INNOVATION, NETWORKS & MEDIA

“Charting Collections of Connections in Social Media: Creating Maps and Measures with NodeXL”

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September 22, 2011
3:00-4:15pm
GRIS 180

Marc Smith is a sociologist specializing in the social organization of online communities and computer-mediated interaction. Smith leads the Connected Action consulting group in Silicon Valley, California. Smith co-founded the Social Media Research Foundation, a non-profit devoted to open tools, data, and scholarship related to social media research. He has co-edited two books: “Communities in Cyberspace,” a collection of essays exploring the ways identity, interaction and social order develop in online groups; and “Analyzing Social Media Networks with NodeXL: Insights from a Connected World,” a guide to mapping connections created through computer-mediated interactions. Smith received his M.Phil. in social theory from Cambridge University and Ph.D. in Sociology from UCLA. He is currently a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Media-X Program at Stanford University.

ABSTRACT

Networks are a data structure commonly found across all social media services that allow populations to author collections of connections. The Social Media Research Foundation NodeXL project makes analysis of social media networks accessible to most users of the Excel spreadsheet application. With NodeXL, Networks become as easy to create as pie charts. Applying the tool to a range of social media networks has already revealed the variations present in online social spaces. A review of the tool and images of Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and email networks will be presented.

With Support Provided By:
The Brian Lamb School of Communication
E2020: Innovation Through Design Grant

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