

What is Social Networking?

Except from SmallBusinessComputing.com article, "What is Social Networking, and Why Should You Care?":

Social networking, also referred to as social media, encompasses many Internet-based tools that make it easier for people to listen, interact, engage and collaborate with each other. Social networking platforms such as [Facebook](#), [MySpace](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), blogs, message boards, [Wikipedia](#) and countless others are catching on like wildfire.

People use social networking to share recipes, photos, ideas and to keep friends updated on our lives. In many cases, you can use social networking tools from mobile devices, such as Blackberries and iPhones, as easily as from a PC or Mac.

By its very nature, social networking is interactive. You can tell anyone (that you want to talk to, and that wants to listen to you) anything about your opinions and experiences—and vice versa—through blogs, [Facebook](#) pages, videos and even 140 character messages called tweets. You can also build communities based on common interests, causes and concerns.

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Social Networking



Introduction to the world of online social networking. Learn what it is, some of the most popular websites, and how to get started.

Popular Social Networking Sites

Excerpt from PCMag.com, "Social Networking 101: A Beginner's Guide to Facebook, Twitter, Google+, & LinkedIn":



Facebook

It's home to 750 million active users (as of July 2011) who create status updates about what they're doing or thinking, share pictures, videos, messages, and links, play games, and run apps. It's a jack-of-all-trades so big that, for some, it's synonymous with the word "Internet."



LinkedIn

Some refer to it as the business version of Facebook, minus the games, of course. It focuses on the kind of networking that helps people get jobs. Your profile on LinkedIn is actually your résumé.



Google+

This social network is the new kid on the block. Google+ builds on features we've seen previously from Google, such as the status updates we saw in Google Buzz and picture sharing from Picasa, mashes them together within profiles, and integrates them in other incredibly popular Google services like Gmail.



Twitter

Though technically a micro-blogging service, Twitter does play in the social networking space. Tweets are, essentially, the same as status updates or links on Facebook; they're just limited to 140 characters. You can follow anyone and anyone can follow you, and you don't have to do anything to make this happen (unlike Facebook, where making "friends" requires approval from both sides).

Other Popular Social Media Sites



YouTube

Share and watch videos.



Yelp

User reviews and recommendations of top restaurants, shopping, nightlife, entertainment, services and more.



TripAdvisor

Unbiased hotel reviews, photos and travel advice for hotels and vacations. Compare prices with just one click.



Wikipedia

The free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Getting Started

First, decide what you want to do. Some examples are:

- Get in touch with old (or make new) friends or family
- Network with other professionals
- Find reviews of businesses
- Find a good recipe
- Join an online community (that may also meet in person)

Those are just a few possible things you can do with social media.

Once you decide what you want to accomplish, the next step would be to choose an appropriate social media website to join.

Go to the website. Most social media sites require you to register. However, many sites only require you to register if you wish to contribute content.

Registering usually involves creating a profile which will identify who you are. If you are concerned with sharing your personal information, you can usually provide the minimum, which may include your name, location, and an email address.