

## Introduction to the Social Networking and Communities Minitrack

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This minitrack has been ongoing under various titles since 2003 [1]. Over those years, our emphasis has continued to be on exploring how social media – internet, email, twitter, blogs, social networking, and more – affect the development and support of community-based endeavors. We consider community quite broadly to include work and learning groups, as well as more general social collectives [2]. The empirical and theoretical papers that make up this minitrack address online communities of practice, inquiry, and interest relating to political, educational, business, social, and/or gaming pursuits, with attention to how online community building and management contribute to success in the digital economy and society. While the focus is primarily directed to online communities, papers also address the important interplay between online and offline worlds.

The minitrack continues to attract a lot of interest and this year nine papers were selected following peer review of 21 submissions (43% acceptance rate).

Papers this year examine issues of psychology and behavior, e.g., in papers on addiction, flaming, and unfriending,

- *Why they become addicted?* by Qian Li, Xunhua Guo, and Caihong Sun
- *Factors affecting individual's flaming in virtual communities* by Ayoung Suh
- *Facebook fallout by future contact avoidance after being unfriended on Facebook* by Christopher Sibona

Crossover effects between the online and offline worlds, e.g., for those out of work, and those in academia,

- *The supportive role of social media networks for those out of work* by Anne Suphan,

Miriam Feuls, Christian Fieseler, and Miriam Meckel

- *Wired academia by why social science scholars are using social media* by Anatoliy Gruzd and Melissa Goertzen

Learning and information exchange online,

- *Understanding inspiration, socialization, and skill acquisition in an amateur multimedia community* by Brittany N. Smith
- *Information diffusion with content crossover in online social media: an empirical analysis of social transmission process in Twitter* by Joseph Kwon and Ingo Han

And effects and results of in-world, in-community online behavior,

- *Continued social virtual world use among teens by examining the moderating role of perceived network exposure* by Matti Mäntymäki, and A.K.M. Najmul Islam
- *Discovery of community structures in a heterogeneous professional online network* by Daniel Suthers, Judith Fusco, Patricia Schank and Kar-Hai Chu.

Together, these papers guide us on important areas for consideration online as well as providing insight into online community behaviors.

### References

- [1] Nahone, K. (2012). Social Networking and Communities Minitrack at HICSS. <http://ekarine.org/news/hicsscommunities/>.
- [2] Haythornthwaite, C. & Kendall, L. (Eds.) (2010). Internet and Community. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(8), whole issue.