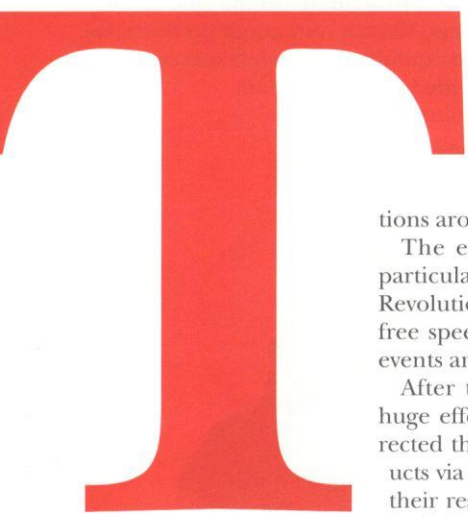


Virtual Revolution

How social media has changed the world and which platforms will take it by storm in 2014

By Ali Shaaban



he development of Facebook in 2004 triggered a revolution in global communications and it now plays a role in nearly every aspect of our lives: from social activities and marketing to activism and politics. Notably it has even been a catalyst for revolutions around the world.

The effect of social media on Egyptians in particular became tangible after the January 25 Revolution in 2011. It was a catalyst, an outlet for free speech, a source of information on current events and a way to organize demonstrations.

After the revolution, companies realized the huge effect of social media on Egyptians and directed their efforts towards marketing their products via platforms like Facebook and Twitter with their respective 17 million and 1.6 million users. Statistics show that Egyptian users have become among the most active users of such services.

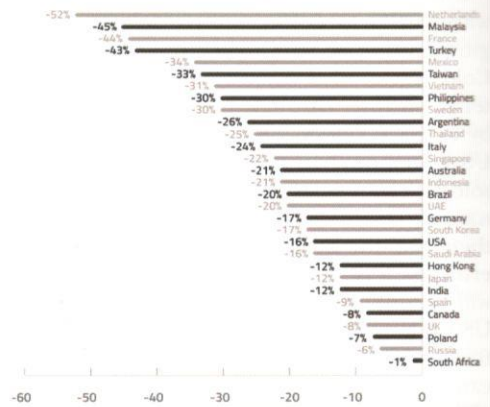
Despite the huge effect social media has had on Egyptians, for the most part it is still in its infancy. Meanwhile, there are several examples of big brands in Egypt which have experienced branding success through social media, particularly Facebook. These include Emaar Misr, BMW, Nokia and Etisalat. Social media business in Egypt is growing and on its way to creating its own identity.

According to the numbers, 50% of Twitter users in Egypt are 21 or younger, 25% are aged 25-34, while those 45 or older account for just 9% of users. Of total users, 29% access the services via their smartphones.

“More than 50% of online marketers believe that social media helped them to increase sales”

WHICH MARKETS ARE MOST IMPACTED?

TREND IN ACTIVE USAGE, % of Teens between Q2 2012 and Q3 2013 Global exc. China. Question: Which of the following social platforms have you used or contributed to in the past month? // Base: % change in millions of active users 16-19 years old globally // Source: GlobalWebIndex



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Ali Shaaban

Ali Shaaban is a pioneer in the digital advertising and communications industry in Egypt with over a decade of experience. He leads the vision for Icon Creations, an award winning creative digital agency. His clients include, BMW, MINI, Nissan, KIA, Emaar Misr, Unilever, P&G, McDonalds, Lufthansa, Hyatt, Hilton Hotels, National Bank of Egypt among others. Ali has led and transformed Icon Creations to become one of the most successful full-service creative digital agencies, creating integrated digital marketing experiences, products and services for its clients.

The trend shows that those under 20 are more likely to migrate from Facebook to new social media platforms like Instagram, tumblr and Snapchat. This drove Facebook to buy out many of these companies, including Instagram, and to enhance its features to retain users, such as copying Twitter's hashtag feature, and Foursquare's check-in feature.

Social media has become an important part of online marketing where brand popularity can easily be quantified by the number of fans on different platforms.

Online, consumers consult social media before making purchases. They check evaluate the brand based on followers, in addition to checking the product's price and features.

There are statistics showing the effect of social media on business globally; more than 50% of online marketers believe that social media helped them to increase sales.

Despite the success of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, it is expected that this generation of social media websites will disappear sooner than we think as newer, updated ideas appear. This makes sense as daily technological updates are developed, thereby making users more demanding.

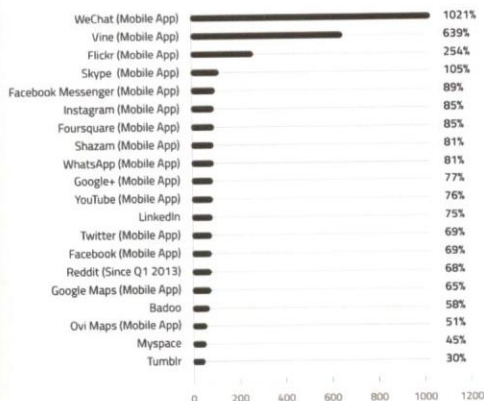
The evolution of social media took place in stages; first we had MySpace, then Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram and finally Google +. There are many more social media apps and websites that have been launched or that are now in at maturity and there are the new and rising starts like Snapchat and Kik, each targeting a certain age bracket with fan bases that are growing everyday.

We can't predict what the future will hold for social media users — that depends on users who increasingly have more expectations, needs and variable demands — but we can guarantee that the future will definitely hold more effective and updated social media channels than what we have presently. **bt**

WHERE ARE THEY GOING?



TREND IN ACTIVE USAGE, TOP 20, % of Teens between Q1 2013 and Q3 2013 Global exc. China. Question: Which of the following social platforms have you used or contributed to in the past month? // Base: % change in millions // Source: GlobalWebIndex

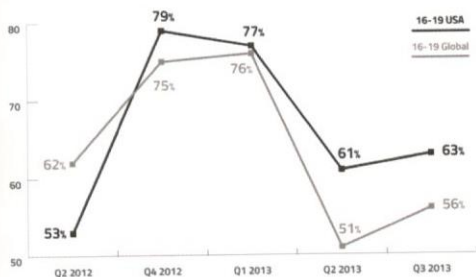


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IS FACEBOOK LOSING TEENS?



TREND IN ACTIVE USAGE, % of Teens between Q2 2012 and Q3 2013 Global exc. China. Question: Which of the following social platforms have you used or contributed to in the past month? // Base: % change in millions // Source: GlobalWebIndex



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