

Search Engines, Social Media and The Brave New World of Social Capital

A Preface

Human history, in large measure, advances whenever speed and intelligence—the rate, originality, and use of knowledge production—form unique, often serendipitous intersections. Examples abound: transistors, microprocessors, Babbage’s ‘analytical engine’, the printing press, harnessed electricity, self-propelled vehicles, telecommunication devices, and immunizations. Metaphorically speaking, the speed of light, of insight, has and continues to transform the world, with globalization the most recent child of these technologies and trade intersections.

Space no longer poses the same limitations to commerce and community as it once did, although some of our most deep-seated traditions about knowledge creation, production and applications still present sizeable yet unnecessary obstacles. We at YouMeThink.com believe that if there is to be a revolutionary Web3, Berners-Lee’s semantic web, it means creating a second path, a new alternative, in which users are still able to find, share, and combine information but, more importantly, are given the tools and support to translate information into knowledge and knowledge into social capital. YouMeThink.com is a Web3 solution, an alternative to how current web technologies limit the development of new markets and new profit communities.

Limitation I – The Search Engine

Current day search engines use similar technologies to produce similar results. Whether Google, Yahoo, Bing, MSN Search, Ask Jeeves, or Ask.com, current Web2 algorithms work by ranking web pages in terms of their ‘popularity’, with ‘good or desirable’ pages associated with each other. Although effective as indexing systems, search engines have no inherent capacity to manage, manipulate or maximize the *capital-value content* of billions of pages and site resources crawled daily.

YouMeThink.com believes that the frequency of access should not be the sole factor determining the value of page and site content. Nor should the traditional index/library information paradigm limit social capital production by limiting other possibilities. We represent an alternative way of accessing information that—unlike popularity rankings—facilitates the creation, accessing, and application of knowledge. Because popularity rankings do not maximize the relationship between knowledge, capital and value, they actually restrict the production of social capital, having no way of monetizing cyber-knowledge. An analogy helps—like neighborhood libraries, digital library based search engines store and list the most popular books, but do little to facilitate the *mobilization* of much larger volumes and sources of knowledge—the ideas in other books or sources—that maximizes the generation of both individual profit and social capital.

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Transcending the Limitation

YouMeThink.com leverages search engine technologies to overcome the restricted value of static search results. YouMeThink.com transforms search information into *capital-value content* to create social capital for individuals, groups, corporations and government agencies.

Limitation II – Social Media

Although they store and disseminate billions of bytes of information daily, contemporary social media sites do little to facilitate—with their technology/apps—the creation of meaningful groups or communities formed on the basis of shared interests or entrepreneurial activities. Whether Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google Plus+, Instagram, or Pinterest, their content remains frozen in a presentational dynamic—the *data mirror effect*—with individuals offering photos, videos, or messages in technologies like internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogs, wikis, social networks or podcasts.

Despite these Web2 efforts at conversations, sharing, and creating group relationships, very little knowledge is converted into social capital because emphasis on self-disclosure or self-presentation limits knowledge-capital conversion. Some scholars, like Turkle and Marche, go so far as to question the meaningfulness of human interactions created by social media. Another limitation concerns the implications of current new media technologies given that much of what passes as online human interaction is the product of a technological determinism. This added limitation refers to how the actual content and effect of social media is determined by the technology itself. This underscores my earlier point that the index/library tradition of search engines limits their ability to generate social capital.

Transcending the Limitation

YouMeThink.com not only uses the internet to create and market individual or social capital, but also contains community development tools allowing users to form groups for any purpose desired.

The Solution Creates Value *through the Production of Social Capital—the Brave New World of Web3*

YouMeThink is the first Web3 service uniting the value of social capital with the power of social media.

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