

## Social Networking Tools Comparison Chart

We consider social networking tools to be online tools that enable users to create networked profiles. This is based on the definition provided by d. m. boyd and Nicole B. Ellison in the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*:

“We define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.”<sup>1</sup>

U of M standards apply when these tools are used by departments and units to communicate about the University of Minnesota in an official capacity.

	Tool Type	Strengths	Weaknesses	Features	Accounts	Privacy	Support	U Examples	U Authentication
<a href="#">Delicious</a>	Social Bookmark	Tag Create networks	Can't rate sites Searching can be difficult	Large community Feature rich extensions for major Web browsers	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">UTools in Delicious</a>	No
<a href="#">Digg</a>	Social Bookmark	Higher rated sites appear at the top Searchable archive Useful categories	Can be overwhelming	Collaborative news site	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U		No
<a href="#">Elgg</a>	Social Network	Suite of features Open source and well supported	Technical to set up Can be expensive to host a vibrant and active social community	Create and host your own social network	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U		No

<sup>1</sup> boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), article 11. <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html>

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<a href="#">Facebook</a>	Social Network	<p>Millions of users</p> <p>Clean interface</p> <p>Connects with many other online services</p>	<p>Privacy features are confusing and difficult to find</p> <p>Total privacy is almost impossible</p>	Many third-party applications to extend features	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<p><a href="#">University of Minnesota News Service</a> Group</p> <p><a href="#">University of Minnesota Emergency Notification</a> Group</p> <p><a href="#">Technology @ University of Minnesota</a> Group</p>	No
<a href="#">Flickr</a>	Photo sharing	<p>Easy to share photos with others</p> <p>Can organize photos in albums</p> <p>Can make prints, calling cards, photo-books, slideshow-DVDs, postage stamps, more</p>			Create at their site	<p>Users create groups:</p> <p>Public, anyone can join</p> <p>Public, invitation only</p> <p>Private</p>		<p><a href="#">Search for University of Minnesota</a></p>	No
<a href="#">Google Docs</a>	Collaboration/ sharing Web site	<p>Synchronous authoring</p> <p>Easy to share docs with others</p> <p>Can export docs to multiple formats</p> <p>Can be used offline through</p>	<p>Not compatible with Microsoft Office 2007 documents</p> <p>Limited formatting options</p> <p>Not as feature rich as traditional equivalents</p>	<p>Closely mimics a traditional application</p> <p>Integrates with other Google services that users may already have</p>	Create at their site	Private by default	Will be centrally supported by the U fall 2009		Yes

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		browser extensions	equivalents Offline work must synchronize with online content, which can cause problems  Google can monitor any content in Google Docs						
<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>	Social network for professionals								
<a href="#">Media Mill</a>	Video sharing								Yes and no; can be private, public, or University Internet ID only
<a href="#">Moodle</a>	Collaboration Web site with social networking features	Feature rich: includes forums, RSS feeds, wikis, blogs, and more	Some tools, like the database, have a high learning curve	On campus support via e-mail and online resources	Available to anyone with a University Internet ID	Sites are private by default, but profiles are public by default	Centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">Project and Change Management Collaborators</a>  <a href="#">Reinventing Internal Communications</a>  <a href="#">University Video Users Community</a>	Yes, with Internet or Guest ID
<a href="#">myU Portal</a>	Web portal	Students, faculty, staff, and friends can access U information and applica-							Yes

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		<p>tions based on their role at the U</p> <p>Includes communication and collaboration tools and customizable areas</p>							
<a href="#">NetFiles</a>	File storage	<p>Permissions-based access</p> <p>5 gigabytes of storage</p> <p>Web browser and WebDAV access</p> <p>Automatically saves previous versions of uploaded content</p>	<p>An ineffective check-in/check-out system</p> <p>Can be confusing to use advanced features</p> <p>Must activate account to use or view protected content</p>	Integrates with the U's central authentication	Available to anyone with a University Internet ID, but must be activated at the user account page, <a href="http://www.umn.edu/myaccount">www.umn.edu/myaccount</a> .	Private by default, but some folders are public by default	Centrally supported by the U		Yes
<a href="#">Ning</a>	Social network	<p>Create individual social networks</p> <p>Open social participant</p>	<p>Can be difficult to customize</p> <p>Relies on Ning network</p>	<p>Create own social network</p> <p>Free hosting</p>	Create at their site	Profiles are public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<p><a href="#">CEHD Connect</a></p> <p><a href="#">Discover U: New Employees</a></p> <p><a href="#">NEO-IT: New Employee Orientation for IT Professionals</a></p> <p><a href="#">UofM Collaboration Tools</a></p> <p><a href="#">University of Minnesota</a></p>	No

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								<a href="#">Black Alumni</a>	
<a href="#">reddit</a>	Social Bookmark	Make individual communities Tag sites	Smaller community than competing services	Can create own social bookmarking community	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U		No
<a href="#">Stumble-Upon</a>	Social Bookmark	Can rate sites Create networks	Difficult to organize bookmarks	Can “stumble” to a random site	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">Search for University of Minnesota</a>	No
<a href="#">Twitter</a>	Status updater/mini-blogger tool	Diverse community of users Focused, straightforward features Multiple ways to interact and update account	Requires some commitment to understand the value of the service Frequent, unannounced downtime	Third-party companies that repurpose Twitter contributions are expanding and altering its use	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">UMNews</a>	No
<a href="#">UMWiki</a>	Collaboration Web site	No anonymous edits Can revert to previous versions Centrally supported by the U WYSIWYG editor Export to PDF	Only one person can edit at a time Wiki code may be difficult for some users Can only export to one file format	Integrates with the U’s central authentication Can be made secure for sharing private information	Available to anyone with a University Internet ID	Sites are public by default but can only be edited by people with a U Internet ID. Sites can be access-restricted.	Centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">OIT Systems Status</a>	Yes, with Internet or Guest ID
<a href="#">UThink</a>	Blogging	Hosted at the U Appears	Can’t integrate blog with a per-	Free hosting Integrates with the U’s	Available to anyone with a University	Public by default	Centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">CLA Grants, Fellowships, and Re-</a>	Yes, with Internet or Guest ID

## Social Networking Tools Comparison Chart

		Appears higher in Web searches Keep blog after leaving the U	sonal Web-site Somewhat technical to set up and customize	with the U's central authentication	Internet ID		the U	<a href="#">search Funding eCommunication Blog</a> <a href="#">School of Public Health Calendar</a>	Guest ID
<a href="#">WordPress</a>	Blogging	Suite of features Large user-base and developer support	Somewhat technical to set up and customize	Plug-ins that extend the features of the regular suite	Create at their site	Public by default	Not centrally supported by the U	<a href="#">Buck Bravo's Football Blog</a>	No
<a href="#">YouTube</a>	Video sharing	Users can share videos and interact around common interests						<a href="#">University of Minnesota Channel</a>	No

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