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Social Networking

3 trends

are driving change

- Exhibitionism
- Voyeurism
- The erosion of formality

Three Key Social Trends

Exhibitionism

Far more people believe their personal experience and point-of-view not only should be made available by others but will be valued by others than at any time.

The examples are everywhere, from “American Idol” to blogging to YouTube to Flickr.

It is more than just shooting for 15 minutes of fame. People are growing to expect a sustained public voice. It has become part of the fabric of self image and self-worth.

Three Key Social Trends

Voyeurism

The trend is a natural companion of exhibitionism.

People enjoy watching the extremely personal content generated by their peers and of celebrities, public officials, and business leaders.

They not only enjoy it, they feel it is their right to see it.

Three Key Social Trends

The Decline of Formality

Because people feel that their voice counts they expect direct access to others, no matter who they are. They expect dialog with elected officials, business executives, their physicians, and others in a way that we could not have imagined even 15 years ago.

With this erosion of formal distance has come an erosion in civility. Online discourse is more than just conversational and informal, at times it is shockingly uncivil.

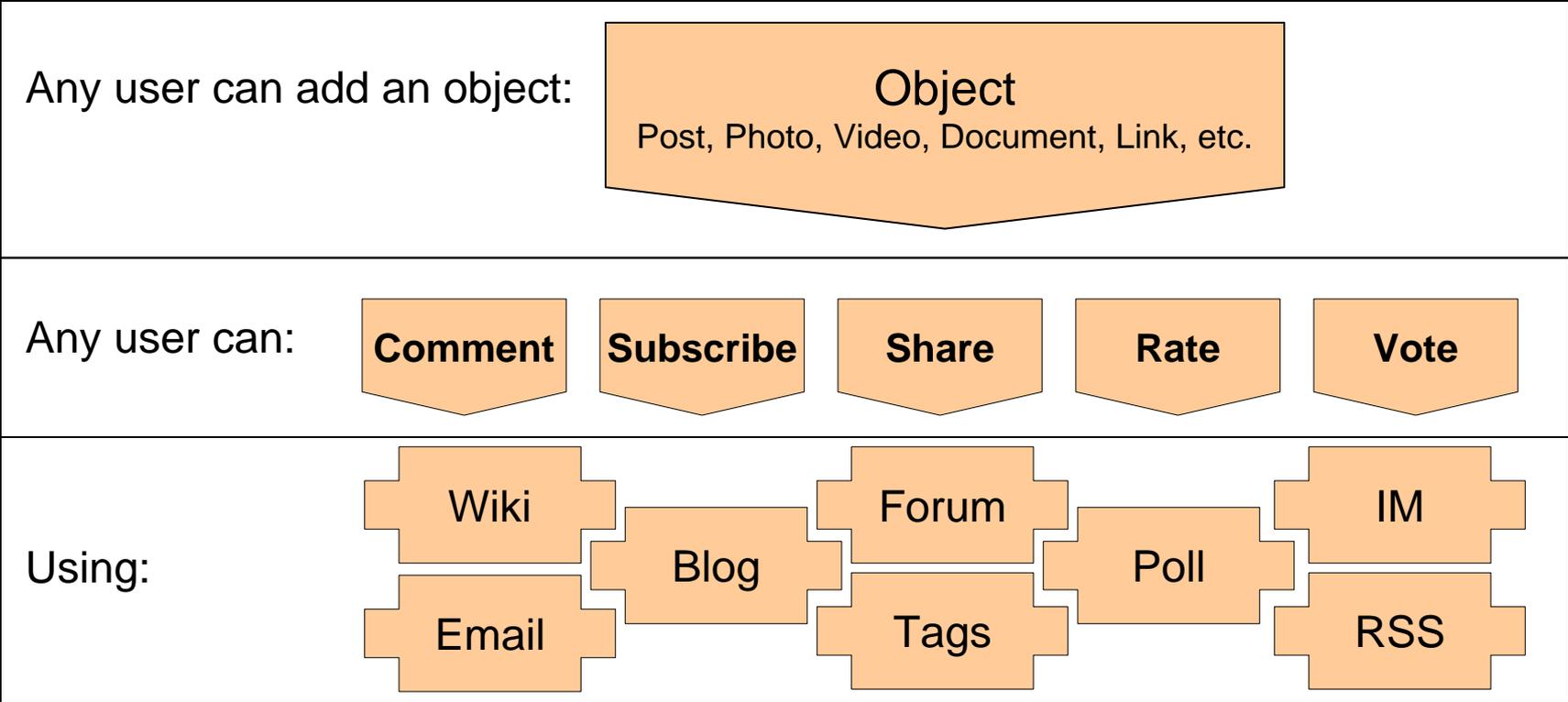
This can not be blamed solely on the ability to remain anonymous online. Online anonymity has become less feasible, and in a society that values exhibitionism, less desirable.

Three Key Social Trends

These trends fuel the growth of social networks and consumer generated content.

They also challenge norms and comfort zones, but it is the new reality, one that requires immersion and understanding.

Social Networking



Search

Google doesn't care what your site looks like when it ranks search results.

How does your site drive search engine visibility?

- Frequent content updates
- Lots of inbound links
- Lots of outbound links

Search

The broader your online presence the more visibility and traffic you will generate.

How can you go beyond your site to create more touch points? More links? More front doors?

- Upload photos to Flickr and then embed them into your site
- Upload video to YouTube and embed it into your site
- Link to posts and stories about you, your band, your projects
- Create a network of sites that link together, leverage social media sites:
 - Create a page on MySpace, post regularly
 - Create a page and a group on Facebook, post regularly
 - LinkedIn is a smart option for artists to host their CV and make connections

Authenticity

Authenticity has become an important currency online, people are looking for, and expecting, a more personal connection online.

How does your site allow your audience to learn more about you? What insight into your work, your process, yourself does the site provide?

- Posts about the creative process
- Follow-up posts after shows or openings
- Behind the scenes photos and videos

Call and Response

The best way to generate interaction with your audience is to provide a call-to-action on your site.

How does your site encourage your audience to connect?

- Answer a poll
- Submit photos
- Comment on a post or photo

Evangelize

Your audience can be a powerful source of word-of-mouth marketing.

How does your site encourage your fans to evangelize?

- Graphics to host on their page(s)
- Music plug-ins to host your music host on their page(s)
- A reason to email their friends (about an opening or concert)

Privilege

You can encourage fan interest and loyalty by creating special opportunities for fans.

How do you use your site to provide special offers to fans?

- Come backstage at a show or attend a rehearsal
- Have a signed CD waiting for them at the door
- Read a message from them during the show
- Attend a special preview for an opening
- Tour the studio
- Even an invitation to a public event from the artist conveys a sense of privilege to fans

Publishing tools

Social media tools make designing and maintaining a site easy, don't make things harder than they need to be.

The easiest way to build a site these days is with a blog.

- WordPress and TypePad are the leaders, although there are many options
- Publishing pages and posts is very easy, removing a major barrier to keeping the site updated
- Blog software generates RSS feeds, allowing individuals and other sites to subscribe to your content, and allowing you to feed content from one site to another
- Most provide simple integration points with other popular social media sites/tools, including Flickr, YouTube, MySpace, ...
- Gallery plug-ins make it very easy to add and organize images

Design

Visual design does matter, but very subjective. Whatever design you pursue, make sure it is functional.

Can your audience find what they need on your site?

- Preview images load quickly because they are not too large
- User's don't need special plug-ins to get basic information
- The navigation is persistent (it doesn't change method and location from page to page)
- Don't link to the sites from your global navigation
- Don't animate for the sake of animating

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Awareness

We have found that for many of our clients generating awareness in the new landscape is a product of:

- Social media/consumer-generated media
- Media relations
- Blogger relations

What does this mean to you?

- Interact online, reach out to fans, peers, and influencers
- The online writer can be as important to you as a print-based journalist, and often one is a path to the other