



# SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT

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# About me

- Associate Professor at Vestfold University College, Norway, Faculty of Business and Social Science
- Research group: Regional innovation
- Since 2004, research on:
  - e-democracy, e-participation, e-government
  - Public sector innovation



# Content

- Some observations, but also based on:
  - Two research projects
  - Collaboration with municipalities



# Web 2.0

- Collaboration
- Sharing
- Interoperability
- User-centered design
  
- Fun



# Web 2.0

- Primarily tools for individuals
- But not only..



# The Web 2.0 world

- Blogs
- Twitter
- Facebook, LinkedIn, Plaxo
- YouTube
- Flickr
- Wiki



# Users of Web 2.0

- Individuals
- Organizations
- Politicians
- Government
- Business

# Why is Web 2.0 interesting?

- Web 2.0 has **regular** users
- What web sites have regular users?
- NOT MANY!
- Most web sites have only sporadic users, e.g. municipal web sites.
- Information on demand





# Why is Web 2.0 interesting

- Newspaper web sites attract regular users
- Social media also attract regular users
- Some users access such web sites several times a day..

# Web 2.0 mission

- The whole motivation for Web 2.0 is based on individuals:
  - Sharing
  - Collaboration
- But is there a potential for business and governments
- YES! DEFINITELY!



# Web 2.0 opportunities

- Innovation
- Customers may take part in product development
- Citizens may take part in policy making
- Web 2.0 may be the facilitator

# Some Norwegian numbers

Application	Users
Facebook	1.156.000
Nettby (Net city)	818.300
Blogs	453.500
Biip.no	426.000
LinkedIn	215.000
Origo	130.000
Twitter	46.675

Source: webMagasin, 04/2009, based on research by Halogen



# New groups of users

- Recent report on national TV:
- The older are taking over Facebook

# Steps in utilizing social media

A maturity model approach

- Build network
- Inform network
- Mobilize network
- Interact with network

# Politicians

- More than individuals..
- Politicians have embraced the internet
- Obama campaign, fundraising
- Norwegian prime minister
- What they use:
  - Blogs
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - YouTube



# Business utilization

- Use social media to know your customers
- Inform them about new products and services
- Mobilize them through campaigns
- Interact with them to get feedback





# Business utilization

- It is impossible to ignore social media
- Your products or services are discussed
- From observation to dialogue



# Government utilization

- Show the value of registering
- Inform them
- Mobilize them
- Interact with the citizens

# Blogging project

- Municipal elections 2007
- Context: Revitalization of democracy through directly elected mayors
- Vestfold county: 5 municipalities was selected as participants
- 32 candidates for mayor



# Why blogging

- Unfiltered opinions
- No discrimination
- Immediate dissemination
- Possible interaction with voters

# Numbers

- 31 out of 32 candidates used blogs
- 395 articles during the pre-election period
- 153 comments from readers (strict rules!)
- 4261 unique IP addresses
- 75000 page accesses to individual blogs
- 25000 page accesses to summaries

# What we learned

- **Dissemination is the biggest motivator**
- Created some headlines in regional and local media (Press/local radio used blogs)
- Support organization was necessary
- Small impact on election result, but some citizens gave nice feedback



# Municipalities on Facebook

- Two sources:
  - Collaboration with City of Larvik, Norway
  - Research on uptake by municipalities since February 2009

# Municipalities on Facebook

- The number of municipalities using Internet as a communication channel with their citizens is steadily increasing.
- Data collected by the author in November 2009 showed that 26 Norwegian municipalities were actively using Facebook to interact with and inform their citizens.
- Altogether 73 municipalities were present on Facebook, but the remaining profiles were either established by third-parties or used for employees.



# Case example: City of Larvik, Norway

- November 2008, discussion and implementation
- Target group: Age 18 to 30
- Targeted information
  - First use: To inform about a course for young mothers
  - DEMO



# Mobilization

- Oil spill accident: Asking for volunteers
- Getting volunteers to read for old people



# Interaction

- Ask what the citizens want
- This is particularly relevant to planning processes

# Oops

- If you do not have a strategy, you may find yourself in a strange position
- Research on Municipalities on Facebook
- Very interesting results



# The Dark Side of Social Media

- Everyone is watching you..
- Identity becomes relative..
- EXAMPLE / DEMO
- Abuse
- Social exclusion



# What's next

- Wiki has a great potential