

# THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON THE BEHAVIOR OF THE STUDENTS. CASE STUDY: FACULTY OF ENGINEERING HUNEDOARA

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this article is to analyze the impact of social networks on the behavior of young consumers in the information society. This article will first present the tools used by companies for promotion in social networks according to different parameters. Subsequently, the advantages and disadvantages of promotion by social networks will be set forth. Finally, the article will present reflections based on secondary data that reveal the development of social networks in Romania and worldwide as well as the results of empirical research carried out among students of “Politehnica” University Timisoara, Faculty of Engineering Hunedoara (Romania).*

**Key words:** *social networks, behavior, student.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is currently the largest computer network on our planet. It can be called the network of networks. The Internet is no longer limited to universities, industries and governments. Today everyone uses it, because every individual can now join the network. The Internet makes it possible to exchange information freely. At the same time, we observe the dynamic development of social networks that are becoming more popular and more used. As a result, companies are introducing new promotional tools, taking advantage of the advantages offered by new technologies. The aim of this article is to analyze the impact of social networks on the behavior of young consumers in the information society based on the results of empirical research conducted by students of “Politehnica” University Timisoara, Faculty of Engineering Hunedoara (Romania).

## 2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

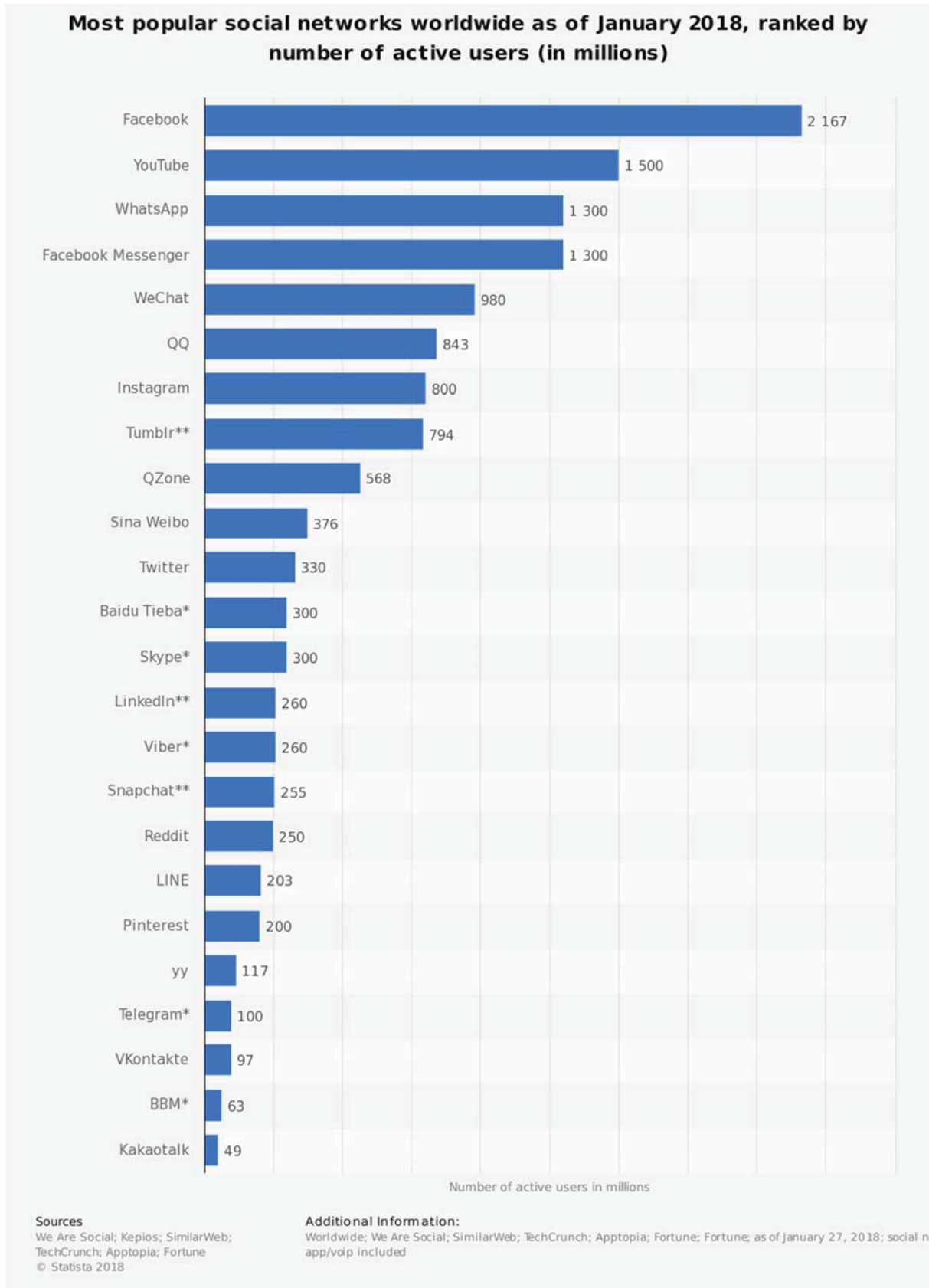
In recent years on the Internet, there is a real phenomenon. Social networks have grown to reach billions of people around the world. People use them to create personal space to share with friends - real or virtual - their daily life, their photos, their interests, but also to discuss, play or meet new people. Social networks have also become a new promotion way for companies.

Social networks bring people together according to their interests. There is a tremendous diversification. There are networks for young people, for executives, for gaming enthusiasts, networks concerning politics, computers, sports, etc. As a result, specialized teams representing companies devote their time to updating and creating new sections, topics or portals.

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**Figure 1. Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2018**

This statistic provides information on the most popular networks worldwide for January 2018, ranked by number of active accounts. Market leader Facebook was the first social network to surpass 1 billion registered accounts and currently sits at 2.2 billion monthly active users. Seventh-ranked photo-sharing app, Instagram, had over 800 million monthly active accounts. Meanwhile, blogging service Tumblr had an estimated 794 million monthly active blog users on their site.

The leading social networks are usually available in multiple languages and enable users to connect with friends or people across geographical, political or economic borders. Approximately 2 billion internet users are using social networks and these figures are still expected to grow as mobile device usage and mobile social networks increasingly gain traction.

The most popular social networks usually display a high number of user accounts or strong user engagement. For example, market leader Facebook was the first social network to surpass 1 billion monthly active users, whereas recent newcomer Pinterest was the fastest independently launched site to reach 10 million unique monthly visitors. The majority of social networks with more than 100 million users originated in the United States, but European services like VK or Chinese social networks Qzone and Renren have also garnered mainstream appeal in their areas due to local context and content.

Social network usage by consumers is highly diverse: platforms such as Facebook or Google+ are highly focused on exchanges between friends and family and are constantly pushing interaction through features like photo or status sharing and social games. Other social networks like Tumblr or Twitter are all about rapid communication and are aptly termed microblogs. Some social networks focus on community; others highlight and display user-generated content.

Due to a constant presence in the lives of their users, social networks have a decidedly strong social impact. The blurring between offline and virtual life as well as the concept of digital identity and online social interactions are some of the aspects that have emerged in recent discussions.

### 3. STUDENT BEHAVIOR – RESULTS PRIMARY RESEARCH

The survey was conducted by the following survey method. The sample consists of 135 students from „Politehnica” University Timisoara University, Faculty of Engineering Hunedoara (Romania). The gender distribution consists of 63% women and 37% men aged 19 to 25 years. During the research, consumers' perceptions of the evolution of the Internet, their expectations of the Internet, the evaluation of promotion in social networks and the impact of this promotion on their purchasing behavior were analyzed.

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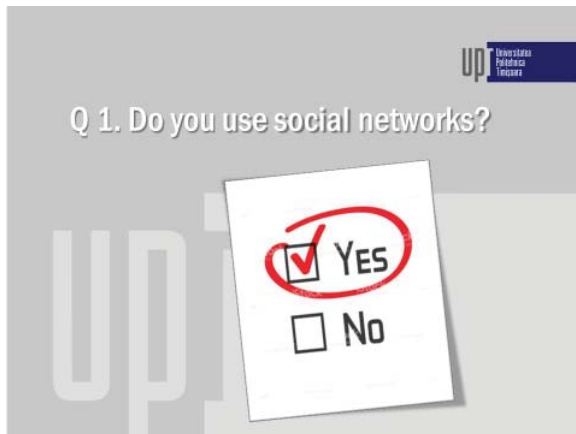
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The objectives of the questionnaire were as follows:

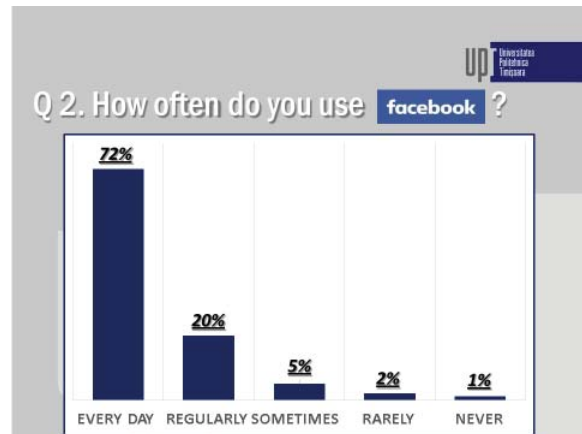
- To determine the impact of social network on the behavior of the students,
- To find out if the subjects were pleased to work on social network,
- The involvement of social network in the development of students.

According to consumers surveyed, the Internet symbolizes modernity, openness to the world, progress, communication and exchanges. The Internet enables everyone to access information and arouses curiosity, enthusiasm and attraction. Netizens see the possibility of individual ownership, speed, personalization, quality and tremendous potential for exchanges and relationships around the world.

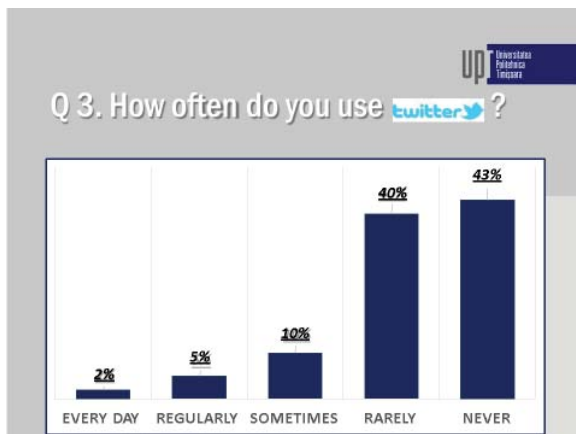
The questionnaire, comprised of 12 questions, was applied online from November 13 to 26, 2017.



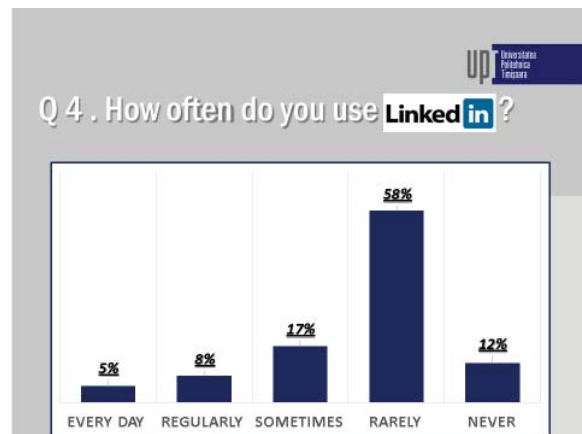
All respondents use social networks



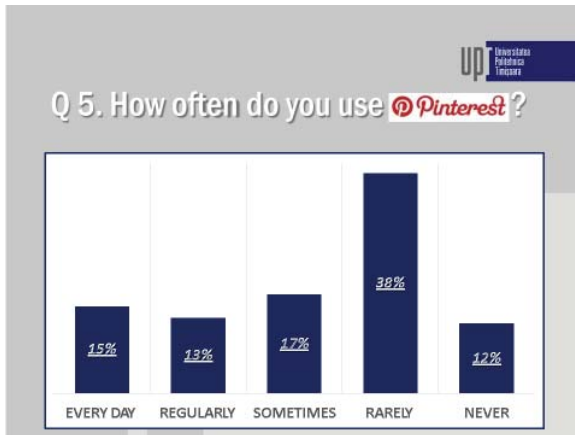
72% use Facebook daily, 20% regularly and only 1% never use it.



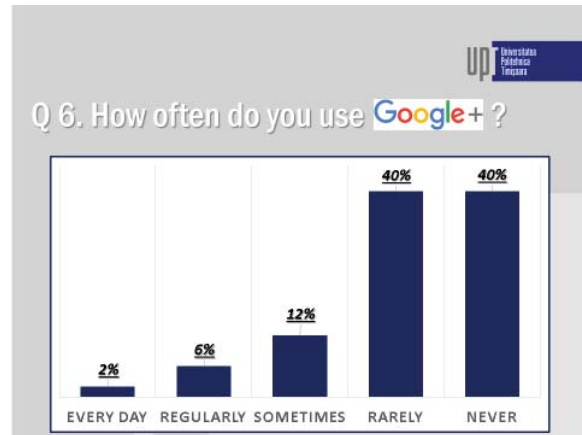
Only 2% of students use Twitter daily, 83% rarely and never



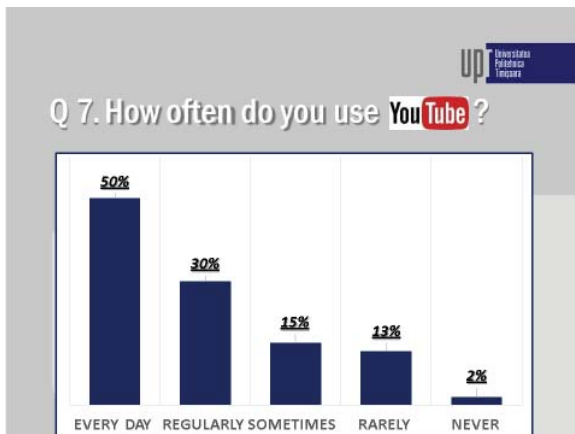
Note nevertheless the non-performance with 58% of the students who are registered and present on LinkedIn



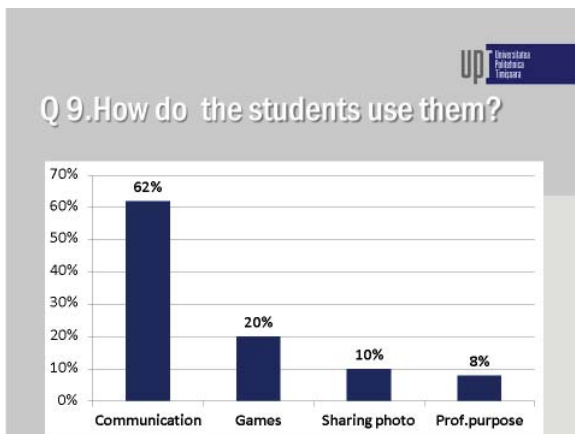
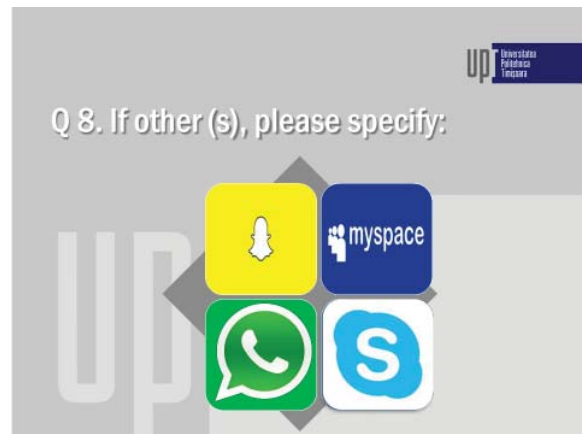
45% of students use Printerest every day, regularly and sometimes, and 50% use it rarely and never



Google+ is used by 80% of respondents, rarely and never



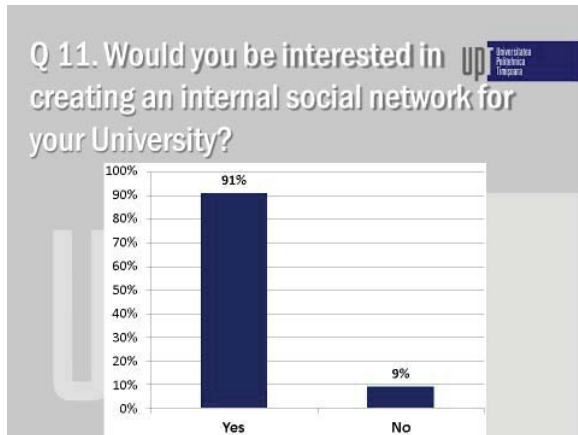
Youtube is one of the most used social networks: 80% use it every day and regularly



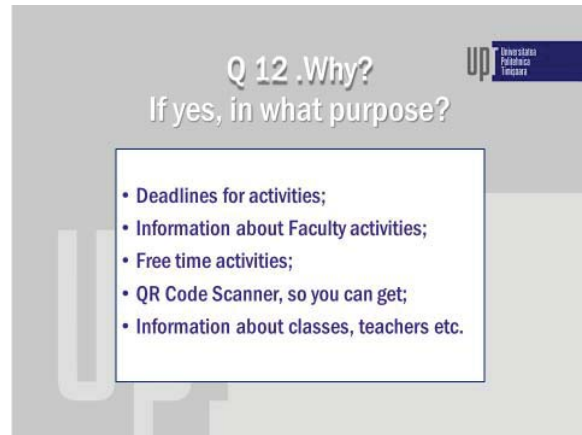
62% of students use social networks mainly for communication, 20% for games, 10% share photo and 8% for professional purpose.



65% of respondents use for internship and job search



91% of students are interested in creating an internal social network for their university



The most relevant arguments in creating an internal social network in their own university.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The benefits of social networking for students:

- Increased proficiency in technology;
- Increased exposure to diverse views;
- Development of communication skills;
- Increased ability to work on group projects;
- Many students already use these forms of technology, so
- they might be more engaged if learning if they are utilized;
- Students can develop a positive image of themselves by putting best qualities out there.

The impacts of social networks are visible in many areas. These networks have been introduced into our lives, and many of their applications will remain available for a long time, thanks to the many benefits they bring.

In addition, other functions of social networks remain unexplored because the networks are only in the launch phase and will develop by simplifying still our lives. The advent of technologies is dramatically transforming people's habits.

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