Social Impact of Internet Access: A Survey

Poonam Dhaka
College of Home Science

Sandeep Upadhyay
Techno India NJR Institute of Technology

Drashti Dave
College of Technology & Engineering

ABSTRACT
Internet is a network of networks that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, of local to global scope. Today, the Internet is a public, cooperative, and self-sustaining facility accessible to hundreds of millions of people worldwide. A social networking service is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people, who share interests and activities. This study examined the condition of Internet use and social media. Data of 50 working adults was analysed. Even though the persons using blogs, social networks, video on demand (VoD), wikis and other vehicles can quickly share information with others, the study findings suggest that the use of social media in the workplace is growing at a rapid pace.

Keywords
Culture, Productivity, Social Networks, Workplace, Malware, Hack

1. INTRODUCTION
Internet accessibility continues to grow in multiple dimensions, as do the discussions regarding its application within the realm of business and learning. There are various interpretations of internet domains, whether it is specific to social networking, web technologies, email or application specific domains which makes use of any existing technology that enhances social life to make it better. Social media, however, has many benefits to business, especially the evident advancements in collaboration and communication. As social media technology continues to change and grow in popularity, companies need to consider strategies to leverage its use in the workplace. The term, "Internet accessibility means "Internet access is a service that provides access to the global system of interconnected computer networks known as the internet which acts as a common platform the world over"

This definition indicates a spectrum of technologies much larger than just email, information based websites, Social networking websites, Application provider websites. Instead, it is all-inclusive of web and mobile technologies, including text messaging, web conferencing and video chatting, in addition to more traditional web tools. The scope of internet is endless as it's a service by world to the world. It gives benefit & learning both professionally & socially. Additionally, companies are considering and using these new technologies to help collect and manage knowledge across the organization. Many companies have begun investing in and implementing their networks to connect with other companies network via internet. Along with these benefits have come risks. Few risk have been identified the following as the top five risks of social media: viruses/malware, hacking, cracking, lack of control over content, the loss of confidential information or violation of confidentiality policy. The study was conducted to determine what the employees think about security risks associated with employees' use of social media tools. The major finding of this research is, as the internet and social media technology continue to evolve,   organizations

will realize even more benefits but with greater security for using these tools So that's why the ever-expanding world of internet needs to be continually reviewed to accomplish work-related tasks efficiently without harming the ethical factors of workplace. Because of these it has been common practice, both in the past and the present, to make these social media sites inaccessible in the workplace. Strict policies regarding Internet usage have been more frequent than not. Guidelines, while necessary, need to be continuously evaluated in order to reflect the ever-changing dynamics of the cyberworld including factors of customized usability, necessity and above all cyber policies both inside the workplace & outside the workplace.

2. INTERNET ACCESS – A FACTOR OF DIGITAL DIVIDE
Access to the Internet has grown drastically from 1995 to 2011. Despite this tremendous growth, Internet access has not been distributed equally throughout the world.The gap between people with Internet access and those without it is one of the many aspects of digital divide. Digital divide refers to "the gap between people with effective access to information and communications technology (ICT), and those with very limited or no access to ICT". ICT consists of "televisions, telephones, videos and computers". Internet access is dependent on access to ICT. Whether someone has access to the Internet can depend greatly on financial status, geographical location as well as government policy. "Low-income, rural, and minority populations have received special scrutiny as the technological "have-nots."Access to computers is the most dominant factor in determining Internet access.

The United States has invested billions of dollars in efforts to breach the digital divide and grant Internet access to more people.In India itself, the National Center for Education Statistics reported 72% of offices has Internet access. In 1995 top countries interms of internet access were United States (25 million), Japan (2 million), Germany (1.5 million), Canada (1.2 million) and United Kingdom(1.1 million) but now this scenario has been changed. Now the top five countries which has maximum internet usage are China(420 million), United States(239 million), Japan (99 million), India(81 million) and Brazil (76 million).The administration in almost all the countries has continued this commitment of breaching the digital divide and expanding Internet to rural and low-income areas through stimulus money. Government policies play a tremendous role in Internet access.

3. CONCERNS OF SOCIAL MEDIA
The growth of social networking platforms has been phenomenal. Millions of people around the world with access to the Internet are members of one or more social networks. They have a permanent online presence where they create profiles, share photos, share their thoughts with friends and spend hours catching up with what their hundreds of friends are doing with their lives.

Most people access to the Internet and spend the next hour checking their email, their Facebook profile, their MySpace

Web page, updating their Twitter account and their LinkedIn account. It doesn't happen only once a day. The time spent using social networking applications is one reason why many businesses are reluctant to allow employees to use sites like Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn during office hours.

Add the time spent on non work related browsing, and employers have a point. At the same time, however, businesses are starting to appreciate that social networking has its advantages, and there are many companies that have adopted social networking as another vehicle to gain a better presence online and a wider audience(Fig-1).
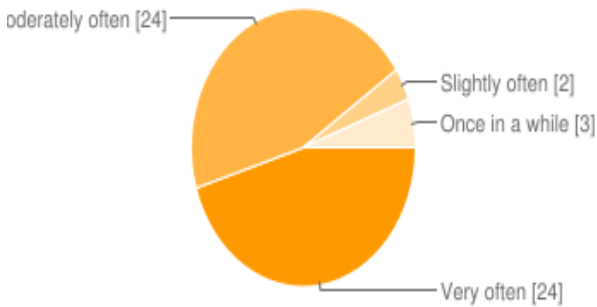
**Fig -1 Frequency of Access to Social Media by Professionals**

This survey states that 91% of professionals used to access their social media account frequently or almost 2 or 3 times daily.People are so used to of internet based applications specially on social media that they have included this in their daily routine. Checking their profiles everytime over the internet enables the access use of internet. Many people used to be available online 24 cross 7 doing surfing, uploading, downloading, playing games no matter they are at their workplace or are at home. But being available over these social media platforms from workplace is a major concern.

This study indicates that 27% of users used to access their social media accounts just for surfing, 12 % users access their social media accounts for messaging, 51% users access their social media accounts for uploading & downloading activities and 10% of users access the social media account for playing the games(Fig-2). So by this statistics it is very much clear that major percentage portion of the users access the social media account for those activities which consumes the social media resources heavily.

Fig -2 Access to Social Media Professionals in 4-dimensions

Employees are using social media for both business and non-business purposes. However, they are using it more often for personal reasons. About more than half i.e.71 % use social media for personal usage. Approximately 7 % users used to access social media for professional purposes purely. Almost one – fourth of the persons used to access social media for professional & personal – both the purposes(Fig-3).
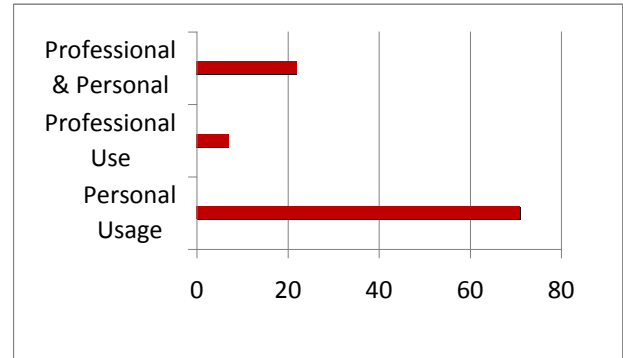
Fig -3 Usage divide of Social Media

4. CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORKPLACE

Social networking has become a new trend in the workplace, from analyzing potential employees' profiles to promoting a business and encouraging interaction between employees. Websites such as Facebook, Youtube,Twitter and LinkedIn offer free advertising and other benefits for a company or business, opens a company up to some disadvantages.

4.1 Social Networking in the Workplace

Social networking plays multiple roles in the workplace. Many workplaces use social networking to allow employees to share information with one another throughout the day or while away from the office and to build relationships with one another. Social networking also provides a way for an employer to learn more about potential and current employees. Many social networking sites also allow a company to promote itself online without paying any advertising costs.

4.2 Employee Productivity

According to a study, companies that allow employees to use Facebook during the work day lose productivity. With its wealth of applications, games and status updates, employees may find themselves compulsively checking Facebook throughout the day instead of performing work-related tasks. Allowing employees access to Facebook and other social networking sites for business-related activities may have some benefits, but the distractions available on the websites often outweigh any benefits.

4.3 Employee Relations

Social networking has the ability to hurt employee relations within a company. Employees may send negative messages or harass one another through social networking sites and hinder their ability to work together. An employee who had a bad day at work may post an innocent status message or tweet about his day and another employee may relay that information to that employee's supervisor, resulting in tension in the workplace and resentment among employees. Additionally, social networking provides a way for employees to communicate with one another throughout the day without anyone overhearing, leading to an increase in off-task conversation.

4.4 Confidentiality and Company Image

Allowing access to social networking in the workplace opens a company up to potential breaches in confidentiality and a tarnished image. Workers may inadvertently post status updates or tweets about promotions or business information that the company is not prepared to release publicly.

Employees may share confidential information through a social networking website and that information could be accidentally sent to the wrong person, leading to a leak of that information. Allowing employees to post about a company on social networking websites may also compromise the company's image when an employee posts something negative about the company and that post is shared among other social networking users.
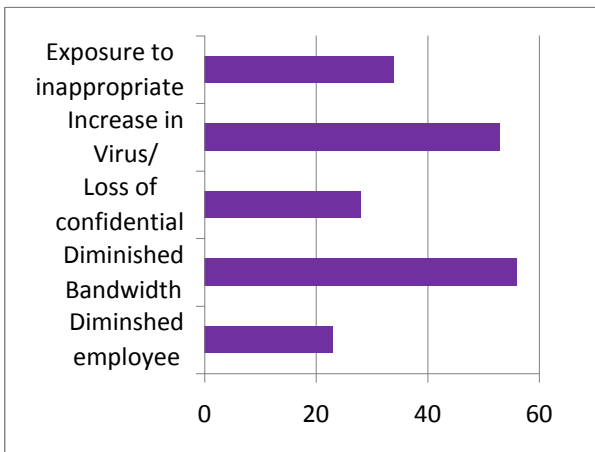
Fig – 4 Consequences of Social Media at Workplace

The consequences of Social media usage at workplace describes the diminished employee productivity by 23%, diminished bandwidth by 56%, loss of confidential information by 28%, increase in virus or malware attacks by 53% and exposure to inappropriate content with a weightage of 34%.
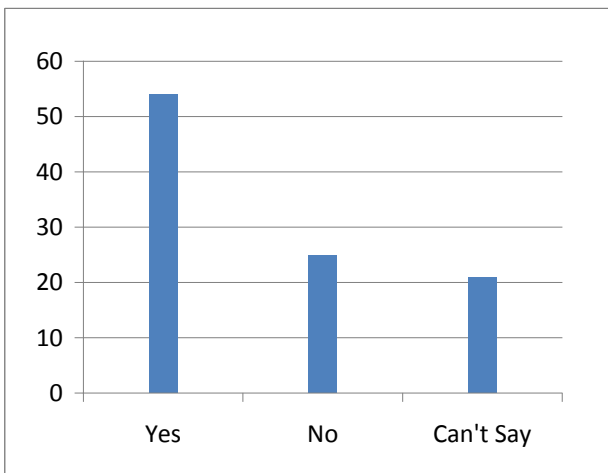
Fig – 5 Acceptance of risks at workplace due to use of social media

The other dimension of social media usage states that 54% users agree that their network is under risk due to use of social media at work place.
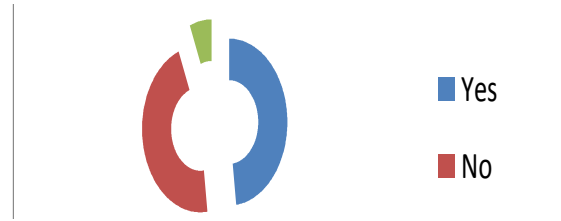
Fig –6 Poll over the acceptable security policy at workplace

At workplace 48% of employees believes that they have good security policy whereas 46% states that they have policy not up to the mark to tackle the virus, malware, hacking & cracking attacks at workplace.
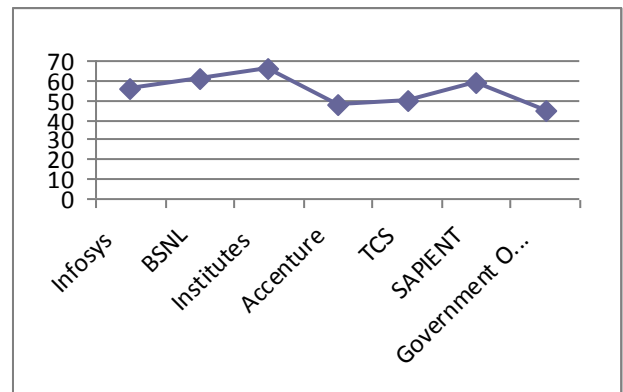
Fig – 7 Increase in bandwidth due to access usage of social media

The statistics of workplaces at Infosys, BSNL, Educational Institutes, Accenture, TCS, Sapient & Government offices describes that internet bandwidth due to access usage of social media has been increased from 50 -60 percent in last 8-10 years(Fig-7). What is worrying about social networking sites is to encourage people to give as much information as possible about themselves. Even the most cautious and well-intentioned offer information that should not – same goes for what is posted through the platforms adopted by the social networking company If a company will provide access to social networking sites, there are some basic steps that must be followed.

5. SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Restrict Access

Give employees a break and allow them to access social networking sites during their lunch break, before and after office hours. Web filtering software gives administrators the ability to implement time-based access to these sites and others.

5.2 Educate and Train Staff

This is very important. Most employees do not know how their actions can cause security problems for the organization. Tell them in a language they understand how a simple click on a link they receive or an application that could lead to downloads of malware from infecting your machine and network. Also, tell them not to click on suspicious links and pay attention to give personal details online. The fact that employees are smart enough to have an online profile does not mean you're computer savvy or have a high level of security awareness.

5.3 Security Policies in Place and Use

All employees sign all policies related to Internet use at work, access to social networking sites and what you can say or do during office hours. Monitoring of all web activity is important and employees should be aware that their actions are recorded and that failure to comply with company policy may result in disciplinary action and / or dismissal.

6. CONCLUSION

Use of social media in the workplace is important for achieving business objectives. However, it is also believed that these tools put their organizations at risk and do not have the necessary security controls and enforceable policies to address the risk. Organizations are most concerned with employees downloading apps or widgets from social media sites, employees are using social media tools more often for non-business purposes than business purposes. Malware infections are increasing as a result of social media use.

At workplace employees expect to be allowed access to these sites at work – albeit with certain restrictions. While some organizations that prevent employees have access to these sites, the most intelligent deployment of secure Web gateway technology combined with Acceptable Use Policy to maintain the organization and its security employees, while providing a work environment flexible. This combination not only a powerful protection against today's threats posed by social networking sites, but also to protect the organizations previously unknown, the Web-based threats.

.

7. REFERENCES

[1] David Kelleher "Information Management at workplace" – 2009. Available: http://www.information-management.com

[2] James Bennett, Mark Owers & Michael Pitt "Diminished resources at workplace by the use of internet" in Workshop on Information Security over Resources (WISR)

[3] Human Resource Executive Online; When Social Networking and the Workplace Collide; Jeffrey S. Klein, Nicholas J. Pappas, Jason E. Pruzansky; 2010

[4] Stacy Zeiger - "Employee Producivity" In Conference over Global Media Usage – 2008

[5] J. Bonneau and S. Preibusch, "The Privacy Jungle: On the Market for Privacy in Social Networks", In Workshop on the Economics of Information Security (WEIS), 2009.

[6] Robert Westervelt, News Editor - "Narrowing resources at workplace". Available: http://searchsecurity.techtarget.com

[7] K Liu and E. Terzi, "A Framework for Computing the Privacy Scores of Users in Online Social Networks", in Proc. ICDM, 2009, pp.288-297