



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Social Media Overview

Social Media is an important part of our international culture today. Worldwide there are approximately 2 billion people connected to the internet with a majority using social media outlets. Whether it is for news, entertainment, information or simply keeping in touch, social media is here to stay. If we do not use it effectively someone else will.

Since the early days of message boards to the trendy, recently launched Pinterest site, there has been a swift and dramatic evolution in electronic communications. Social media has redefined the concepts of collaboration and connections to new levels through the creative use of technology.

According to a Dec. 2013 Pew Internet reports, over 73 percent of U.S. adults participate in one or more social media platforms. Despite recent growth by services such as Pinterest and Instagram, Facebook remains the dominant social networking platform.

Blogs- There are over 152 million blogs in existence. Blogs are used for sharing short stories or opinions on a wide variety of topics. Most blogs allow commenting, giving people the opportunity to share their opinions and perspectives. Information presented in this format does not have the same protections, such as confidentiality of sources, as journalists enjoy. There are legal challenges being considered that could affect the publishing opinions. For blogs and stories check out LivingLutheran.com.

Facebook- The 1.2 billion active users on Facebook (source: Pew) spend an average of 8 hours a month on the site (source: Huffington Post). ELCA's Facebook page has 47,379+ likers and they have the potential connections to over 8.1 million friends. A majority of our likers, 64 percent are female. Facebook's timeline provides an easy-to-use environment to share posts, ideas, likes and interests. Facebook's mobile application is the number one smartphone application. Visit the ELCA's page at facebook.com/Lutherans.

Forums- One of the original social networking outlets, forums are places to share information and resources about a specific topic or interest. Members are frequently required to have a user name and password to participate in these communities. Administrative monitoring is key to the success of forums because they often attract negativity.

Google+- With over 400 million users (source: PEW) the Google+ social networking platform has recently grown in popularity. Number of Google+ unique mobile monthly users is 20 million as of May 10, 2013. On March 30, 2014 the average time spent on Google+ is 7 minutes.

LinkedIn- 240 million active users (source: Tech News Daily). LinkedIn is best known as a networking site for professionals. Users are between the ages of 25-55 and most frequently use this platform to connect with other professionals and share information relevant to their expertise.

MySpace- 36 million users (Oct. 2013). Once leading the social networking site in the world, MySpace has become a music-sharing site that is trendy among a younger audience. It has also become a popular

vehicle for musicians to share and promote their music. In 2008 MySpace was surpassed in popularity by Facebook.

Ning- At 90 thousand customers in 2013, Ning has not reached critical mass and every indication points to it as a declining social media network. Once a free social networking site, there now is a charge to be a member.

Pinterest- Pinterest has grown from having 19 million members in March 2012 to 70 Million in March 2014 (source: Mashable). Pinterest members are 85 percent women between the ages of 21-34. The majority of pinners are from the Midwest with an average household income of \$75,000+. Pinterest is a highly visual social media experience.

Twitter- In the number two position in popularity- 560 million+ active users with an average of over 5,000 tweets per second –Twitter is a strong social media outlet. It is best for short, to-the-point updates; monitoring conversations about brand and attracting followers. Demographically ages of 31-49 account for 42.3 percent and Tweepers between the ages of 18-29 are at 41.5 percent. Twitter's mobile application makes it ideal for receiving news and alerts on the go.