

IS SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ME?

KEN ARCIA

Ken Arcia: Social Media's a hot topic for the last one or two years. I hope to give you a brief explanation of what social Media is, show you several examples, and then you can decide if you want to be involved with social media. I'll give you the top social media sites, explaining the difference between personal and business sites.

I've been a member of ALDA since 1994, this is my 18th consecutive ALDAcon. I missed the first few. But once I joined, I was addicted. I run the ALDA website, ALDA Facebook page and ALDA Twitter page. I've been involved with social media for over ten years. I have a bachelor's degree in psychology and went to graduate school for marriage counseling. But computers and technology became my career. I was involved with social media when I worked with Sprint. I left Sprint last year, then joined AT&T as Social Media Manager.

There are ten social media sites. The biggest one is Facebook. As of the end of last year, they had almost 1 billion members, 850 million members all over the world. It was founded in 2004 as a way to identify friends in photos. People were sharing photos on the Internet, and sometimes other friends of friends would ask, who is that person in the photo? Then, they would click on the photo and tag them. From that, Facebook grew to where it is now.

It's used for both business and personal pages. It's free, completely free. Many businesses still view Facebook as a fun personal page, not for business. If they do that, they're missing out. Some businesses recognize its usefulness. You'll notice sometimes commercials on TV or in magazines will say "Like us on Facebook."

It's another way of marketing. If you "like" a business' page on Facebook, you can get discounts or coupons that are not available in the regular media. Once you "like" something on Facebook, you become a subscriber. That means from then on, any time you click on "like," you will get information from that business. If you don't want that information, you return to that page and "unlike" them.

Audience Member: How do you unlike a person? How do you get them off of your site?

Ken Arcia: When you first go to that page and you click "like," you'll see the button at the top that says "like" and it will be checked. If you want to unlike, you just click it again and it becomes "unliked."

Most people who are on Facebook stay logged in on their mobile phones, iPads or tablets. Facebook also has a feature for chat, like IM (Instant Message). They have

added Visio, so you can see the other person. We can thank Skype for that. We can thank Facebook for people using terms like "tag," "like" and "share".

Twitter. As of the end of last year, Twitter had about 150 million people all over the world using it. Twitter, founded in 2006, is based on 140 characters, not words, characters, in text messaging on cell phones. It's used for both business and pleasure. The terms for Twitter are "follow" and "hashtag." It's the number and pound symbol that you add to your Twitter messages.

Twitter is probably the fastest way to get information out there because it's all text based, no pictures or graphics. It's nice that you don't have to go looking for information. Once you sign up, you automatically subscribe to the person of interest, you get all of their messages. People follow celebrities or politicians if they want instant information.

YouTube. It was started in 2005 as Internet television. First it was set up for personal videos. Then later YouTube added full length movies, commercials and promotional videos. It's now owned by Google.

If you create different videos you can make your own channel so people can see what you posted. It includes full length movies and videos and you can add captions in different languages.

Google created "Instant captioning" that uses voice recognition to follow what the person is saying. It automatically creates the captions but it's not very good. Sometimes the captions are way off. However, it's their first attempt at trying to use voice recognition.

Audience Member: How do you add captions?

Ken Arcia: You have to Google to see how to do that because there are several different methods. But, basically, you would type up everything that you're saying, as a text file. Then, upload it and match it with what the person is saying. You see a timeline and put in the words. There are different kinds of software for that so look at Google and find how to do it.

It has both businesses and personal uses and over 100 million views of different videos every day. Their headquarters are in San Bruno, just south of San Francisco.

We also have *Google Plus* which I feel is kind of a flop. It's not as successful as Google envisioned. It seems only people who work for Google use Google plus. Originally, the idea was to create something like Facebook. (Google wants their hand in everything.) As of the end of January, Google Plus has about 90 million users, still less than Twitter. I think another version was Wave and Buzz, used for both business and personal pleasure. Terms used for Google Plus tend to be "Plus 1" which is almost like sharing something. "Hangout" is when you have several people that you want to meet together,

then you call it a “hangout.” If you have friends, you can put them in different circles, like coworkers, or bridge club, or classmates. Different circles can overlap. You can have one friend who is in several different circles. It's a little less busy than Facebook. It's a nice website and social media; it's just not as popular as Facebook. There are similarities, so people ask, why use that one? It's the same thing.

LinkedIn. LinkedIn was created in 2003 and has 150 million users. It was created for professional networking. Last year when I was laid off from Sprint, I posted my resume on LinkedIn. People would look at my LinkedIn page for my resume and my qualifications. Also suppose I wanted to hire someone who is skilled in one particular area, I could go to LinkedIn and look for people who are skilled in that area. LinkedIn's earnings for last year were more than Twitter's. When the shares became public to be traded, all 5,000 employees instantly became millionaires. The LinkedIn employees from the beginning were paid a salary but also given stock options.

LinkedIn shows updates for anybody who you connect with on LinkedIn. If they update their resume or credentials, those are shown. You can search for contacts, groups of people, post jobs available or look for available jobs. You can search your Yahoo, gmail or e-mail accounts for your contacts who are signed up to LinkedIn and add them.

Flickr. Have you heard of Flickr? Flickr is owned by Yahoo and it lets you have a place where you can put your photos and videos. It's great for photographers, like me. I can post photos and Flickr shows what kind of lens I used, the speed I used or settings on my camera. It's nice sharing that information with other photographers. It gives you basic storage space free. If you're going to post a lot of videos, then you pay depending how much storage space you use.

Audience Member: Is Flickr strictly personal or could anybody see what you post out there? Is it open to the public or is it private?

Ken Arcia: You can change the settings depending on who you want to see your photos. For some photos, you can indicate “public” and anybody can view. Others are hidden and you send invites to those people you want to see the hidden photos.

Yelp is a personal network which was founded in 2004. Suppose you move to a new city and want to find a good doctor, a good dentist, a beauty salon or a barber or whatever. What would you do? You can meet your new neighbors and ask, or use Yelp. You post what you're looking for and where. It will show you a list of different results with ratings or reviews of those services or products. Suppose I'm coming here and want to find a good brewpub. Yelp will give me several options and what people say about each place. This way, you get more of an honest opinion about the product or the service, instead of relying on someone paid to tell you how great the place is. Last quarter of this year, Yelp averaged 6 million monthly visits. They have over 25 million reviews. I used it many times before I ever wrote a review. Now I feel any time I go to Yelp to look for something, and then I use that service or product, I feel I should review it for other people's use.

Audience Member: Can nonprofits like ALDA have an account on Yelp?

Ken Arcia: Yes. Business owners or managers can set up a free account. You can post photos and messages and everything is free. Yelp makes its money from advertisements posted on the side bar.

Here's what happens. Up at the top you say what are you searching for? And then next, near where? And then you click "search" and it gives you a whole list. And you click it on -- sometimes there are many just a few reviews, sometimes there may be hundreds of reviews on something. You can see the reviews are rated, you know how somebody rates something. Three stars out of five or two stars. Just go to Yelp.com if you want to sign up.

Here are a few other website or other social media. Instagram has become very popular. Facebook saw it and bought it earlier this year for \$1 billion. Instagram is just a cool app that you can use on your phone to post pictures. It doesn't matter if you have an iPhone or Android or whatever, you just download the Instagram app. Then you use filters that can change the look of the photo. You can post the photo on Twitter or Facebook or wherever. Like other social media sites, you can follow, or other people can follow you. Once they sign up, they see any photos you post or you see any photos they post. It gives you a different perspective on how people see things.

I use it. I decided last year that this year I would post at least one picture, every day. That means a photo a day. I use Instagram for most of my pictures.

People can create similar ideas or themes. You sign up and you say this month, it will tell you what to post. For example, tomorrow post something red. The next day post something related to speed. Or family. It's just fun seeing how different people view different photos of each other.

Foursquare is used to find your friends who are near you on any given day. If your friends are signed up for Foursquare, it will show where you are. Then you can look for friends who are nearby. Do you want to meet them for a drink or lunch? If you're in a different city, you can find where your friends are there.

Audience Member: Is it possible to use Foursquare for agencies in different areas, so you can know what the agencies are doing?

Ken Arcia: Yes, if you are a deaf agency, you can sign up on Foursquare and can find other deaf agencies or services in your area.

Audience Member: Let's say a deaf agency wanted to post on Foursquare for individuals traveling who might want to know if there is there a deaf agency near them. Can they can just go to Foursquare and ask, if there is a deaf agency nearby? Something like that?

Ken Arcia: I think you would use Yelp for that because Foursquare is used more for mobile devices and “checking in” wherever you are. Say you want to find out if there is a movie near you or if you want to find an agency near you, where you are, or where you are going, you then use Yelp. You wouldn't use Foursquare. Foursquare lets you “check in”. You can find friends who are nearby. Maybe a friend is in the same supermarket or shopping mall and you can meet up! Kids can use it when they tell their parents they are going to a movie, they can “check in” and the parents see that they really are where they say they are.

Audience Member: Somebody just asked me to join one called WAYN, which means Where Are You Now? It sounds very much like Foursquare.

Ken Arcia: Yes. There are hundreds of social media and mobile applications out there. I'm just trying to show you the most popular, the top ones that people use. There is another app or website called "Where" and you can do the same thing. Suppose when you're traveling, you wanted to find a hair salon in any given city. Just type it in and “Where” will show where you are, which ones are near you and how far they are. Then the extra step after that would be like Yelp because it would show you reviews, comments and opinions.

Audience Member: On the Foursquare, how is that different from checking in with Facebook? And how do they know your friends are nearby? What do they use as a basis for your friends? Do they use your Facebook people? Do they use your contact list? I get kind of worried about all this information out in a public arena.

Ken Arcia: You bring up a very good point. It depends on your perspective or your willingness to give up some of your privacy. When you sign up for a lot of these sites, you are giving up a lot of your private information. You can decide no, you don't want to be part of that because you want to keep your information private.

Facebook now and Instagram also contracted with Foursquare so that when you take a picture, it uses Foursquare to search where you are. Then it integrates that information when you post the photo. There are programs to search and find where you are; then it posts the information.

Again, I want to remind you that you decide what you want to be a part of. If there is information that you prefer to keep private, that's fine. You don't have to join any of these social media. But some are fun and you might want to share that information. The same thing with Facebook. So many people use it because it's so popular. Yet, many other people don't want to join it because they don't want information about them out there. That's fine. However, there are a lot of security settings in Facebook so you can only share some information.

I've noticed if I'm looking for a friend on Facebook and find them, when I click and want to see their friends or their photo, most of the time I'm blocked. That person has set it up that way. Many people don't know they can do that. You just go into settings and

look around in the privacy information, check all the boxes describing what you don't want to share.

Audience Member: I was wondering, if someone is flaming you or just having some personal attacks against an individual or an agency, do any of these sites allow you to block an individual?

Ken Arcia: Most of the sites I've seen would allow you to do that.

Also, going back to Facebook, you can use Facebook to find old friends, family members you haven't been in contact for a long time. When I became deaf, I lost a lot of contact with family members who didn't sign or didn't have e-mail. That was 20 years ago. Now when I look for them, I find them on Facebook and I want to keep in contact that way. So that's nice.

On the other hand, sometimes I get friend requests from people I used to know in high school. I have no real desire to be friends with them again. When they ask me to be friends, I decline. They don't see that I declined. When I send out friend requests, if somebody turns me down, I don't take it personally. You can decide if you want to be friends with someone or not.

Audience Member: I have another Facebook question. I am someone's relative. I don't want to block them but I don't really want to know every single thing they do every day. Can I keep them as a friend and just block some of their notifications?

Ken Arcia: There's a lot of different settings you can change to accomplish that. When you see a lot of information posted on your news feed from one person or several people, again and again and again, you can click next to their name how much information you want from that person. Or you can hide them meaning I don't want to see that. Now, it's not blocking them. They still contact you; you just don't see their posts on your news feed every day.

Audience Member: I'm curious to know that when people interview for jobs, will the companies that are interviewing people for jobs be able to check on Facebook status and those kinds of things?

Ken Arcia: Very good question. Related to privacy, again, anything you post on the Internet, anyone can see. So be very careful. Like they say, the Internet is forever. The e-mails you send out, the posts on Web Pages are recorded somewhere. It's likely if you are applying for a job, your employer may check your website and may check your Facebook posts. You have to talk with your company about their policy about that.

I work for AT&T so I have a personal page and I have a work page. But I know my boss sees my personal page so I'm not going to post any risque things or bad information on there that could affect my job. That's commonsense. You have to check with your company about if they personal pages or how often they do that. Policies vary. I've

known some people who have been fired because of something that they had posted on the Internet or their website or Facebook. You have to be careful.

Audience Member: I used that word of caution a lot because I've been a school teacher. A lot of friends are former students, so that I say can also affect my job. I have ask myself, what would I tell my family or my friends that I don't want my students to know on my job? That really limits what I put on Facebook. I'm always aware that there are multiple audiences and I have to be very careful. If I put the wrong thing up about my personal life, my students and former students can find that and spread it.

Ken Arcia: I have a friend who is a rehab counselor who doesn't want his clients to be his friends. What he did was create a different name. He used a different name for his friends. He used another name for professional use. He wanted to keep his professional life separate from her personal life.

Audience Member: Sometimes I get "tagged," or people will "tag" me with photos. If it's a nice photo, I might want to forward it to somebody. Sometimes I don't want to tag anything on my list or maybe I don't want to be tagged at all. Is there a way to prevent that? Please explain about tagging.

Ken Arcia: Sometimes people post photos of you that you don't want others to see. Or someone posts an unflattering photo. It's that privacy issue again. Any time someone tags you, you are notified automatically. Go to that notification they send you, click on that, go to the photo and when it has all the names of the people in the photo, you click or you hover your mouse on your name and then remove tag. So then other people may see you in the photo, but they're not notified that it is you in that photo.

If you really don't want anybody to see that, you can inform, please remove that. As a photographer, that is tough for me with group photos. If there is something you don't like, you have the liberty to say, "No, I don't want that published." But everybody else in the photo likes the photo, so I don't want to remove it. If I really want to publish the photo, I'll blur you. Recently I had a birthday party for a friend, and another friend had a bit too much to drink in the picture I took, she looked drunk. She said, "Please remove that. I blurred her face out. You have a couple of different ways to go. Contact the person and ask them to remove the offending picture or just go in there yourself and remove the tag. Either way works.

Okay? I think that's it for now. So, thank you again for coming to the workshop and I hope it was helpful.

Ken Arcia is a long-time ALDA member, a past-president of ALDA Inc. , and a self-professed "geek." He is also an avid traveler and photographer. Ken co-manages ALDA's Facebook and Twitter pages. He became deaf at age 21 from NF-2 and is currently the Social Media Manager for AT&T Relay. This is Ken's 18th consecutive ALDAcon.