THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON INFORMATION FLOW

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“Today people don’t trust companies. One of the things marketers want to do is to humanize their brand. What better way to do it than put a live person in front of them.”
INTRODUCTION

- The majority of the African population access the various social media platforms through their mobile phones.

- Mobile phone use has opened up doors in:
  - Personal learning
  - Networking and communication
  - Information dissemination
  - Media production and
  - Economic development
Social media technologies take on many different forms including:

- magazines
- Internet forums
- weblogs
- social blogs
- social blogs
- Wikis
- Podcasts
- rating and;
- social bookmarking.
The honeycomb framework defines how social media services focus on some or all of seven functional building blocks. These building blocks include:

- **Identity**: The extent to which the user reveal themselves.
- **Conversations**: The extent to which users communicate to each other.
- **Sharing**: The extent to which users exchange, distribute and receive content.
- **Presence**: The extent to which users know if others are available.
- **Relationships**: The extent to which users relate to each other.
- **Reputation**: The extent to which users know the social standing of others and content.
- **Groups**: The extent to which users are ordered or form communities.
### The Implications of the Social Media Functionalities

| **Presence** | • Creating and managing the reality, intimacy and immediacy of the context |
| **Sharing** | • Content management system and social graph |
| **Relationships** | • Managing the structural and flow properties in a network of relationships |
| **Identity** | • Data privacy controls, and tools for user self-promotion |
| **Conversations** | • Conversation velocity, and the risks of starting and joining |
| **Reputation** | • Monitoring the strength, passion, sentiment and reach of users and brands |
| **Groups** | • Membership rules and protocols |

Companies can use honey comb framework to monitor and understand how social media activities vary in terms of function and impact.
“A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is – it is what consumers tell each other it is.”

-Scott Cook, co-founder
Intuit
In the mid-1990s, as the use of mobile phones started its rapid spread in much of the developed world, few thought of Africa as a potential market.

Now, with more than 400 million subscribers (CCK, 2010), its market is larger than North America's.

Africa took the lead in the global shift from fixed to mobile telephones (UN International Telecommunications Union Report, 2010)

Africans are coupling their already extensive use of cell phones with a more recent and massive interest in social media.
The explosive growth of Social Media has provided millions of people the opportunity to create and share content on a scale barely imaginable a few years ago.

The youth occupies the highest percentage in the use of social media in communication and social networking.

Given this widespread generation and consumption of content, it is natural to target one's messages to highly networked youth who will propagate them further in the social network.

Various research findings can be easily disseminated through this channel.
Imagine the world without Social Media!!!!

Top 20 Twitter users (number of followers)

1. Ashton Kutcher, 4,815,727 followers, 5,245 updates, 455 following
2. Britney Spears, 372 followers, 372 updates, 420,117 following
3. Ellen DeGeneres, 4,537,644 followers, 1,866 updates, 80,326 following
4. Barack Obama, 3,772,245 followers, 671 updates, 730,229 following
5. Lady Gaga, 3,753,638 followers, 329 updates, 151,252 following
6. Kim Kardashian, 3,467,836 followers, 3,841 updates, 99 following
7. Oprah Winfrey, 3,451,214 followers, 118 updates, 20 following
8. John Mayer, 3,326,587 followers, 3,186 updates, 88 following
9. Twitter, 3,129,910 followers, 716 updates, 217 following
10. Ryan Seacrest, 3,102,063 followers, 2,584 updates, 140 following

10.7M followers/2012
Barack Obama US President
15.7M followers/2012
Bob Collymore CEO Safaricom
57.4K followers/2012
Martha Karua MP
70.2K followers/2012
Twitter is one of the fastest growing social networks on the Internet, and thus the focus of advertising companies and celebrities eager to exploit this vast new medium.

As a result, ideas, opinions, and products compete with all other content for the scarce attention of the user community.

In spite of the seemingly chaotic fashion with which all these interactions take place, certain topics manage to get an inordinate amount of attention, thus:

- bubbling to the top in terms of popularity and
- contributing to new trends and to the public agenda of the community
Forever and a day, there has been much hype about the potential for ICTs to change peoples’ lives. While I have never doubted that, it has been something rather obscure to prove.

Here is a rather succinct infographic that says so much in just a few pics. It’s a big heading: **Mobile phones tackle poverty**, but here you can see the impact of using mobiles on GDP, feelings of safety, income generation, health, education, transparency, corruption, access to markets, citizen information and banking.

While there are not too many statistics in this infographic, it’s a nice overview of some “potential” and some reality.
INFографICS OF MOBILE PHONES

MOBILE PHONES TACKLING POVERTY

Mobile technologies empower the poor to take hold of their future. They fundamentally transform the way people in the developing world interact with one another and their governments, and access basic health, education, business and financial services.

4.5 billion

Mobiles in the developing world:

By 2016, there will be one billion phones in Africa.

2000
16 million

2011
500 million

2016
1 billion

MOBILE IMPACT

An increase of 10% in mobile penetration can raise the annual GDP growth rate by 1.2% in a developing country.

93% of female mobile phone users feel safer with a phone
85% feel more independent
41% use their phones to increase their income and professional opportunities
INFORMATION FLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA VIA MOBILE PHONES

Global
5 ways mobile devices have changed the way people consume media

1 | Mobile share of time ahead of TV, catching up with online

The average mobile web user consumes 7.2 hours of media daily. Mobile devices represent 27% of this time.

2 | Mobile devices are used throughout the day

67% lying in bed
47% waiting for something
39% while watching TV
25%commutes
22% spending time with family
19% in the bathroom
15% while shopping
15% at social gatherings

3 | Mobile content consumed varies by gender

M
Social Media
Entertainment
Games
General Info & Search
E-mail
Shopping
Local Search
F

4 | Comfort with mobile advertising is already greater than TV or online advertising

Which forms of media most impact your purchasing decisions?

48% Mobile
47% TV
46% Online

66% are more or equally comfortable with mobile advertising vs. TV or online ads

5 | Mobile impacts consumer behaviors throughout the purchase path

42% Introduced you to something new
9% Provided you with better options
23% Helped you find something nearby
26% Caused you to reconsider a product
13% Influenced you to buy via your mobile
11% Influenced your in-store purchase

Source: InMobi, Decision Fuel & On Device Research, Mobile Media Consumption Research, Feb 2012

www.inmobi.com / research@inmobi.com / @InMobi
Provided the ICT market continues its impressive advancement and growth in Africa, access to information and knowledge will be very high in Africa (80%) by 2016.
A chief in Kenya, Francis Kariuki, says he uses Twitter to communicate with his villagers. His village is called Lanet Umoja and is 160 kilometres west of the capital, Nairobi.

Mashable and AP say that “Mr. Kariuki regularly sends out tweets about missing children and farm animals” ... and raising the alarm about thefts, which has helped to reduce crime in the area.

@Chiefkariuki is Africa’s new novelty, thanks to Associated Press

Alikuwa wapi?
RT@Chiefkariuki: mtoto amepatikana

@chiefkariuki, I first saw you featured on AL Jazeera and about innovative ways to reach out to your community
Kenya Defence Force actions were all over news. The highest information on the updates of the events in challenges were all being posted on social media e.g.

- 4KDF soldiers injured when their armored vehicle escorting water tankers drove over a landmine in Mandera east @ citizen.tv
- @MacOtani now I wonder how KDF is doing in somalia with the current silence....

During the launch of TNA (The National Alliance) by the DPM in Kenya, all the proceedings and debates were all over twitter and facebook

Some of the tweets included:

- TNA Launch: u set the bar too high for Eugene, Jirongo, Kamenchu, Mutava launches
- Amazing speech by the presidential hopeful@Ukenyattaat the launch of TNA
- Youth scramble for cash mars Kisumu TNA launch: Kisumu Peace Initiative committeechairman Audi Ogala blamed the event organizors
North Africa Study - Libya

- Libya was inspired by the revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia.
- The young and old Libyan were tired of the Gaddafi error, thus various information was channeled in the social media platforms.
- On Facebook, you can get the web page “February 17 Libyan Revolution” this was when all the people were all over resisting the Gaddafi government.
- Information is power thus it enlightened the Libyan people to make the right choices to liberate their nation.
Africa’s most populous country, Nigeria is expected to experience explosive growth in the near term despite

In January, 2012, Lagos Business Association and the Information ministry launched free SMS service to over 20,000 youths to inform the community on:

- Security alerts
- Business development/enterprises
- Health issues
- Networking and communication
According to research ICT Africa, 31.1% of the Namibian population that was interviewed use internet for social networking or video sharing.

The finding gives a highlight that if social media is explored extensively to disseminate research information then it will capture audience at a wider scope. This will be explained by the viral effect of the internet information.
When this population were asked if they have signed up for any online social network the results were amazing since 81% of the Namibian population said yes as compared to the 19%.

This is a clear indicator of how often people spent their time on the internet and for what purpose?
Researchers are using social media tools in identifying research opportunities and disseminating research findings.

The most popular tools used in a professional research context tend to be mainstream anchor technologies or ‘household brands’, like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>For convenience and cheap conference calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Docs</td>
<td>Any researcher will need Google for research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>To understand the streaming power of information about a company's brand or image</td>
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<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>Share video or audio clips on the emerging scenarios in the society</td>
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CONCLUSION

- Social media are helping to fulfill the demand for cheap, instant communication between researchers fuelled by the growth of collaborative and interdisciplinary research.

- Use of social media is usually down to personal initiative, so a clear understanding of the capabilities and benefits of these tools is essential.

- Social media authenticity of the individuals poses a challenge to researchers e.g.
  - Identity of the individual is anonymous
  - Demographic information is unknown
  - Making the statistical significance of the sample is challenge
“The qualities that make Twitter seem insane and half-baked are what makes it so powerful.”

- Jonathan Zittrain, Professor of Law at Harvard