



Internet-based Communities & Communications

Wikipedia

If you use the Internet, then you probably use Internet-based communications to contact family, friends or co-workers. From sending an instant message to a friend, to e-mailing co-workers, to placing phone calls, to conducting video conferences, the Internet offers a number of ways to communicate.

The advantages of Internet-based communications are many. Since you're already paying for an Internet account (or your employer is), you can save money on phone calls by sending someone an instant message or by using VoIP instead of standard local telephone services. Of course, no technology is without a downside and Internet-based communications has plenty, such as viruses, privacy issues and spam.

Like all technologies (and especially technology tied to the Internet), the way we can communicate online is constantly evolving. It is important, as parents, that we understand how our kids are using the internet and what they are using it for. You need to be aware what you kids are sharing, especially about themselves online. Visit Internet Parental Tools to learn how you can get help with monitoring you kids online activity.

Here is a brief review of the various internet-based communications that are currently in use:

Instant Messaging

One of the fastest-growing forms of Internet communications is instant messaging, or IM. Think of IM as a text-based computer conference between two or more people. An IM communications service enables you to create a kind of private chat room with another individual in order to communicate in real-time over the Internet. Typically, the IM system alerts you whenever somebody on your buddy or contact list is online. You can then initiate a chat session with that particular individual. ... more information. For a list of text messaging abbreviations, click here http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessagabbreviations.asp

Blog

A blog is a website in which items are posted on a regular basis and displayed in reverse chronological order. The term blog is a shortened form of weblog or web log. Authoring a blog, maintaining a blog or adding an article to an existing blog is called "blogging". Individual articles on a blog are called "blog posts," "posts" or "entries". A person who posts these entries is called a "blogger". A blog comprises hypertext, images, and links (to other web pages and to video, audio and other files). Blogs use a conversational style of documentation. Often blogs focus on a particular "area of interest", such as Washington, D.C.'s political goings-on. Some blogs discuss personal experiences. ... from Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/blog>

Podcasting

A podcast is a web feed of audio or video files placed on the Internet for anyone to subscribe to. Podcasters' websites also may offer direct download of their files, but the subscription feed of automatically delivered new content is what distinguishes a podcast from a simple download or real-time streaming. Podcasting's essence is about creating content (audio or video) for an audience that wants to listen when they want, where they want, and how they want. ... from Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>

Internet Social Networking – articles

Online social Networks: everywhere, Yet Nowhere

<http://www.simonwhatley.co.uk/online-social-networks-everywhere-yet-nowhere>

Social Networking Websites and Teens: An Overview

http://www.pewinternet.org/ppf/r/198/report_display.asp

MySpace, Facebook and Other Social networking Sites: Hot Today, Gone Tomorrow?

<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=1463>

How to help your kids use social Web sites more safely

<http://www.microsoft.com/protect/family/activities/social.mspx>

What you need to know about YouTube and other video networks

<http://www.wiredsafety.org/resources/pdf/1%20Tube.pdf>

Internet Social Networking - sites

Below is a small sampling of the some of the more popular social networking sites. For a complete list of social networking sites, [click here](#).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites

Ditty Talk (www.dittytalk.com)

Ditty Talk is a free online Christian community, a resource and a place of fellowship that is safe, clean, and up to date with current internet trends such as blogging, sharing music and photos, playing computer games, and conversing with people around the world through forums, email, and journaling.

Xanga (www.xanga.com)

Xanga is an Internet Web host that provides its users (community) with access to their own online diaries and journals (often called blogs). A person who belongs to the Xanga community is called a "Xangan". If someone has a Web blog on Xanga, they are being referred to as "having a Xanga." Xanga services are most popular with youth and young adults. Along with its popularity among younger people, Xanga has been mentioned in major news publications

worldwide as many law enforcement agencies believe that many of the 91 percent of some 40 million users aged 13 to 29 are revealing too much personal information about themselves on Xanga journals. With over 31 million worldwide users, it is one of the most popular online blogging sites. As of 21 January 2006, Alexa Internet rated Xanga the 23rd most popular English-language website, and the 48th most popular website in the world.... from Webopedia

MySpace (www.myspace.com)

MySpace is a free social networking website offering an interactive network of photos, blogs, user profiles, groups, and an internal e-mail system. As of January 2006 MySpace is the world's seventh most popular English language website, with over 50 million users.

Facebook (www.facebook.com)

Formerly known as thefacebook, is a social networking service for high school, college, and university communities, primarily in English-speaking countries. The site has some similarities to MySpace, but differs in account availability, user control of display content, real-world identity, and overall neatness of appearance. As of December 2005, it has the largest number of registered users among college-focused sites (at over six million US college student accounts created). Anyone with access to a valid e-mail address from 2,000+ universities can register for and access the site, a group that includes students, alumni, faculty, and staff, although the vast majority of Facebook's users are students. Facebook is also available at 25,000+ American high schools. The site is free to users and is financed by advertising. Users create personal profiles, typically containing photos and lists of interests, exchange private or public messages, and join groups of friends. The viewing of detailed profile data is restricted to users from the same school or confirmed friends, though one can change their personal options regarding this. The name of the site is based on the paper facebook that many colleges give to incoming students, faculty, and staff depicting members of the campus community. ... from Wikipedia

MEETfish (www.meetfish.com)

A family-friendly alternative to MySpace. It is the safer, easier-to-use online social network. Here you can set up your own profile with our unique drag-and-drop system, post photos, listen to music and connect with friends and family. You can use Groups to find people with a common interest, or set up your own. In addition, other Christian organizations (Alliance Members) will be able to share their own ministry's needs, goals and news information to their members under one roof through MEETfish.com. These Alliance Members will also be able to receive constant feedback and pertinent information from their users. It is the safer, easier-to-use online social network. MEETfish is for anyone who: post profiles and search for others; easily design their own web pages to reflect their individual personalities with pictures and music without wading through technical lingo; post their likes and dislikes; share their hobbies, and form groups with others with similar interests; simply and easily customize their web page; participate in an online community without the fear of explicit content. All of this is possible in an easier and more user friendly format than other sites.

YouTube (www.YouTube.com)

Founded in February 2005, YouTube is the leader in online video, and the premier destination to watch and share original videos worldwide through a Web experience. YouTube allows

people to easily upload and share video clips on YouTube and across the Internet through websites, mobile devices, blogs, and email.

GodTube (www.GodTube.com)

GodTube.com is a dynamic community of people who are looking to connect, share, and belong. In its simplest form, GodTube is a video-driven social network where users can explore their faith and the tenets of Christianity. Our millions of users come back time and time again to find inspiration, ask questions, interact, chat, share, upload Christian videos, worship and more. Some of the content is fun, some of it is serious, and all of it is safe for the whole family. GodTube showcases religious content from many of the world's leading Christian ministries and socially responsible faith-based organizations, including Spanish language and other international Christian ministries.