

What has Social Networking Service (SNS) Research done for the Half Decade?

Review, Critiques, and Discussion of
the Studies from 2006 to 2011



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Foreword

Winning an award at a peer-reviewed conference is an honor that most academics cherish. We like it because we enjoy being recognized by the research community. In addition, when rightly done, an award speaks to the quality of a paper. All this probably explains why the annual conventions of major communication associations of the world—ICA, NCA, AEJMC, WAPOR, IAMCR and the like—have set up awards for top student papers. While the authors will find the awards encouraging, the award-winning papers can be a source of inspiration to many others. Graduate students and budding scholars are particularly curious about these papers.

The graduate students in our School have been very active in joining all the aforesaid conferences. As teachers, we are happy to find that quite a few have won awards for their outstanding works. To meet the demand for easy access to these papers, the Centre for Chinese Media and Comparative Communication Research (the C-Centre) has launched this Award-winning Student Paper series as part of its e-publication plan. As the copyright owner, the authors are expected to revise and publish the e-papers in the more traditional venues of journals and books later. We publish the e-version as working monographs in order to speed up the dissemination of research ideas. We encourage you to share the e-papers with others. You are also invited to refer student award-winning papers to us for possible inclusion in the series.

Joseph M. Chan, PhD
Director, the C-Centre
Professor of Journalism and Communication
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Abstract

This study presents an extensive review of the scholarship on social networking service (SNS) in the past half-decade. Through a full scan of the academic outputs published in seven high ranking or relevant Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) journals from 2006 to 2011, eighty-four articles were identified for review. The topical, theoretical and methodological trends of current studies are summarized and discussed. The study hopefully provides not only an overview of current SNS research trends but also new insights for future research directions regarding this new interactive form of social media.

This paper was awarded the Top Student Paper at the Jung-Sook Lee Paper Competition of the Communication Technology Division of Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) annual conference 2012.