Social Internet communities

How Norwegian youth use the Internet

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Social Internet communities

- The project is financed by the Ministry of Government Administration and Reform.

- Conducted by:
  - Network for IT-Research and Competence in Education (ITU), University of Oslo
  - Institute of Media and Communication (IMC), University of Oslo

- Period: October 2007 - April 2008.

Focus of the project

- **Social internet communities**
    - Social web, web 2.0
    - YouTube, Facebook, Nettby,

- **Internet generation**
    - Has grown up with digital technologies
    - 16-19-year-olds

Studies in the project

- Preliminary analysis
  - Developed over time

- Questionnaire survey (750 replies)
  - Mapping young people's use of social websites.

- Focus groups (4 groups of 5-6 young people each)
  - Understanding how and why youth use social websites, and how young people search information.

Preliminary analysis, questionnaire survey and focus groups were conducted by TNS Gallup

All figures are from TNS Gallup

Young people are major users

When near a computer, I'm always logged on, even when I'm watching TV.

- **The Internet is the largest medium among youth**
  - 96% of 16-19-year-olds use the Internet daily

- **Nearly everyone has access**
  - 99% of 16-19-year-olds have access to the Internet

- **The Internet is used throughout the day**
  - 76% of 16-19-year-olds use the Internet two or more times a day.
  - They turn on their computer when they come home and let it remain on while they do other things. They check the computer intermittently to see what's been happening on Facebook or "Nettby".

Online communities are a major part of young people's Internet use

Q7: Hvor ofte pleier du Œ gj¿re f¿lgende pŒ Internett?
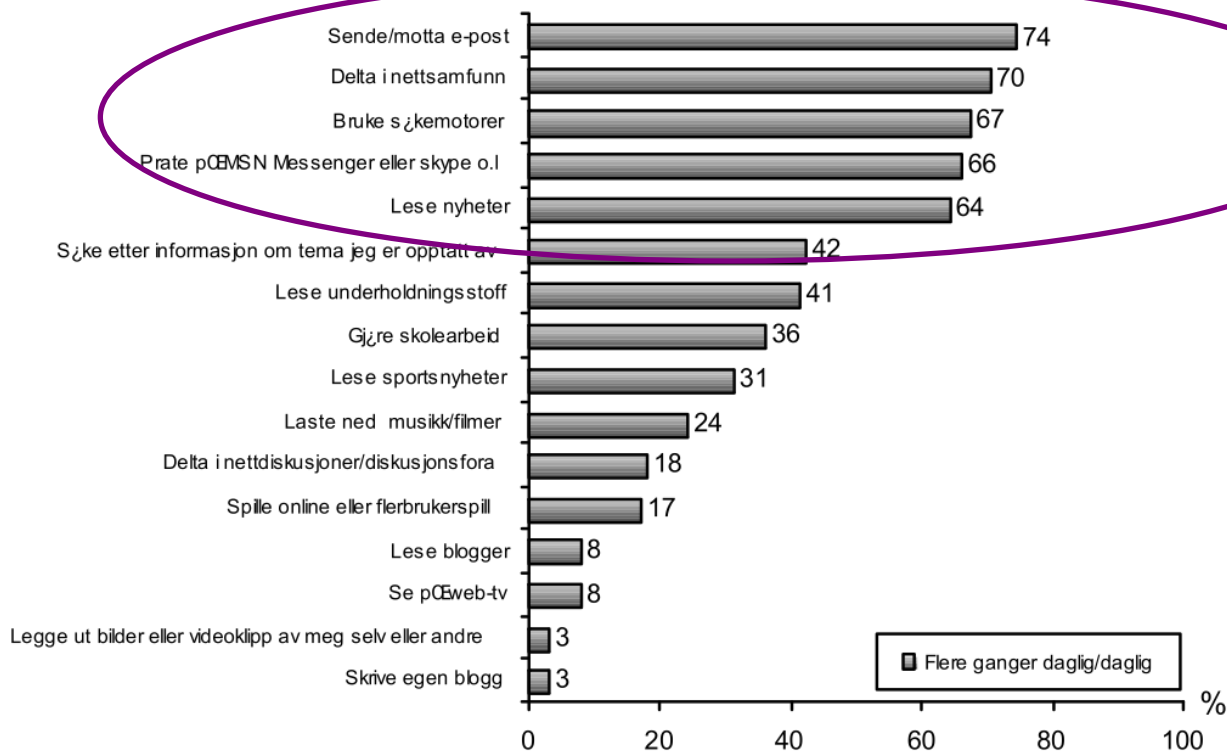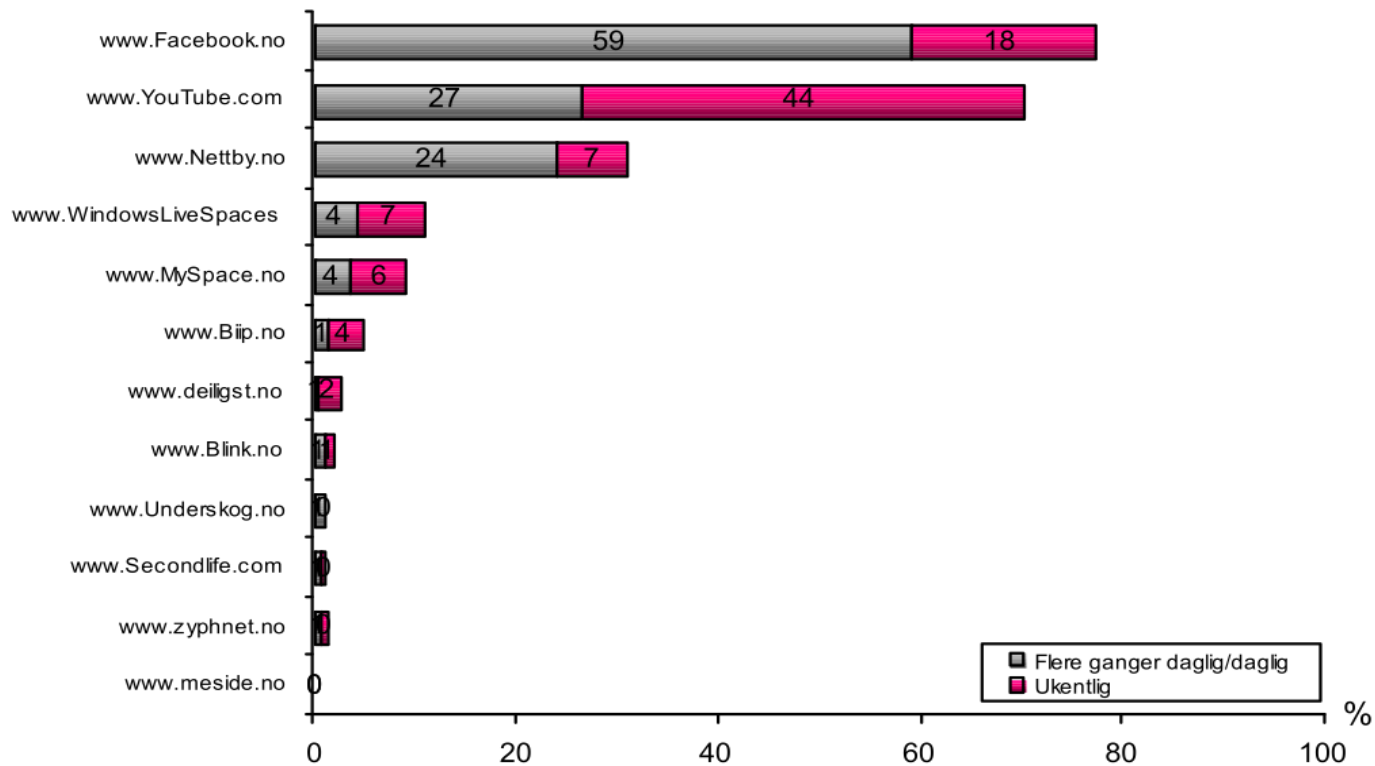
Base: 750 (alle)

TNS Gallup 2008

Girls and boys communicate differently

- 79% of girls use online communities one or more times a day

- 62% of boys do the same

- This creates the impression that girls are more socially oriented and extroverted

- Boys communicate somewhat more directly with their friends.

- Ofcom's survey on Social Networking (2008)

- The main trend is that a large majority of youth, both girls and boys, are active users of online communities, and that their common main activity is keeping contact with friends.

Facebook rules

Q9: Hvor ofte bruker du f¿lgende nettsamfunn?

	Flere ganger daglig/daglig	Ukentlig
www.Facebook.no	59	18
www.YouTube.com	27	44
www.Nettby.no	24	7
www.WindowsLiveSpaces	4	7
www.MySpace.no	4	6
www.Biip.no	1	4
www.deiligst.no		2
www.Blink.no	1	1
www.Underskog.no		0
www.Secondlife.com		0
www.zyphnet.no		1
www.meside.no	0	

Base: 750 (alle)
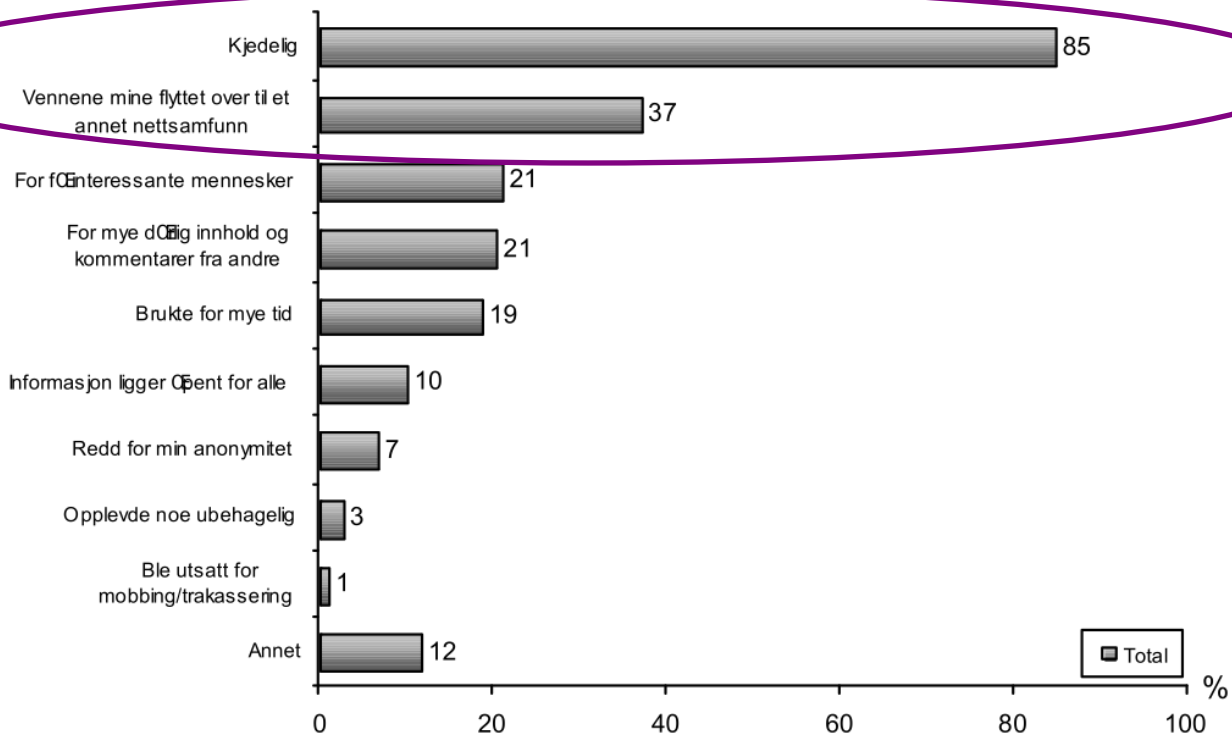
TNS Gallup 2008

Use of online communities

- **Most youth are members of more than one online community**
  - An average of 3.4 online communities.
  - But they must complement each other (Facebook + YouTube).

- **Many quick visits**
  - Most youth spend less than half an hour in online communities per day.

I mostly go in
to have a look
and then go out again.

Young people move in hurds

Q11: Grunner til sluttet Œ bruke ett eller flere nettsamfunn?

TNS Gallup 2008

Are online communities useful?

- **Not important for searching information?**
  - Online communities are considered of little use for searching information.
  - But participation is necessary for finding out what is happening.

My friend didn't want to join Facebook. Then she went to college, where so many things were planned in Facebook. Then she just had to join in order to keep track of events.

Scepticism to government in online communities?

People use Facebook to view pictures of their friends. I can't see that the two things belong together.

–But the Council for Mental Health ad campaign on Nettby is mentioned as a good thing.

Media Creators

- Young people participate in online communities because of entertainment

- This requires certain skills

- For example, all users create their own profile or website.

- These are multimodal texts where users can to varying extent determine layout, functions and complexity.

- All young people in online communities are thus more or less media creators.

Digital literacy in school

- New challenges with respect to the skills or competencies that have become central and relevant.

- Online communities is a creative practice and it is a positive and constructive way of stimulating digital literacy

- The future's literacy is being able to produce media expressions, navigate in a knowledge community and make use of available knowledge.