

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this survey is on students' use of and experiences with social networking services such as Facebook and MySpace. Included in the survey are questions concerning the prevalence and frequency of use of Facebook and MySpace, usage patterns of these services, the prevalence of negative experiences from using social networking services, and use of other internet tools (such as YouTube, Flickr, CiteULike, and others).

In total, 1,852 Penn State undergraduate students responded to the survey for a 23.2% response rate. By phone, 519 participated, and 1,333 participated by Web. The confidence interval for the total sample is +/- 2.24%. Of the respondents, 69.1% are between 18 and 20 years of age, 50.4% are female, 83.4% are White/Caucasian, 56.2% live off campus, and 52.8% attend University Park. For additional information on the Pulse methodology, please visit <http://www.sa.psu.edu/sara/qa.shtml>.

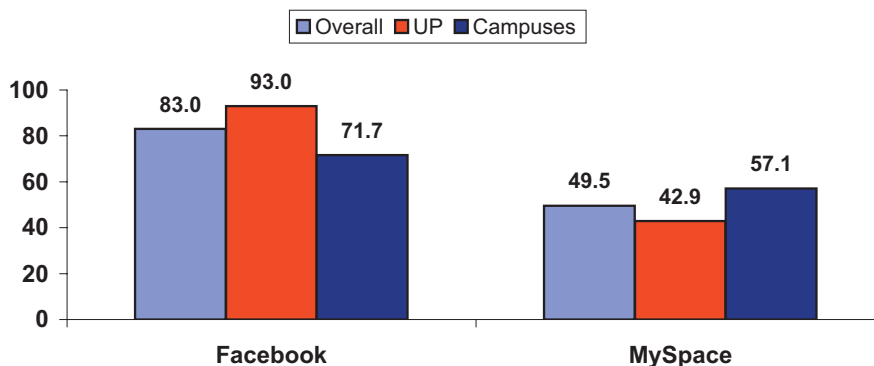
FINDINGS

Use of Social Networking Services

Students were asked a series of questions about their use of Facebook, MySpace, or other similar services.

- Eighty-three percent of Penn State students reported using Facebook, with students at University Park (93.0%) being significantly more likely to use the service than students at the Commonwealth campuses (71.7%) (see Chart 1).
- Approximately 50% reported having a MySpace account; students attending the Commonwealth campuses (57.1%) were significantly more likely to have an account than their counterparts at University Park (42.9%) (see Chart 1).
- In addition, 5.7% of students reported using another service similar to Facebook or MySpace. These services included Xanga, Hi-5, LiveJournal, Friendster, Orkut, and Yahoo! 360° (data not shown).
- In total, 88% reported using Facebook and/or MySpace (data not shown).

Chart 1. Use of Social Networking Services (by percent)



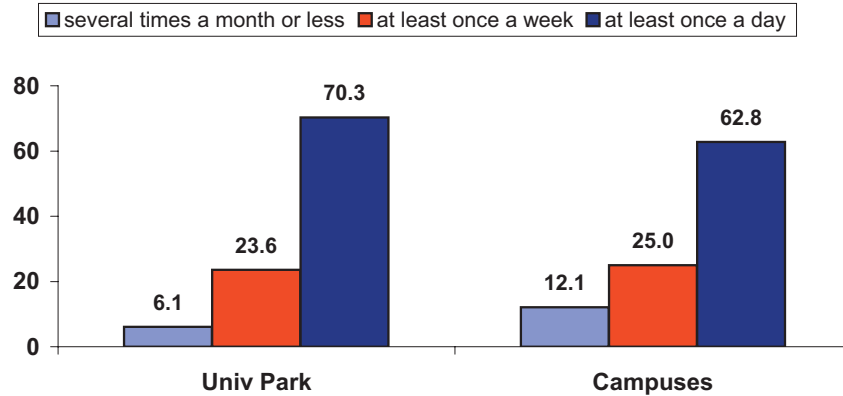
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Among students who use Facebook:

- Most students who use Facebook (98%) have one account (data not shown).
- Approximately 8% opened their first account in high school; a third opened their first account the summer before entering Penn State; and 60% after they began at Penn State (data not shown).

- On average, students were members of 24.85 Facebook groups. Membership among University Park students (26.50) was higher than students attending the campuses (22.17) (data not shown).
- On average, students had 203.43 friends on Facebook. University Park students averaged 229.88 compared to 159.62 for students attending the campuses (data not shown).
- Approximately 70% of University Park students and 63% of Commonwealth campus students who use Facebook indicated they log in to Facebook on a daily basis (see Chart 2).
- In addition, 80.6% of students reported they update their Facebook profile several times a month or less frequently (data not shown)

Chart 2. How Frequently Students Log in to Facebook (by percent)



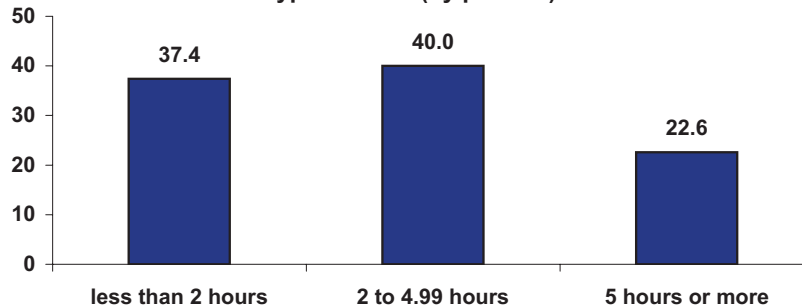
Of students who have a MySpace account (data not shown):

- Most students who use MySpace (95%) have one account.
- Approximately 60% opened their first account when they were between 15 and 18 years of age.
- Approximately 45% log in at least once a day.

Of the students who use Facebook and/or MySpace:

- Almost 23% reported spending 5 or more hours in a typical week on Facebook and/or MySpace (see Chart 3).
- Approximately 37% of University Park students reported using Facebook or MySpace to learn more about their first-year college roommate (data not shown).

Chart 3. Time Spent on Facebook and/or MySpace in a Typical Week (by percent)



Functions of Social Networking Services

Students who reported using social networking services were asked how often they use the services to communicate with friends, acquaintances, and strangers (see Table 1).

- Overall, 64.0% of Penn State students reported that they often or very often use Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service to communicate with friends from home and/or from another college.
- Most Penn State students indicated they never or rarely communicate with strangers using Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service.

Table 1. Use of Social Networking Services for Communication¹

	Overall		Univ Park		Campuses	
	%	Avg.	%	Avg.	%	Avg.
Friends from home and/or other colleges	64.0	3.81	61.6	3.75	66.6	3.89
Friends from Penn State	55.4	3.60	57.1	3.66	52.8	3.52
Acquaintances	17.9	2.65	12.9	2.50	24.2	2.84
Strangers	1.4	1.47	0.6	1.38	2.4	1.60

Scale: 1=never; 3=sometimes; 5=very often

¹Percents represent those who indicated "often" or "very often."

Students who reported using social networking services were also asked about the frequency of their use of the services for a variety of other functions (see Table 2).

- Approximately 81% of Penn State students reported using Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service to learn more about an acquaintance.
- In addition, 66.0% indicated they had used Facebook or a similar service to learn about a campus event.
- Less than 10% indicated they had dated someone they first “met” on a social networking service (8.5%) or had used Facebook or a similar service as a requirement in one of their courses (7.8%).

Table 2. Other Uses of Social Networking Services (by Percent)

Percent who have done these one or more times	Overall	Univ Park	Campuses
Used Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service to learn more about an acquaintance	81.1	86.5	74.2
Learned about a campus event advertised on Facebook/ similar service	66.0	73.1	56.4
Found people at Penn State with common interests on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	54.6	52.6	57.4
Used Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service to send mass messages to people	43.0	39.6	47.4
Met someone in person who you first came in contact with on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	41.3	41.8	40.9
Learned about courses or professors from Facebook/ similar service	34.8	36.4	32.8
Dated someone you first “met” on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	8.5	6.9	10.8
Used Facebook/ similar service as a requirement in one of your class/ course activities	7.8	8.6	6.9

Social Networking Negative Experiences and Privacy Efforts

In addition, students who reported using social networking services were asked how often they had negative experiences or took steps to protect their privacy.

- Over 32% of Penn State students reported having been offended at least once by Facebook/ MySpace groups posted by other Penn Staters with 40.2% of University Park students reporting such experiences compared to 22.5% of students from the campuses (see Table 3).
- Furthermore, 31.5% reported having had unwanted contact online, and 11.2% had unwanted contact in person with someone they first “met” on Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service (see Table 3).
- Approximately 72% of University Park students and 60% of students at the campuses reported having used the privacy settings on Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service to restrict access to their information (see Table 4).
- Furthermore, 55.9% of University Park students and 40.9% of students at the campuses indicated they had had someone at Penn State talk with them about the risks of providing “too much information” in Facebook, MySpace, or a similar service (see Table 4).

Table 3. Social Networking Negative Experiences (by Percent)

Percent who have experienced these one or more times	Overall	Univ Park	Campuses
Been offended by Facebook/ MySpace groups posted by other Penn Staters	32.4	40.2	22.5
Had unwanted contact online with someone you “met” on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	31.5	32.4	30.5
Had unwanted contact in person with someone you “met” on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	11.2	11.8	10.5

Table 4. Social Networking Privacy Efforts (by Percent)

Percent who have done these one or more times	Overall	Univ Park	Campuses
Used any of the privacy settings on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service to restrict access to your information	66.6	71.6	59.9
Reconsidered posting personal information on Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	62.0	69.0	52.9
Had anyone at Penn State (faculty, college staff, residence hall staff) talk with you about the risks of providing “too much information” in Facebook/ MySpace/ similar service	49.2	55.9	40.9

Anticipated Social Networking Behavior

Students were asked several questions about their anticipated behavior with regard to social networking services (see Table 5).

- Among University Park students who used Facebook or MySpace, 67.6% indicated they were likely to manage their sites differently when job searching compared to 55.8% of students attending a Commonwealth campus.
- Approximately 60% indicated they were likely to use a social networking product like Facebook or MySpace that was integrated with Penn State services and to maintain their Facebook/MySpace accounts after they graduate.

Table 5. Anticipated Use of Facebook or MySpace²

Likelihood of:	Overall		Univ Park		Campuses	
	%	Avg.	%	Avg.	%	Avg.
Managing your Facebook/MySpace site differently during a job/internship search	62.3	2.73	67.6	2.86	55.8	2.56
Using a product like Facebook/MySpace integrated with Penn State services (note: includes all respondents)	60.4	2.58	61.6	2.61	59.0	2.53
Maintaining your Facebook/MySpace account after you graduate	60.9	2.63	58.0	2.58	64.8	2.70
Managing your Facebook/MySpace site differently if seeking a leadership role on campus	52.1	2.49	54.7	2.55	48.8	2.41

Scale: 1=very unlikely; 4=very likely

Uses of Other Internet Services

Lastly, students were asked about the prevalence of use of other internet services (see Table 6).

- Almost 90% of University Park students indicated they had viewed a video on YouTube and 72.0% had viewed photos on Flickr or similar sites at least once, compared to 80.0% and 54.2% (respectively) of students at the campuses.
- Approximately 60% of Penn State students reported having used peer-to-peer tools at least once.

Table 6. Use of Other Internet Services (by Percent)

Percent who have used the following services one or more times	Overall	Univ Park	Campuses
Viewed a video on YouTube or a similar site	84.9	89.5	80.0
Viewed photos on Flickr, Webshots, or a similar site	63.5	72.0	54.2
Used peer-to-peer tools (such as LionShare or Limewire)	60.7	60.2	61.7
Purchased legal music or videos online	46.5	52.6	39.8
Posted/ uploaded a photo on Flickr, Webshots, or a similar site	34.4	38.9	29.1
Downloaded a podcast	20.4	24.0	16.6
Posted/uploaded a video on YouTube or a similar site	15.6	15.2	15.9
Participated in Internet gambling	11.1	11.7	10.6
Used CiteULike, Connotea, or De.lic.ious to bookmark/ search for references or view research	7.0	6.1	8.1

² Percents represent those who indicated "somewhat likely" or "very likely."