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The Use of "Facebook" to Build an LIS Student Learning Community

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the using behavior of social network to build LIS learning community of Maharakham University's undergraduate students. The results demonstrated that, before participated into the research, most of the undergraduate students have their own Facebook accounts and all of them could access the Internet. The highest frequency of using Facebook was 7 days per week while the duration of use was around 1-3 hours. Most of undergraduate students agreed that it was more convenient to follow up and they could ask some inquiries all the time. They were also satisfied to know and talk to other students studying the same subject or having similar questions. When they had any inquiries or would like to update information, they would read wall posts of their lecturers and curriculums to check news, announcements and assignments. Moreover, they used chat function to communicate or ask their lecturers or friends their questions with. To the problems and obstacles of the use of Facebook, nevertheless, most of undergraduate students felt that it was unsafe and they were afraid that their information would be revealed. Besides, they had to follow up the information from too many people because not all of lecturers used Facebook.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, an online social network has played an important role as a medium of communication to make new friends beyond boundaries. It is easy to receive, share, connect and access the information on the online social network (Rosson et al., 2009). Then, it has become a new trend to gather people who are interested in the same things. It is also applied as a tool to show the power, both positively and negatively. Particularly Facebook, with over 5 million accounts worldwide, it has empirical influence on several positive and negative phenomenon. In addition, the online social network such as Twitter or Facebook is applied as an area to build the learning community or advertisements for many products, services or business operations. It can quickly approach

numerous consumers, which can lead to tremendous business value. The users can endlessly convey stories to their friends or other persons in their own network as well.

Similar to current Thai society, the online social network has become popular among the students, working-age people or even organisations and companies. It is adapted as another method to approach target customers. For instance, Facebook or Twitter providing free accounts attracts a lot of people at all ages because of fast communication without any limitations of time and place. Teenagers mostly use this kind of channels to contact and make an appointment with their friends, send the information, create special groups for those having the same interest, as well as share images and stories to other people.

Recently, the online social network has played significant role in people's lives. Various organizations or companies have adjusted the online social network for their benefits. The free online social networks allow the persons to access the information faster until it becomes a community. Some groups or organizations are established to exchange the information from each other, for example, meeting, important assignment, and etc. Similarly, the online social network is utilized to the LIS to build the learning community in a visual world of the online social network which has increasing influence on the undergraduate students' daily life, especially librarians. Unlike the past, the librarians do not have old-fashioned personality and live with piles of books anymore. This occupation has changed a lot in the present world because they have to always develop their skills for all types of information technology to apply to libraries. They must have depth of insight, specific knowledge and understanding to implement the information technology to manage the information such as sourcing, storage and distribution. Additionally, they must be able to instruct users to learn and understand the information technology used for data search (Chowsilpa, 1996). To benefit and facilitate the users as much as possible, therefore, the LIS learning community is used to communicate and exchange the knowledge from each other. Besides, this community will help improve other skills as follows:

Information Exchange: It is beneficial to exchange the information and news between the users on the online social network such as text, image, sound, video, and etc. The users do not need to search for original files like the past. They just share and publish of contents in the visual community and other members can access the same information as well.

Information Technology: It is applied to access the information of the LIS learning community in the visual world. Also, it is helpful to improve the skill and proficiency leading to positive effect on the knowledge implementation for the information service in the future.

Language: The skill of using correct and appropriate language, both Thai and English, can be enhanced in the visual community. The information should be sent with precise meaning for the same understanding without error, distorted language, impolite and informal language to avoid deviation and distortion of information.

Morality and Ethics: The use of online social network to build the learning community must be concordant with rules. The users must realize the importance of published information if it is correct and suitable.

2. Objectives

- To examine behaviors and patterns of the use of social network to build the LIS learning community.
- To inspect problems and obstacles of the use of social network to build the LIS learning community.

3. Methodology

This is an exploratory research applying an observation and content analysis. The steps of research are listed as below:

1. Study literature related to the research.
2. Analyze the contents, texts and opinions on Facebook to create a questionnaire.
3. Design research tool which is the questionnaire to survey the behavior of Facebook usage as part of the LIS learning community. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts as follows:

Part 1: Personal status of respondents including gender, year of study and educational stream

Part 2: Questionnaire on the behavior of the use of online social network with single choice (single answer)

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