

Web 2.0, Connectedness and Conversion of Users into Commodities and Digital Audience Labour

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Abstract

The promises of Web 2.0 - enabling creation and exchange of user-generated content, and that of technology - greater accessibility and interactivity, have spawn more dynamic and interconnected capabilities. Smart phones, tablets and computers for instance, leverage the Web, Websites, search engines, aggregators, social media, blogs, storage systems and software apps to multitask and perform functions which overlap. Interestingly, some businesses leverage this overlapping functionality and user information to incentivize consumer experience with products or services and the media, while serving and billing each consumer simultaneously. And with businesses becoming increasingly information-driven, some businesses tap into user information to transform users into digital audience labour and commodities sellable to advertisers. Anchoring on the technological determinism and diffusion of innovations theories, this paper considers this subtle conversion of users and how these technologies influence modern business processes. The paper found that Web 2.0 and associated technologies have transformed business processes, brought greater convenience and improved service delivery. It recommends

that businesses must continue to consider cost and convenience of consumers and instead of manipulating users' information should invent ways of co-creating mutually-beneficial values with consumers.

Keywords: *Web 2.0, Internet, Overlap, Interactivity, User-generated content, Websites, Search engines, Googlization, Digital labour.*