

CHECK THESE SITES OUT!!!

Something to think about this year is Mobile Social Networking. This is another growing culture for all ages. I was at a party recently sitting at a table with some friends and all of a sudden no one was talking...we were ALL texting with our blackberries (I actually have the incriminating photo)! Another time I was in the kitchen cooking and received a text from my son. in the other room wondering what I was doing. On Christmas I had over 10 texts from friends wishing me a Merry Christmas and only a couple telephone calls. What has happened with us? We are so busy that we can't take a moment to pick up a phone, walk into another room or have a face to face conversation. Why should we, our phones can do all kinds of things, video, text, pictures, record, access the internet and come close to taking the place of our computer.

So what does this tell us? People like to share, they want to share, and they want to tell you the most intimate details of their life. As you read this someone is recording a conversation, making a video of some incident, calling a loved one from across the country or the other side of the world, or texting about where they are what they are doing or want to do.

It is estimated in 2007 that there are 12.3 million consumers in the US and Western Europe that access mobile social networking sites. You can imagine how it has grown in 2008. There are over 35+ sites to choose from (see below for a few of these sites).

The phone is another tool for the bad guys as well. Let's keep up with all the technologies so we have an idea what they can and can't do, and how and what evidence we can collect from these devices.

So how much information can be collected from these mobile social networking communities? Well Check out some of these sites...

Mobile Social Networking:

- **Loopt.com** – connects with friends and alerts you when they are nearby, share your location, pictures, comments to friends and social networks.
- **Loopt.com/mix** – get connected with others that are near you who have public profiles. If you are in a restaurant, club, or conference you can check to see who around you has a profile so you can hook up and make new friends.

Social Communities:

- **Itsournature.org** – this is an environmental organization with 1.2 million members. This organization protects human health and the environment. You can also connect with loopt.com/mix to connect with other members.
- **Buzznet.com** – this is a music community, the search options are very specific which can be helpful when searching for someone.

Other mobile social friendly sites:

- **Myspace.com** – I know you know about this...don't you?
- **Facebook.com** – Oh my, gosh do I really have to tell you about this one?
- **LinkedIn.com** – Professional social community, you already belong right?
- **Socialight.com** – based out of New York. This is like a demand for information about places where you are located at that moment. Pull your phone out and ask about what is around you. Your location is pinged by cell towers. You can get updates for new postings (called sticky notes). They even have a video to explain about them (on utube.com). It is really pretty cool. I think I will write more about this one on my blog.
- **Flagr.com** – based out of Boston, this allows you to flag a map of your favorite places like restaurants, vacations, parks, any thing you can point to on a map. You can upload pictures and videos. It works just like a text. The maps are limited to the US, but you can pull up the map with flags for recommendations in the area you choose.
- **Groovr.com** – based in LA this site was created by some folks to keep friends hitting the hot spots connected.
- **Mocospace.com** – based out of Boston and geared for your cell phone. It has the same feel as myspace.com. It is worth checking out. I have a brief write up on my blog.
- **Placestodo.com** – Ever see a place you'd like to check out but don't have the time? Well this site will keep track so you can pull up that special place any time to remind you what you wanted to do. Pull a location up and it will text message your 'to do' list plus what to do within a 10 block radius. This sounds like a great place for active seniors such as me, who can't remember my own name at times! So one more time, you can post your to dos then go back and search your to dos...its great someone to remember for you. They also have a search feature that has list for things like "Non Starbuck Coffee shops", "Thursday Night Out", and "Kid friendly places" (this is a must for you grandparents, aunts and uncles).

Business Reviews:

- **Yelp.com** – users review a business (e.g. restaurant, salons). How could you use this for an investigation? You may know a place a subject hangs out, check on reviews for the location/business (on Yelp or another similar site). Who knows you might get a bit more information on your subject or of friends and/or other places they like to hang out. Yelp also has an application for mobile users.

General Search Engines

- **Msdewey.com** – you would have fallen in love with this one...so did you check her out yet from my last recommendation? If not, it's too late. Microsoft was using her as a marketing tool and Msdewey is no longer! I think we need to petition this she was sooo entertaining!!! Let's start a petition and vote to put Msdewey back on line. Don't wait email Microsoft today...lol... Alright that might not work, but all is not lost...I did some searching and found her on utube.com plus other things about her.

Blogs

- **Blogcatalog.com** – they claim to be one of the largest social blogger directories on the internet. They are also “mobile” friendly; it comes with iphone web application.
- **ohGizmo.com** – They were going to CES, so if you any of you saw them, hit me up with a review.
- **News.cnet.com/crave** – gadget blog...pretty cool stuff

I hope this helps you out. If you have any questions feel free to email me at cynthia@finnegans-way.com Plus, if you have any sites to share, please do. I would be happy to add it to my next updated handout. Comments are welcome as well. Also check out my website, www.finnegans-way.com I will be updating my blog with additional information on some of these sites, plus posting a quarterly (or close to it) newsletter on various news worthy stuff.

*Thanks,
Cynthia*

P.S. - Folks I did my best to self-edit, but I am confident that there will be mistakes! Apologies to you all...