THE NATURE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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SOCIAL MEDIA MEGA SITES

SOCIAL MEDIA VISITOR GROWTH

REGISTERED USERS

1.15B
1.06B
845M
608M
500M · 554.7M
350M · 400* MILLION REGISTERED USERS · 500 MILLION REGISTERED USERS
1 BILLION REGISTERED USERS

150M
50M · 26M · 150M · 150M
12M
1M · 5.5M · 6M · 8M · 1M · 10M · 30M · 80M · 70M · 48.7M · 11.7M

2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

FACEBOOK   TWITTER   GOOGLE+   PINTEREST   INSTAGRAM
* GMAIL USERS
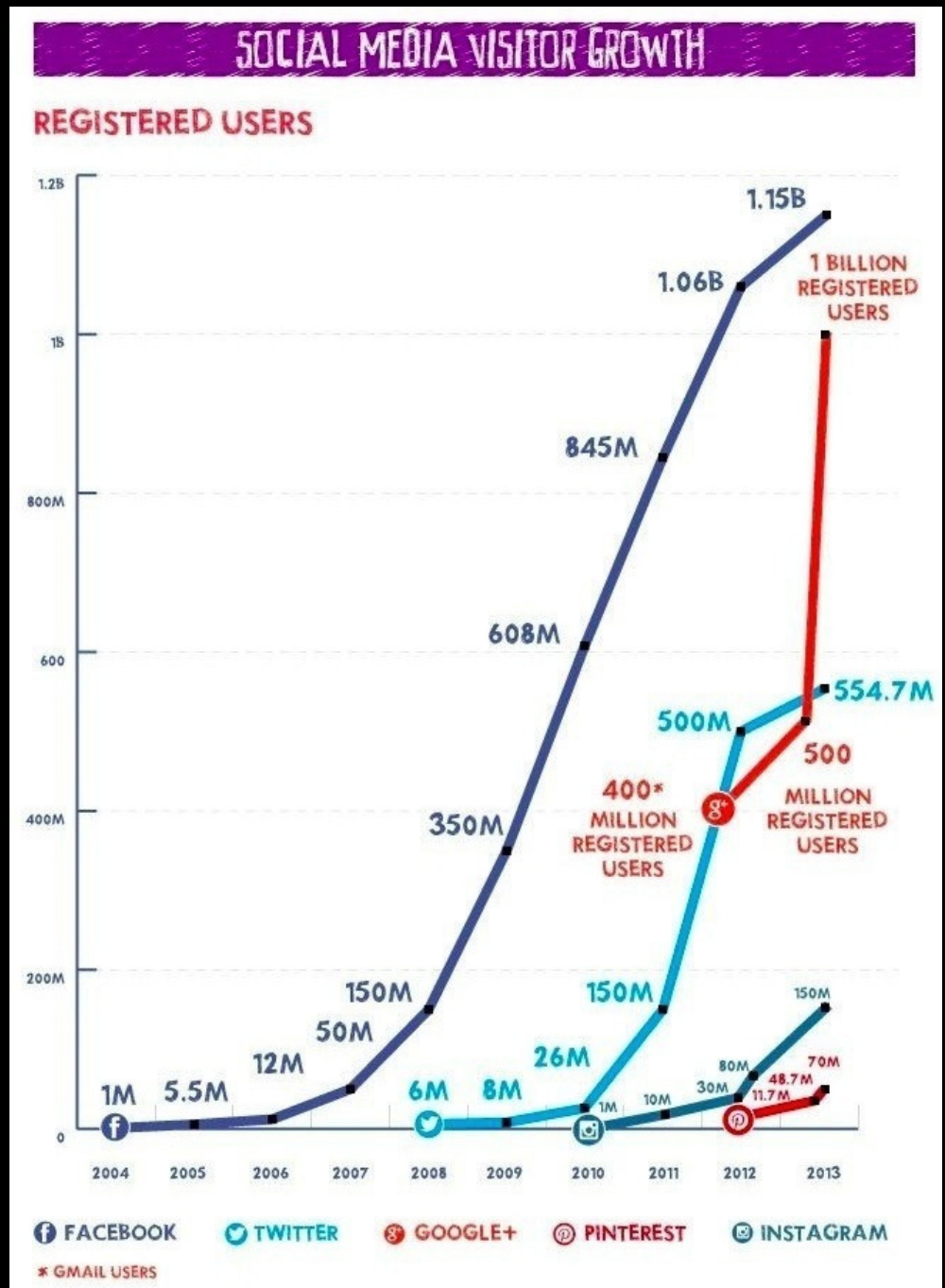
BASIC CATEGORIES

- Each site is different. The only universal characteristics are: the <u>use of the internet</u> to <u>share information</u>.

- Sites differ in a number of key features including:
  - Data richness
  - User identity (vs anonymity)
  - User access (open vs restricted to known users)
  - Provided content (100% user to 100% broadcast)
  - User cost

- Sites differ in their use of profiles / identities
  - Strong profile sites - information is contributed by users, profiles are restricted e.g. Facebook
  - Medium profile sites – all users need a profile, but content is not limited to "friends" e.g. Twitter
  - Weak profile sites - profiles are optional & for heavy users e.g.. YouTube
  - No profile sites - the whole site is open to all (blogs / encyclopaedias) e.g. Wikipedia

FEATURES OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

- Accessibility

- Speed

- Triviality

- Quantity

- Intimacy

- Visibility / openness

- Interactivity

- User-control / Adaptability / variability

- Anonymity

- Common-interest

- Emotional content
  - People are encouraged by example to reveal personal thoughts and respond rapidly and emotionally

- Weak boundaries
  - Boundaries are unclear and porous (mixing friends, colleagues and strangers).

BASIC PROBLEMS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CORPORATIONS

- Electronic communication is prone to misunderstanding

- Electronic communication is prone to emotion

- Electronic communication is permanent

- Electronic communication facilitates anonymity

- Electronic communication allows users influence / control (low transmission control)

- Certain opinions / social groups are over-represented / dominant

- Some users of social media take offence very easily and will then engage in campaigns of vilification

- It is hard to gauge the level of support for comments / campaigns on social media

SOCIAL MEDIA PROBLEMS

- Encouraging poor grammar, usage, and spelling

- Allowing the spread of misinformation that may be perceived as fact even in light of evidence to the contrary

- Exposing children to online predators

- Creating a culture in which a single mistake such as a racy picture or poorly thought-out comment can cause irreparable harm to your reputation

- Decreasing productivity as workers habitually check social networking sites while they should be working

- Providing information that increases the risk of identity theft

- Creating a platform for cyber bullying