

After reading about social media and social networking I found that they are similar, yet very different. Social media is an online platform used to share information with others and typically has a broader audience. Some popular social media platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube. A person, group, or business can use social media to share information. For example, a regular person might use social media to share their photos or personal opinions. A business might use it to promote their products or list their business information. Social networking also takes place on an online platform, however with social networking it is not about sharing information but all about building and maintaining relationships online. While social media interactions are more one sided, social networking interactions are always a two-way street. A business will use social networking to connect with their customers, and hopefully get them to follow the business on social media or refer the business to their friends and family. They do this by responding to the individual messages and posts left for them and positively engaging with the people who reach out to them online.

1. As a toy manufacturer, Lego must always be sensitive to the needs of its customers, both children and their parents, which requires the company to pay close attention to changing preferences and trends. Visit the Lego Mindstorms Web site and identify specific social networking features. Based on what you learned in this chapter, write about 200 words in which you describe current developments in social networking that Lego will need to understand as it decides whether to continue, remove, or modify the social networking features you identified. In your discussion, identify at least two specific social networking features.

After searching for the Lego Mindstorms website, I saw that it was discontinued in 2022. While it was active, however, it offered several social networking features for its community members to use. One social networking feature that Lego still offers to its customers is the chat feature in its Lego Life app. The Lego Life app is a child friendly app, and this chat feature allows people who love Legos and creating new things to chat with each other and share ideas. Another social networking feature Lego offered was in the Mindstorms app and was the Help Center where you could read answers to common questions and current updates posted by Lego team members and watch instructional videos on how to create and control the robots. One thing I learned from this chapter is that social networking is constantly evolving, and businesses should stay on top of the changing trends. The Lego Life app is a great social networking source for children, but Lego lacks an adult equivalent. It could be beneficial to expand their social network and create a social media page for adults who enjoy building with Legos where they can share their creations and find other likeminded adults to talk to. They could also create a page like the help center from the Mindstorms app, where Lego team members could answer questions about different Lego products and offer expert advice.

2. Lego provides a complete set of instructions with this product for building the basic robots. In about 200 words, explain how a new owner of this product might learn how to build and program complex robots using social networking elements provided by Lego.

There are numerous ways a new owner of one of the Lego robots might have learned how to build and program more complex robots using different social networking elements provided by Lego. Lego had both the Lego Life app and the Lego Mindstorms Robot Inventor app, which together provided many different social networking elements for a new owner to choose from. The Lego Life app provides a chat feature to its users, which would have given a new robot owner the chance to seek out more experienced robot makers to talk with and learn new skills from. The Lego Life app also allows users to upload pictures of their creations to the app, which gives newer users the opportunity to find ideas for their own creations. The Lego Mindstorms Robot Inventor app provided two different coding languages for their users to practice, which would have helped a new owner learn the coding skills needed to create and control a robot at a faster rate. The Mindstorms Robot Inventor app also had a built-in help center feature, which supplied the users with several instructional videos to follow along with and was frequently updated by the Lego team members running the app.

3. In this chapter, you learned how newspapers, magazines, and broadcasters are using participatory journalism to have their readers create news items and stories. In 200 words, outline at least five specific ways in which Mindstorms community members create value for Lego.

There were many ways in which Mindstorms community members could have created value for Lego. One way was by inspiring product ideas. When members shared pictures of their creations on the LEGO Life app it allowed Lego to view what creations got the most likes and what ideas could work for a new set. Another way members created value was by presenting free feedback to Lego about their products. By providing a virtual community for members to discuss their creations and the products themselves, it gives Lego a chance to see which products customers are happy with and which products people think should be discontinued. Community members also added value by being free advertisement for Lego. As people shared their creations on the Life app, the more creative creations could have been saved and shared elsewhere to draw others in. The Mindstorms community members may have also helped improve Lego's social network, as they could have shared about the Mindstorms Robot Inventor app and encouraged others to download the app. One last way the Mindstorms community members may have created value for Lego was by helping improve the products. Community members that excelled in coding and building could have helped Lego improve existing products by making them do more things or have a better design.

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