

Using Facebook Academically

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This presentation is available here: http://rheadley.net/presentations/using_facebook.pdf
v0.01

Deckset, incidentally...

... is an excellent application for creating presentations.

It has the advantages that:

- all material is formatted as simple text, which means it can be edited with ease and without the need for reformatting.
- all material can be copied from and pasted into single, simple text files.
- material can be indexed and moved easily, without reference to any proprietary formats.

<https://www.decksetapp.com>

It also produces a dilemma for people working formally in this area:

- Standards, requirements, etc., are frequently defined in terms of proprietary systems and formats, tying us in.
- These systems and formats are often clumsy and slow moving, which ironically makes them ideal for enforcing standards (you simply enforce use of the relevant software).
- But the non-academic world moves quickly, and it can feel as if these enforced systems and format are lacking in innovation, rigid and behind the times in terms of features and capabilities.

So even though Deckset is ideally placed for making smooth and up-to-the-minute presentations, in spite of the fact that it is purely text-based, it may well not conform to current guidelines on accessibility. Nor is it *ever* likely to be the presentation 'software of choice' because it is not Powerpoint.

But that's another story.

Problems with Social Media

There are difficulties with social media themselves which are becoming increasingly apparent, primarily around the *curation and use of information*.

Particularly stark examples:

Social media

How big tech finally awakened to the horror of its own inventions

It took years for ex-Facebook and Google bosses to criticize what they had created - but they seem to have had a collective change of heart. Perhaps it's because they now have children of their own



Julia Carrie Wong in San Francisco

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Wed 20 Dec '17 09:00 GMT



< 694



Sean Parker has been among the Silicon Valley voices condemning the industry's own work. Photograph: Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP

For an industry that prides itself on innovation, Silicon Valley loves to conform. The herd mentality can be seen everywhere, from tech executives' collective commitment to [wearing wool slippers](#) in public to the spectacle of Facebook, Google and Twitter sheepishly echoing one another's testimony at a series of congressional hearings in October.

Many of the men who have become tech naysayers have changed in one crucial aspect, however: they have become fathers.

“A lot of the designers and coders who were in their 20s when we were creating these things didn’t have kids. Now they have kids,” Fadell said in June. “And they see what’s going on, and they say: ‘Wait a second.’”

Palihapitiya told CNBC that his own children were allowed “no screen time whatsoever”, while Parker, a father of two, said of social networking: “God only knows what it’s doing to our children’s brains.”

That Silicon Valley parents use the money they earn from tech to send their children to [tech-free schools](#) is no secret. But such qualms have not stopped the tech companies themselves from continuing to push their products on to other people’s children, both through partnerships with [school districts](#) and special [apps for children](#) as young as six.

Former Facebook executive: social media is ripping society apart

Chamath Palihapitiya, former vice-president of user growth, expressed regret for his part in building tools that destroy 'the social fabric of how society works'

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Tue 12 Dec '17 18:58 GMT



<
45,990



It is eroding the core foundations of how people behave by and between each other,' says the former Facebook executive Chamath Palihapitiya. Photograph: Toby Melville/Reuters

A former [Facebook](#) executive has said he feels "tremendous guilt" over his work on "tools that are ripping apart the social fabric of how society works", joining a growing chorus of critics of the social media giant.

Chamath Palihapitiya, who was vice-president for user growth at Facebook before he left the company in 2011, said: "The short-term, dopamine-driven feedback loops that we have created are destroying how society works. No civil discourse, no cooperation, misinformation, mistruth."

The remarks, which were made at a [Stanford Business School](#) event in November, were just surfaced by tech website [the Verge](#) on Monday.

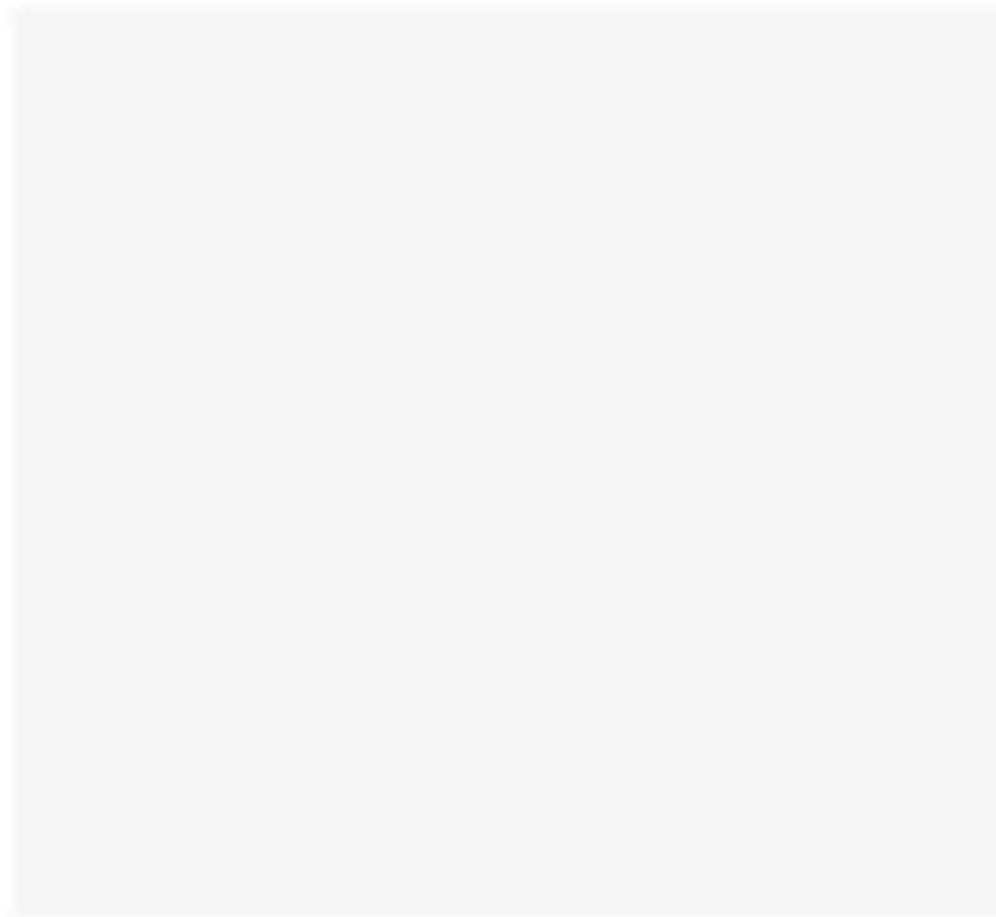
Facebook screws up the 2018 US midterm elections

There is not really any good outcome for [Facebook](#) in 2018 and the company seems to know it. It's stuck between two competing imperatives and it's hard to see how it can chart a course between Scylla and Charybdis.

On the one hand, the company has to demonstrate conclusively that it has managed to protect the US against further Russian interference. That's an almost existential concern for Facebook, at this point: the

investigation into the [Internet](#) Research Agency's actions on the site has blossomed into the worst press it has ever had and already made 2017 hell for the company.

That defensive need goes further than just Russia, though. Facebook still has a problem [with "fake news"](#) and its efforts to stymie the spread of hoaxes, bad reporting and deliberate propaganda haven't worked. The rot has got so bad that Facebook is experimenting with simply deprioritising news full stop, trialling a news feed in six countries around the world that removes news posts to a secondary column, the "explore feed".



Google

Google search for images: 'unprofessional hairstyle'





Guardian Article from April 2016





Google

Do Google's 'unprofessional hair' results show it is racist?

Leigh Alexander


Search term brings back mainly results of black women, which some say is evidence of bias. But algorithms may just be reflecting the wider social landscape

Fri 8 Apr '16 08:50 BST

This article is 1 year old

< 604



There results of image searches for 'unprofessional hair for work' (left) and 'professional hair for work' (right) on Google. Photograph: Google

Recently, an MBA student named Rosalia discovered something alarming: Googling “unprofessional hairstyles for work” yielded image results mainly of black women with natural hair, while searching for the “professional” ones offered pictures of coiffed, white women. Often the hair styles themselves were not vastly different -- only the hair type and the wearer's skin.

Rosalia's tweet has since been retweeted thousands of times - more than 6,200 in the first 24 hours, she says - as her discovery sparked discussion on implicit racial biases against black people in the workplace. Can an algorithm itself be racist? Or is it only reflecting the wider social landscape?

Solutions?

- So, if you use Facebook, *don't* include any personal information, images, etc., that you would not be comfortable with being public.
- Use different Facebook accounts for different purposes.
- Use appropriate privacy and advertising settings.
- Learn about *Logging Out*.
- Use a webpage tracker-detector such as ghostery.com.

In MPA, some of us started using Facebook in 2011.

- Krisztian Hofstadter first used it while I was on sabbatical.
- Used initially primarily to aid *communication*.
- It's easy to find: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sensortechnology/>
- and post to: [sensortechnology@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sensortechnology/)

Sensor Technology MOD000607

Public Group

Discussion

Members

Events

Videos

Photos

Files

Group Insights

Manage Group

Search this group

Shortcuts

ARU Sound and Image

Music in Context 2B (M...

Music in Context 2ACM...



Krisztián Hofstädter - tEdör

October 24, 2011 · Cambridge

hello all,

Presentatin (KINECT, wii) so let me know whether I should invite the guy for next week I was talking about in class or not.

all the best, K

Like Comment Share

Seen by 130



Write a comment...



Andy Buclaw

October 23, 2011

This would be a cool gig to go to for the module trip.

NegativWobblyland leaves behind the cut-and-paste formats of their previous collaborations to celebrate the unpredictable magic of...The Booper. Originally invented by Negativland's The Weatherman around 1975 (long before the term "circuit bending"), Boopers are 100% analog feedback instruments, created entirely from salvaged radio and amplifier parts, which recycle back on themselves to generate a living music from feedback and dirt.

<http://cafeoto.co.uk/negativwobblyland.shtm>

Like Comment Share

Krisztián Hofstädter - tEdör

Seen by 130

View 2 more comments



Andy Buclaw That i would love to happen

Like



Krisztián Hofstädter - tEdör I think its sold out, nice idea.

<http://www.amontobin.com/tour>

Amon Tobin

The ISAM tour will feature a stunning 25' x 14' x 8' multi-dimensional/ shape shifting 3-D art installation surrounding Tobin and enveloping him and the audience in a beyond 3-D experience. A fantastic visual journey to accompany ISAM.

AMONTOBIN.COM

Factors involved in using Facebook include:

- A large proportion of people, especially younger people, already have Facebook accounts so they already know how it works
- Many people are not at all keen on Facebook, but still have accounts and still know how it works.
- People are generally (maybe inadvisedly) automatically logged into Facebook, so there is little or no effort in visiting (unlike logging into an LMS/VLE...)

Factors involved in using Facebook include:

- Facebook is an organisation focused primarily on this one platform and ensuring that it stays ahead of the competition. It has resources smaller systems and organisations cannot hope to match, so those smaller systems sometimes look:
 - tired
 - old-fashioned and out-of-touch
 - controlling
 - amateur
 - even more unappealing than Facebook
- all of which are unappealing to some self-conscious students.

So, there some very good reasons for using Facebook. Here's an example of it in use:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sensortechnology/>

Specific things to point out:

- There are 82 members including students (and staff) from *previous years*. We regularly hear from alumni that they keep up with course developments with interest and affection. It also allows them a resource that they can keep contributing too on graduation.
- Although in general most posts are from members of staff, there are quite a few student posters too. These tend to occur more in specific cohorts where Facebook activity is in general higher.
- There are usually people externally who want to join. Circuit Bending (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/circuitbending/>) currently has 60 external people wanting to join!
- Posts are about questions concerning the course and submissions, cultural events, technical issues, etc.

It's also worth pointing out that there are many 'private' Facebook pages which are run by students deliberately so that they can communicate without staff knowledge.

- These pages would probably exist whether we use Facebook 'officially' or not.
- Since 2011 the Department has gradually moved from (a somewhat reluctant?) acceptance of Facebook use to now insisting that *all* courses have regularly updated Facebook pages.

However, there are some problems. These are not necessarily solely concerning Facebook, but they do concern student perception of staff use of new and social media:

- A related resource is YouTube, which has many of the same pros and cons as Facebook.
- I've spoken to music staff from all over the world who think that it's marvellous that we now have music resources such as the following, freely available:

Béla Bartók - String Quartet No. 4 [5/5]

V.

Allegro molto, ♩ = 152

5

ff *ff* *ff* *ff* *simile*

However, I've heard and seen a number of complaints from students that staff use of such resources is 'lazy'; that they, the students, could access them themselves. Presumably, they would prefer staff to bring along paper scores and CDs/records, etc., as these are more 'academic'!

Other issues:

- I have had criticisms (usually via Module Evaluation) that the inclusion of cultural events, related technical items, in fact, *anything* that isn't directly related to a particular assessment element (even if you argue that it is related indirectly), is a 'waste of time', nothing to do with them and more to do with staff interests than the students. This is not helped when students are able to comment negatively on MESs even if they have attended few or even *no* previous classes.
- Such criticism, and even worse the indirect upholding of such criticism at Faculty level and higher through the ever increasing demand for higher and higher targets directly undermines the use of potentially interesting and innovative resources. If a class contains a few disgruntled students they can now easily bring an MES into disrepute, nullifying any advantage gained by increased engagement with the rest of the class.
- Students have no experience of things being worse than they don't know when they're better.

Conclusions:

- It's more difficult and complicated than it seems.
- Privacy and information curation and harvesting are very real problems.
- Reactions of students can seem infuriatingly diverse and whimsical.
- Watch out for unintended consequences.

Conclusions:

- Social media will continue to change and develop in response to the world. It is all but certain that the educational establishment, in collaboration with its IT departments will get it wrong, but by attempting to control too much they may well get it wrong even more.
- You have to allow experimentation and accept a certain amount of failure in order to identify those things that work well in general.
- There is no single answer to anything. Some courses are not suited to Social Media at all, but it's not always easy to identify which are and which aren't, because students are increasingly outspoken and their reactions are increasingly unpredictable.

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