts from people who might have had similar experiences. In this digital age, social media is an invaluable resource for staying connected and learning.

In this chapter, you learned how newspapers, magazines, and broadcasters are using participatory journalism to have their readers to create news items and stories. In 200 words, outline at least five specific ways in which Mindstorms community members create value for Lego.

Mindstorm community members could easily create huge value for Lego. By attending live events and spreading the word about Lego's product they help to attract new customers and keep the space fresh and interesting. One example of this was in the fan section where there was an article about someone who created a Mindstorm that was able to set the world record for fastest Rubik's Cube 9x9x9 solve. This creation could attract a whole new audience by dipping into the Cube world. Customers could also help the brand by hosting Twitter pages, YouTube channels or Facebook groups. All three of these digital platforms could show off the product and reach out to different audiences. Even a Pinterest account showing cool pictures of Lego creations could get people interested. When a product is good, it speaks for itself and just the act of having user engagement can help to promote the brand.

Sources:

Electronic Commerce book by Gary Schneider

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-networking.asp>

<https://www.lego.com/en-us/themes/mindstorms/fanrobots>

<https://www.facebook.com/LEGO/>

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