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Project 4

Social Media vs Social Networking:

Social media refers to platforms that allow users to create, watch, and share content in the form of posts, photos, and videos. Social networking refers to the idea of reaching out and building relationships with others. There are popular social networking platforms that allow and emphasize this such as LinkedIn and Facebook.

These two concepts are somewhat similar in their core functions and purposes but have some differences that divide them into two different ideas. Social networking focuses more on connecting with others and is typically known in a professional aspect. For instance, social networking is what allows a prospect in an industry to reach out to different employers and individuals in the same field of study or employment. Social media, however, focuses on a platform built around content. Content is created and posted, and the platform shares this content for other users on the platform. That content can then be viewed and interacted with through things like the like button, comments, and sharing. For example, someone can upload a video blog on Instagram, and that video can then be seen on another user's main page feed. Although these two concepts are different, platforms often combine the two ideas by allowing media to be posted as well as networking through comments, messages, and subscribing or following.

Lego Mindstorms:

1. Unfortunately, Lego has discontinued its Lego Mindstorms web site and it is no longer accessible through the links provided. However, there are some archives showing images and somewhat describing how the site used to be when it existed. One social networking feature Lego Mindstorms had was user profiles. The site allowed users to create online accounts on the website and have their own profiles. This allowed users to interact personally and be a part of the community. If the site existed today, the site could expand on this by allowing users to have their interactions visible to others through an activity feed. For example, this would allow someone to view a user's activity in their profile. Things like content they interacted with, projects they shared, and

community interactions they've had. Another social networking feature on the site was project sharing. The website allowed users to share their created robots and projects to other users on the site. One way the site could have expanded on that if it existed today would be short-form video creation and sharing. This would allow users to post short video clips of how their project looks or how their robots look in action. This feature would be similar to short-form videos posted on YouTube Shorts or TikTok.

2. A new owner of a Lego Mindstorm robot set could get lots of help and instruction from the Mindstorm community outside of the instructions provided by Lego. The product often comes with step-by-step instructions, but the community could have more insight and understanding from other users' experiences, which could help the new owner better than written instructions. For example, the Lego Mindstorms website had user profiles, where users could access shared projects from others and see what others have built. This would allow a user to see the work others have shared and possibly draw inspiration from those projects on what they would want to build their robot. They could also go to the support message board feature of the website. This part of the website allowed users to post questions and receive answers on a message board, where other community members could respond and help with any inquiries they would have about the product. For example, the new owner could have a question about a certain functionality of a robot that they just can't seem to create. They could go on to the website's message board and post a specific question asking how they would create that functionality and get responses from other users who potentially have already done the project and know exactly what to do.

3. The Lego Mindstorm community members created value in different ways that were similar to participatory journalism where members create and share content and ideas. First, users were allowed to create their own profile and online account. They could login to their accounts and have their own personal interactions with the entire Mindstorm community. Second, they would post their own custom robot builds, which inspires other users to create that build or expand on that build and add different features and functions. Third, the members would also post tutorials. These tutorials would help beginners learn how to design and build a robot beyond the instructions given with a purchase. Fourth, the users would participate in events and competitions. These events would allow members to showcase their builds and their robots in different challenge scenarios. Lastly, selected users were even invited to participate in creating new ideas and testing different software and hardware before release. This allowed those users to

interact at a deeper level with Lego and help them by testing for certain bugs or issues, and provide feedback to Lego on how their new planned software or hardware could improve.

References:

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