

## AN EVALUATION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

*The present research aims at measuring how social networking is a source of developing entrepreneurial intentions among entrepreneurs. The study was designed with the intent to find the components of social networking which help in entrepreneurship. The present research aims at measuring how social networking is a source of developing entrepreneurial intentions among entrepreneurs. The study was designed with the intent to find the components of social networking which help in entrepreneurship. Mass media found as a main source in providing the platform for entrepreneurship in the realm of networking. It is suggested that universities should create network nexus through old students that might develop in to business. Government should facilitate the self-employed people while providing them opportunities of strengthen their social networks through its various means.*

*Key Words: Entrepreneurship, Social networking, networking.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social networking plays a significant role in entrepreneurship development. Social networking provides the entrepreneur some of the very useful resources to run the business. This study makes attempt to explore the pattern of social networking in relation with entrepreneurial success. This study was conducted on three groups of entrepreneurs of three different phases: motivational, planning and established. By using nonparametric regression tree model, three models of entrepreneurial social networking and success are presented in this study. All these models are showing that entrepreneurial social networking is the powerful determinant of entrepreneurial success. Moreover, these models provide us some insight to understand the social networking profile of Indian entrepreneurs of different success level in different phases of entrepreneurship. Findings of this study confirms with other cross-cultural researches that were conducted in the area of social networking and

entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurship researchers increasingly recognize the importance of social networking on entrepreneurial activities (Borch, 1994; Hansen, 1995; Larson & Starr, 1993; Reynolds, 1991; Starr & MacMillan, 1990). Social network analysis explores the relationship between entrepreneurs and others that provide the resources that are important in establishing a business (Johannisson, 1988; Larson, 1991). Entrepreneurs have their original ideas, some knowledge and competence to run the business, but they also need complementary resources to produce and deliver their goods and services. (Teece, 1987). Social network provides the entrepreneurs adequate knowledge, support and access to distribution channels to perform their business. Entrepreneurs are also linked to people and organizations that interact among themselves, these contacts can widen the availability of resources that sustain a new firm (Hansen, 1995). Social networks are not fixed; they are the social context of business and can be activated according to different needs (Granovetter, 1985; Burt, 1992). According to the need of the enterprise, entrepreneurs interact with both the people that are close or distant to them. Family members can play an important role in decision making process and support. As they entertain, plan for and actually set up a firm, entrepreneurs call their family and others in their networks for different kinds of help and support (Rosenblatt, de Mik, Anderson & Johnson, 1985).

## **SOME OF THE USEFUL SITES WHICH HELP THE ENTREPRENEURS TO NURTURE THEIR ENTERPRISES ARE LISTED BELOW:**

### **1. Entrepreneur Connect**

Entrepreneur Media, the company that produces Entrepreneur Magazine, started a social network over a year ago specifically for entrepreneurs and small business owners called Entrepreneur Connect. Like all social networks, you have the opportunity to create your own profile, explore the community, share ideas with other entrepreneurs and network. Unlike most social networks, this one frowns upon too much self-promotion and applauds idea sharing.

You can use this network to connect to service providers, suppliers, advisers and colleagues. Just like LinkedIn and Facebook, there are professional groups that you can join or create. Another cool feature is that you're able to start your own blog and possibly have it appear on the main page. This is similar to what Fast Company has done with their website.

### **2. PartnerUp**

PartnerUp is a social network for entrepreneurs who are searching for people and resources for business opportunities. Anyone can join, but business partners, co-founders, executives and board members will get the

most out of this one. In this network, you can ask or offer advice, find commercial real estate and find service providers like accountants and marketers for your business.

The big differentiator with this social network is the commercial real estate “MoveUpSM” program that serves entrepreneurs who have experienced a hard time trying to find office space for their business. They also have a Resource Directory that allows small and mid-sized businesses to advertise their services.

### 3. StartupNation



Most social networks neglect the content aspect that makes StartupNation so useful. With articles, forums, blogs, on-demand seminars, and podcasts, entrepreneurs will be better prepared for their ventures and have the resources required to make better business decisions.

There are a wide range of topics being discussed on StartupNation right now, including business planning, marketing and web-based business. The site also offers a series of competitions, such as a dorm-based 20 contest and an elevator pitch competition. If you're an entrepreneur or hope to become one, this site is definitely one you can't miss out on.

#### 4. LinkedIn

It's difficult to leave LinkedIn off of any social networking list because it's so useful for anyone who's either searching for a job, is trying to network with like-minded individuals, or building a company. LinkedIn offers many resources for entrepreneurs, such as groups, including the very popular "On Startups" group that has over 54,000 members.

Entrepreneurs on LinkedIn should brand themselves properly so they can attract the right kind of business opportunities, and perform searches to find service providers or partners. As an entrepreneur, you should also be looking to participate in LinkedIn Answers, events and applications to spruce up your profile and become a valuable member to your community.

#### 5. Biznik

This isn't another LinkedIn clone. Instead, Biznik brands itself as a social network that "doesn't suck." The Biznik community is composed of freelancers, CEOs, and the self-employed. Like the other networks, this is a place for you to share ideas, instead of posting your resume. It is mandatory for all members to use their real names and provide real data, and Biznik editors actually review all profiles to ensure compliance with that policy. There are three levels of membership, including basic, active (\$10 a month for an enhanced profile) and supporting (\$24 a month for increased visibility).

#### 6. Perfect Business

If you want to meet thousands of serious entrepreneurs, experts and investors from a variety of industries, then Perfect Business might be the perfect social network for you. The type of people you'll find are potential business partners, potential clients and advisers. Additionally, the site has leading business partners like Entrepreneur and Virgin Money.



From business networking to a video center where you can learn from successful entrepreneurs, a business plan builder and even an investor center, you'll have most of the resources you need to create or regenerate your business. There is a free basic membership and a gold membership that costs \$29.99 per month.

## 7. Go BIG Network

The Go BIG Network embraces job seekers, in addition to funding sources, service providers and entrepreneurs. In this social network, you post requests for help, which are then routed to other people in the network that can answer your questions or support you. Members of this social network can search through profiles of other members, contact them or post a request (a classified ad) to talk about what they are looking for (such as a business partner). The profiles on this network are targeted and specific so it's easy to find an investor in a particular region.

## 8. Cofoundr

The Cofoundr network is made up of idea makers, entrepreneurs, programmers, web designers, investors, freelancers and executives. The primary purpose of joining this network is to start a new web venture. Unlike most of the social networks already listed here, Cofoundr is a strictly private network, which means that you can't view member profiles before you register for an account.

Membership requires having a valid university or work email address, which means high schools students and younger aren't allowed. The first thing you have to do is sign up, then specify your abilities and the people you are trying to network with and finally, post your idea on the bulletin board or in the forum.

## 9. The Funded



The Funded is an online community of entrepreneurs who research, rate and review funding sources. Entrepreneurs can view and share terms sheets to assist each other in finding good investors, as well as discuss the inner workings of operating a business. General benefits of this site include viewing facts, reviews and commentary on funding resources, and accessing RSS feeds of the most recent public comments by members.

By joining the site, you have access to detailed fund profiles with specialty, reference investments, and investment criteria, in addition to accessing partner vCards that have full contact information of all partners at venture funds. In order to get any value out of this social network, you pretty much have to become a member.

## 10. Young Entrepreneur

If you're young, entrepreneurial and socially active or just curious, then Young Entrepreneur is a great starting point for you. This community appears as a discussion forum, with topics such as e-commerce, search engine

optimization, marketing, IT & Internet, and franchising. Aside from their main forum and threads, there is a popular blog and some great videos.

## CONCLUSION

If people do not grow up with the genetic make-up or in an entrepreneurial environment, they are unlikely to have adequate role models to encourage them to enter a career as an entrepreneur. This suggests that role models provided at an early age, possibly in the schools, would be helpful. These role models would also encourage an appropriate work ethic. This may be particularly important as Generation Y becomes the potential entrepreneurs of the future. Current entrepreneurs may benefit from information about what would enable them to match highly successful entrepreneurs. They may need advice about making appropriate appointments to key roles and assistance in ensuring the analytical aspects of the business are undertaken. There is also an opportunity for these entrepreneurs' skills to be utilised when they reach retirement age, as they are keen to keep some involvement in business, although their hands-on, operational approach may not necessarily make them the best mentors. Government needs to ease the administrative and compliance burdens on entrepreneurs by making it easy for them to do the required paperwork. Services need to be offered through organisations not seen as being part of the bureaucracy. Career advice in secondary and tertiary education regarding suitability for entrepreneurship may also be helpful.

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