Project Dissertation

Assessment and Evaluation of Interest-based Social Network Services

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation report titled **"Assessment and Evaluation of interest-based social network services"** is a bonafide work carried out by **Mr. Shashank Mishra** of **MBA 2017-19** and submitted to Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-42 in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Business Administration.

Signature of Guide   **Signature of Head (DSM)**

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Place:

Date:

DECLARATION

I, **Shashank Mishra**, student of **MBA 2017-19** of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi – 42, hereby declare that the dissertation report **"Assessment and Evaluation of Interest-based social network services"** submitted in partial fulfillment of Degree of Masters of Business Administration is the original work conducted by me.

The information and data given in the report is authentic to the best of my knowledge.

This report is not being submitted to any other University, for award of any other Degree, Diploma or Fellowship.

Place: **Shashank Mishra**

Date:

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Shashank Mishra

ABSTARCT

The ISNSs are witnessing a growth patter in the west and a lot of users in India are also active on websites like Pinterest, Tumblr, Cucumber-town etc. While the established social networks like Facebook, twitter etc. has grown and become very generic, the interest-based networks are providing users with relatively smaller and relevant communities. Though not many of these have tried to integrate their on-line and off-line offerings, some startups like Tribesports have done it very effectively.

It is expected that the ISNSs, which would effectively engage users off-line, too would find sustainability in future and thus the concept of neighborhood could be a key player for the future growth of SportsApp. After the detailed empirical and primary research, recommendations were given at the end, some of which would hold important for any startup in general as well.

This report is aimed to understand the trend of the interest-based social networking in the current scenario. It analyzes the current established interest based social network around the world and comprehensively analyzes their business model. This report finally proposes guidelines to launch an ISNS in Indian context and what all things to keep in mind while development and working of such ISNS.

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

Interest based social networking services (ISNS) is the new era of social networking. In this study I have tried to analyse, asses and evaluate few of the leading websites in this domain, working around the world. Then I have tried to understand the interest based social network scenario in India and on the basis of secondary research and primary research proposed a strategy to launch a new ISNS in Indian context.

1.1. Background

In the book named "Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us", Seth Godin the writer expresses that "For immeasurable years, mortals are a part of one tribe or another. A bunch desires solely 2 things to be a tribe: a shared interest and how to speak."

These two aspects can be easily seen nowadays online. The simplest way you can find these interest based groups are on facebook. But there are online web portals where people with similar interest log on to share their interest, communicate with people having similar interest and enhance their skills by being a part of such community. These sites are increasing day by day because there is an urge to be a part of online space where you can meet people having similar skills.

Communication has a new dimension in this age of social networks. Distances don't matter anymore. Friends and family living far away seems so near. Whatsapp and Facebook has redefined the way we communicate and be in touch with those we want to.

If we look back to where it all started then Friendster and Myspace will be the two companies which will cross our mind. Then came the era of Facebook and since them there was no looking back. Now in past few year things have again changed and people now are connecting over visual material like images and videos rather than on text. Snapchat and Instagram are the two companies which has made huge user base. It seems that every five to six years people want some change in the way and they interact with each other and then is the time we see some new idea and company getting big.

Now people have started witnessing a need to be on a platform where they can care about things other than their friends, family and personal life. Facebook, Instagram are network where all a user does is see what his/her friends are doing or what are their interests and can share what's going on their lives.
People hardly share things they do as a part of their hobby or something they are interested in and even if they do those posts, shares reach to their families, friends or their connections

which might not at all interested in the same stuff.

Take your own example. Suppose you are an avid music lover and you like to listen a particular genre of music. Now even if you share that thing on your Facebook timeline, your parents or few close friends will be the one engaging with that post and you know deep within your heart that those people have no interest in the music you love.

Thus arise a need of network where you can share things, ask questions and communicate with those who bear the same interest you have and can actually make sense of what you want to say and express.

1.2 The Rise of Interest Based Networking

Internet and its constant evolution provided us with better solutions to quench our needs and this has what resulted in the rise of interest-based network. Interest based networks are helping people to be a part of online network that are based on meeting and connecting with people of similar interests. These people are often complete strangers and a common interest is what brings them together.

Likes of Pinterest which allow users to pin ideas they are interested in or Fitocracy which allows users to join a fitness community or Flipora to see content related to their interest or it may be Quora which brings you answers to all question related to your interest these new interest based start-ups are growing faster than ever.

People are connecting to people they don't know still they have a lot to talk , discuss , share and communicate because they have a common interest.

1.3 Research Setting

Availability of literature on how the internet and social media has evolved in the past is in abundance but if we try to find out literature for the various business models used by these social networking sites in the past then we don't have enough literature for them. The shift of these social networks from generic to interest based networks has also marked a shift in the business models used by them. When everything in the startup arena is about funding and VC firm people often confuse between a business model and revenue model. On one hand where revenue model is a something which gives an insight on how a company will earn revenue and profit, the business model is a more wholistic approach and give much more insights about the company and its working.

Business models are the building blocks which differentiate one company from other even though both the companies might be working on the same idea with similar revenue model.

In this project report I have tried to understand business models and scope of various Interest based social networking websites around the world. I have used Business Model Canvas, Osterwalder (2010) to assess various companies considered in the case and on the basis of findings tried to propose and recommend things which a new ISNS should keep in their minds while strategizing their business models.

 A start-up, *Getwings* is also analyzed and evaluated to have an insight about the ISNS scenario in Indian context. Apart from the literature and the case companies taken into consideration for the secondary research, a primary research is also conducted to understand more about the requirements and needs of people in India and what all they expect from interest based social networks. 142 respondents' data was analyzed and inferences about the demographic factors and other data driven factors were given in this report.

1.4. Objectives

The project report will serve the following objectives:

- ➢ To gain an insight of the interest based startup ecosystem.
- ➢ Analyze already existing interest based social networking sites and their business models.
- ➢ Understand the requirements of Indian users from an online interest-based platform.
- ➢ To apply the learning and propose business model and user insights for any new ISNS set to launch in India.

The project report will also help to guide existing interest based social networks in India to apply the learning from the primary survey and to incorporate those learning in their existing platform.

1.5 Limitations

ISNS are still in their early stages. There is very limited research literature available. The companies in India working on interest-based models are hardly one or two year old so it is really difficult to know about their exact business models and being private companies and that too few being in their funding phase are reluctant to share information about the exact working of their companies.

Moreover the insights and findings in this project report defines what is the current perception about this industry but being a very dynamic field with continuous innovations in things can change very drastically in future.

People in India are still transitioning from conventional social networks to interest based networks and so the time they are spending on these new platforms are very less. So it is very difficult to know what exactly their requirements are and whether they are finding these new platforms useful or not.

2 Literature review {Social Media}

2.1 The beginning of Social Media

In 1997 SixDegrees the first official social networking site was launched. Users were allowed to create their own profiles. They can also make friends and can list those (Boyd & Elison, 2007)

Once people started using social networks then there came the idea to utilize them economically. Thus catering to the new requirement Ryze was found

Then in 2002 came probably the most popular social network of that time Friendster. It was basically made to enable friends-of-friends meet. It was assumed that they could make better pairs than strangers. (J. Abrams, 2003)

There were software and other technical issues in the maintenance of Friendster as its user base grew (Boyd,2006).

There were issues in the initial concept of Friendster and users were restricted to view profiles after a certain degree. This and along with other issues ultimately resulted in the decline Friendster in U.S.

2.2 SNS rise and start of ISNS

2003 marked the beginning of many similar startups. A social analyst Clay called such SMS as YASNS: "Yet Another Social Networking Service."

There also started few professional SNS such as LinkedIn, Visible Path, and Xing which tend to focus on people in corporate and businesses

Interest based startups like Dogster (T. Rheingold, 2007) help strangers connect based on shared interests. "Care2 helps activists meet, Couchsurfing connects travelers to people with couches, and MyChurch joins Christian churches and their members".

As the curated content began to grew, websites like Flickr (to share images), Last.FM to listen to music, and YouTube to share videos, began to behave as SNSs.
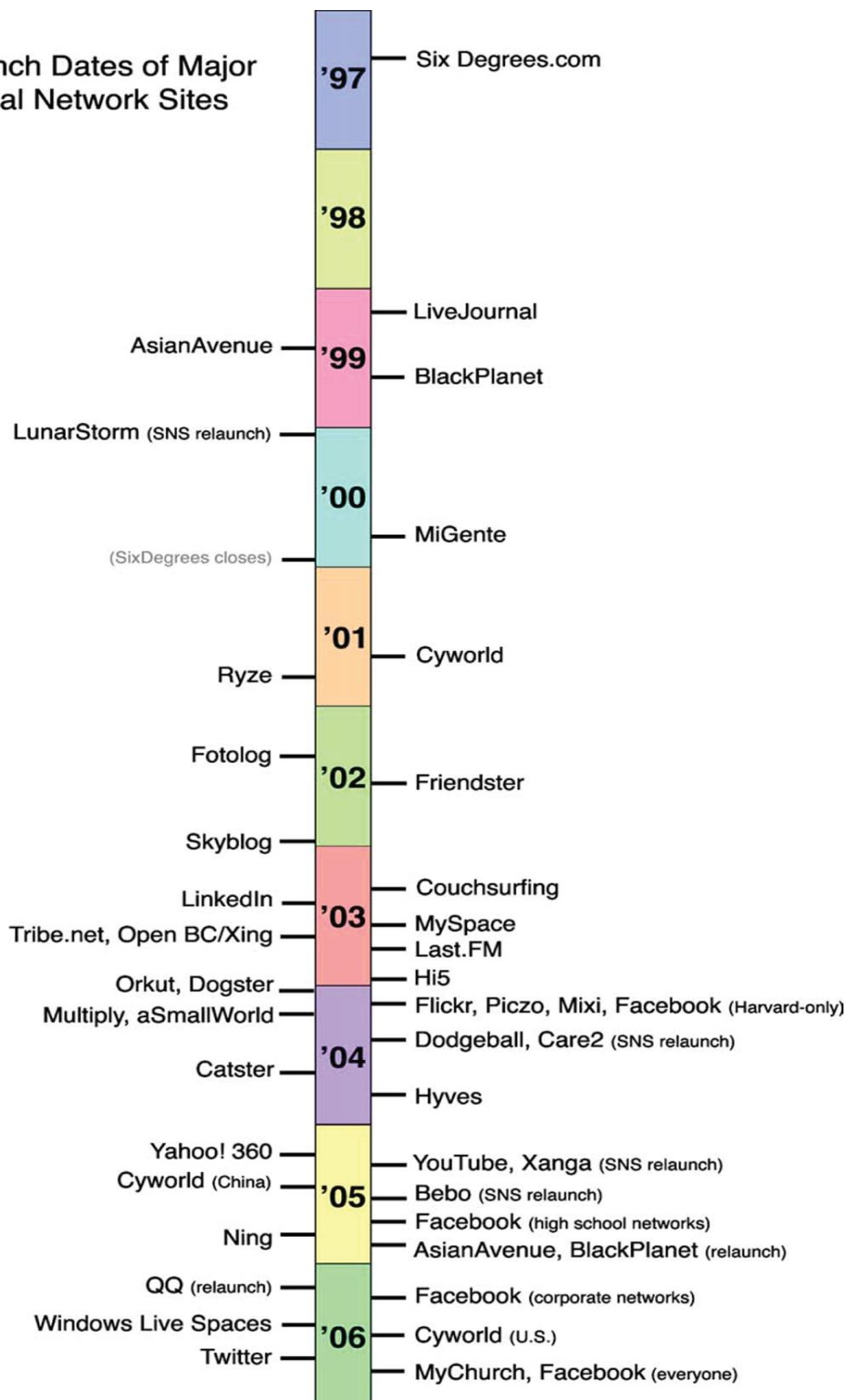
Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites

Year	Left labels	Right labels
'97		Six Degrees.com
'98		
'99	AsianAvenue	LiveJournal / BlackPlanet
'00	LunarStorm (SNS relaunch) / (SixDegrees closes)	MiGente
'01	Ryze	Cyworld
'02	Fotolog / Skyblog	Friendster
'03	LinkedIn / Tribe.net, Open BC/Xing	Couchsurfing / MySpace / Last.FM / Hi5
'04	Orkut, Dogster / Multiply, aSmallWorld / Catster	Flickr, Piczo, Mixi, Facebook (Harvard-only) / Dodgeball, Care2 (SNS relaunch) / Hyves
'05	Yahoo! 360 / Cyworld (China) / Ning	YouTube, Xanga (SNS relaunch) / Bebo (SNS relaunch) / Facebook (high school networks) / AsianAvenue, BlackPlanet (relaunch)
'06	QQ (relaunch) / Windows Live Spaces / Twitter	Facebook (corporate networks) / Cyworld (U.S.) / MyChurch, Facebook (everyone)

Fig 1 (Ellison, 2007)

2.3. Classification of Social Media

Constantinides & Feature (2008) suggested a classification of social media in the following format:

1. Bloggers became very active in sharing content online. Some very popular platforms like wordpress.com and blogger.com started to grow their user base. Blogging became a passion for those who love to write or for those who like sharing experiences, problems and knowledge with others.

2. Social networking communities online can be split in social network, written content areas, and portals. Social networks are about meeting people you know, sharing your experiences in the form of text images or videos and liking similar stuff shared by your connections.

3. Discussion forums where people can discuss on things like to. Reditt is again an excellent example. Now a days quora is again used by people to discuss on various subjects.

4. Information aggregators. These collect information and are mostly free for the use of everyone. Wikipedia is a perfect example of such an aggregator. These platforms do not charge and anyone can donate to them in order to help them sustain.

Lehtimäki(2009) said "within this category plan as well as suggest that there are different request varieties beyond the detailed people named digital words wherever users can certainly converse as well as communicate via avatars which can be visual representations of the respected users. Electronic sides are so visible while alternatives in order to the real world wherever additionally companies can offer some sort of reputation".

Table 1: Classification of social media application types (Lehtimäki et al., 2009)

CATEGORY	TOOL	FOCUS	EXAMPLES
1. BLOGS AND PODCASTS	Traditional blogs, vlogs, podcasts, videocasts	Informing of current events and novelties	Blogs by Dell, podcasts from interviews
2. SOCIAL NETWORKS	Social networks	Content sharing, maintaining relationships, networking	MySpace, Facebook, IRC-Gallery, LinkedIn, ITToolbox
3. COMMUNITIES	Online communities		
	Member-initiated	Members' mutual interests and reciprocal interaction	Communities formed around similar interests e.g. Aukea.net (photography)
	Organization-sponsored	Business transactions, brand building, interaction among organization and customers, co-creation of products	Communities by Mozilla, Fiscars, Dell and Salesforce.com
	Third-party established	Enable communication and transactions between buyers and sellers	eBay
	Content communities		
	Content sharing sites, wikis	Content sharing	YouTube, Flickr, Picasa, Pikeo, dotPhoto, GoogleVideo, Wikipedia
	Forums/bulletin boards	Discussion of mutual interests	B2Bexchanges, Alibaba, Zentrada, Go4worldbusiness
4. CONTENT AGGREGATORS	RSS, widgets, bookmarks, tagging services etc.	Categorizing and customization of web content	Delicious, Yahoo! Widgets
5. VIRTUAL WORLDS	Virtual worlds	Substitute for the real world	Second Life, World of Warcraft, Kaneva, Universe, Habbo

Kaplan & Haenlein (2009) argued on the ideas discussed and resulted "that will several types of social media marketing might be grouped by way of the number of social existence and advertising richness as well as home presentation/self-disclosure In terms of social existence as well as advertising richness, collaborative jobs including wikis possess the most competitive total, simply because nearly all of them tend to be text-based and provide restricted amount of exchange involving consumers".

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**Table 2: Classification of Social Media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009)**

Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Sudarsan (2012) made use of taxonomy and figured out a way to assist users to communicate and share knowledge so as how to create, preserve and extract the way internet is used culturally.

The social networking websites internet put their mind on specific ways to represent and often found images and text format having individually decided on advertising.

So the study revealed that "consumers want to reinforce and gaze after human relationships by means of joining their on the internet pages having additional consumers so as to produce a Facebook and Myspace sometimes freely or even privately".

Figure 1: Classification of the Social Web (Sudarsan 2012)
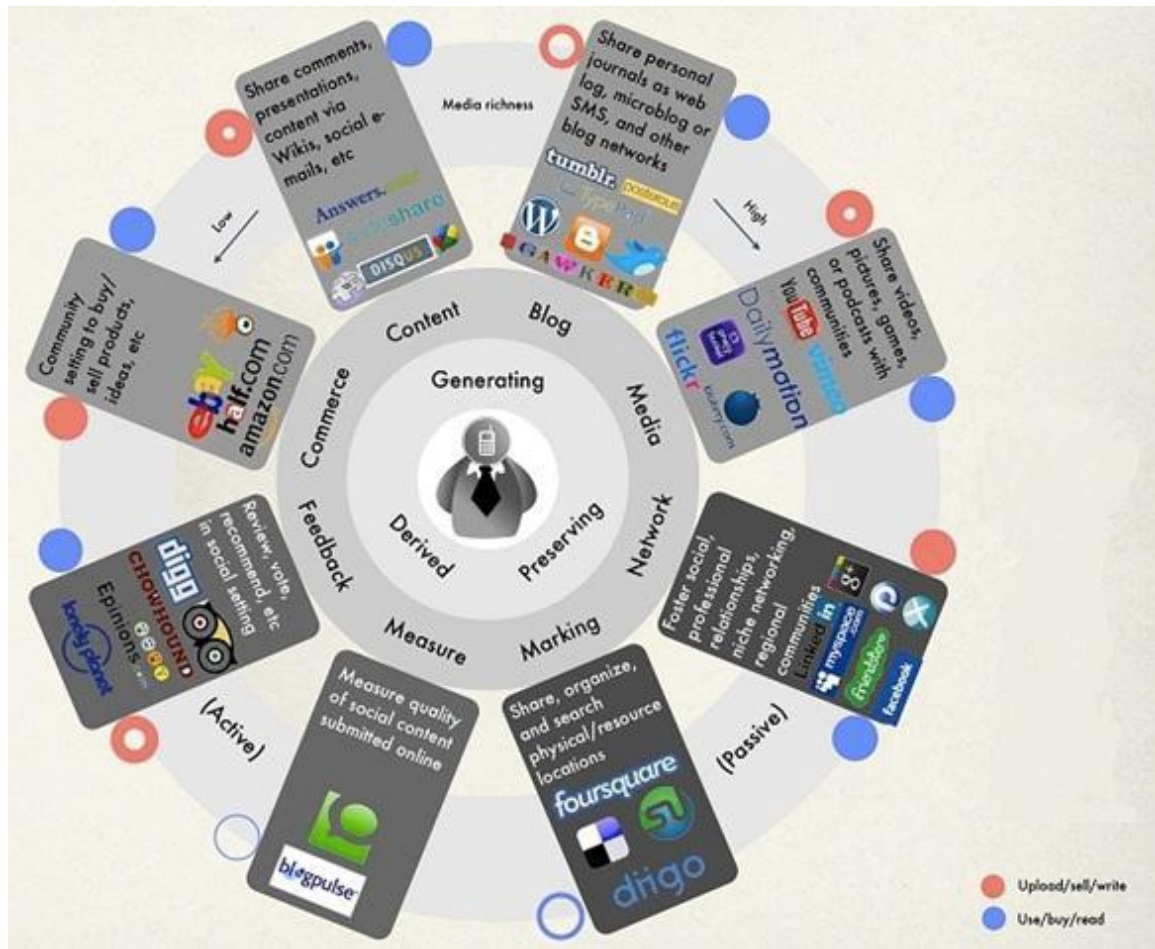
A. Social Media Usage for Marketing and Advertising Purposes

"Organizations have lengthy utilized social networking for promoting uses. The idea has developed into standard exercise in addition to businesses are more and more searching for the ways that many people get to their particular consumers by means of social networking (Geho & Dangelo 2012)". Social media usually affects the way people find and get people items and services they are looking for. Thus it is important to understand very clearly how it works in order to make the best utilization of the same.

Constantinides et al (2008) laid down ways to make the best use of these SNSs:-

1. Social media platforms can be utilized by corporations to target specific audience which is really engaging with their products and then try to maintain a long term relationships with those users. These social media platforms are currently the cheapest way to engage with customers and to actually track the reach and engagement of campaigns.

2. Online portals can be used by corporations to engage with their customers and by spending the minimum amount possible. They do not have to setup a separate call centre or customer care place. They can address all the customer complaints online solve them and also send them feedback online.

3. Social platforms are effective places to showcase company ideology and values to their customers. Every image, video , and text as posted by a company is immediately posted online and can be seen by everyone including a prospective customer.

B. Current Business Models for Social Media Companies

Loayza (2009) claims"throughout the first IT bubble that took place while in 1997-2000 the most common business model pertaining to world wide web corporations seemed to be get a huge amount of targeted traffic, next work out how to help to make money".

Figure 2: Social Media Business Models (Kangas et al. 2007)
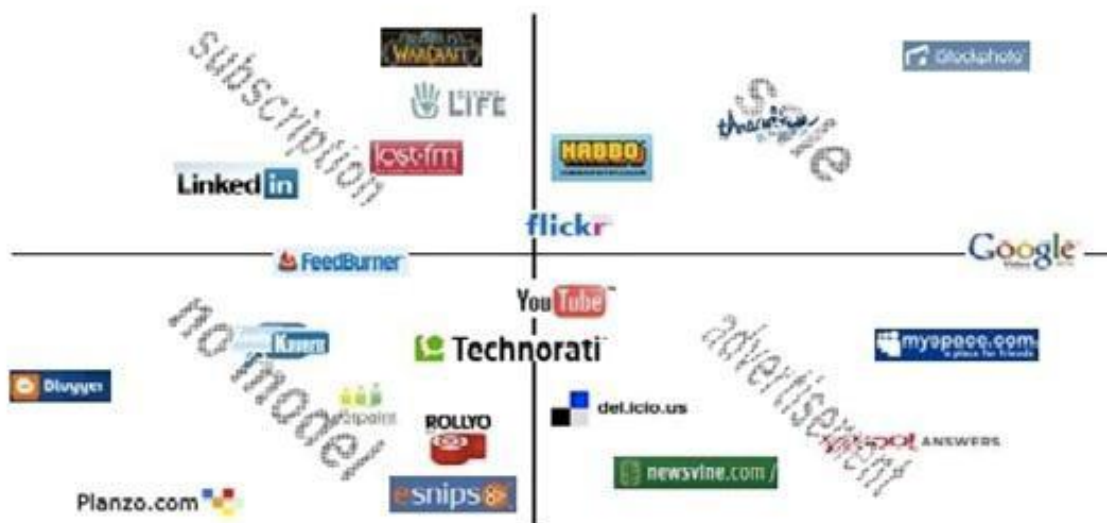
So the basic business models utilized by companies are:

1. **Freemium model**. This model is adopted by the companies to enable users to join their websites. They have free features which they give to their users on their first login. Though some features which are of important uses are kept locked and opened In case the user is willing to pay a premium for those extra features. The problem is what and how much free services need to be given to users. Vimeo and Linkedin are examples of companies using this model.

2. **Registration model.** In this model a monthly or yearly subscription fees is charged to use entire services and no service is hidden. Like take an example of Lynda.com. It utilizes the same model and in that model once you take the yearly package you are eligible to take all the courses available on the website.

3. **Digital products model.** In this model the websites or services involve some sort of digital enhancements like coins, points or virtual cash to use other features. These things can be taken by either regularly engaging with the website like in case of Games else these things can also be bought by the user.

4. **Promoting model.** This is certainly the most important model on which Facebook is earning nowadays. Targeting particular set of users with respect to sex, caste, interest and showing them your company product. Most of the companies make use of the database they have and ask other corporations to give them money if they want to use that database.

Moumenine (2012) also discussed about a model used by Kickstarter called Crowdsourcing. In this various individuals showcase what they are going to kick start and what exactly they need fund for.

C. Interest Based Social Networking Services

Jamison (2012) said "SNS users are regularly adopting completely new interest-based support systems (ISNS) for instance Pinterest, Instagram, Browse, in addition to Foodspotting, despite the favorite belief that Facebook might rule the entire interpersonal worldwideweb and thus avoid the inception connected with completely new support systems". What better than Pinterest's 10 million users in just over two year time is a better

example of the above presented arguments.

Khosla (2012), claimed that interest based apps are used only when you realized that you need to communicate or connect with someone of your own interest and when you visit some social networks and you feel like there is no person in your connection who might be interested in your interest, then is the time you search for a social network which can have people listed on the basis of their interest

Facebook's Social Graph is a data base of people and all the activities they have being doing so far along with friends , family or even those you sometimes meet due to similar interest.

Ravikant & Rifkin (2010) declare that "the eye graph and thus ISNSs vary from the original 'people you understand with real life' interpersonal graph in addition to services from the subsequent methods":

1. On one-way following friending is what the graph is built on.
2. Everything in this deals in interest you pursue.
3. Your profile has automatically set as default setting of public.
4. ISNS gives an opportunity to individuals to dream and hop of learning and becoming who they wanted to be.

There are three important elements ISNS are based on:-

1. People on ISNSs do not actually know each other and so there is no barrier or even a small hesitation to discuss about your interest and to ask someone to help in order to follow that interest which is usually not the case in social networking sites.

2. ISNSs usually are meant for short term directional talk to help us grow and improve in our interest and absence of people we know and usually communicate help us in achieving this purpose of ISNSs

3. ISNS can be very effectively targeted by companies to search influencers and even target audience to promote their products and reach to the audience who is actually interested in your product.

3. Research Methodology

Slesinger & M Stephension (1930) explained research as "the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of theory or in the practice of an art".

So in this chapter we are will be learning the methodology adopted to construct the theory. We will also be learning about the type of questions used in this research and the reasons for using them and also the insights about research sample and design.

A. Methodology

We have done qualitative study of three interest based startups to complete the secondary research. The reason for picking various companies to complete the qualitative study was lack of literature available for ISNSs online. The ISNSs were evaluated using Business Model Canvas. Various constructs were promised by using this way of analysis (Santos & Eisenhardt 2004). Moreover this will help to generalize the result and the final results are expandable and can be used in future as reference. Thus enabling various ISNS to use the study insights and make a sustainable business.

A primary research was conducted on 142 respondents which helped us to figure out what all factors are important for an interest based social network to must have and also insights will be there regarding the demographic of our target audience and this will help ISNSs in deciding their target user at the time of launching their startups or they can use the study results if their ISNS is already working.

The respondents were chosen in such a way that they follow some or the other interests or hobbies. This will help us in somehow understanding what exactly that section of user wants.

B. Source of Data

Primary Data was collected with the help of a questionnaire which was floated to Working Non-Working, Students and Business people. Students we chose were those doing MBA, B.tech, and also other graduates (college going).

Secondary Data is collected by using knowledge available on internet and then applying Business Model Canvas on various ISNSs considered in the case.

C. Sampling Method

The sampling method used here is convenient sampling and the reason for choosing such a method is that I have to make sure our respondents have some interest or the other so that they have idea about ISNSs and can give real insights about their requirements.

D. Sample Size

So we have floated the survey to 150 respondents and we have received data of 142 respondents. This sample has 94 male respondents and 48 female respondents.

E. Structure of Questionnaire

The structure of questionnaire was quite easy to understand. The details about the questions asked is as follows:-

Types of questions asked:

1. Dichotomous questions

Such questions have only to outcomes either YES or NO. Respondents can and have to choose one these two opinions.

2. Likert Questions

Ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree these questions have five options or degrees on which a user can finalize his thought about the question asked. We have used interval scales also. Using Likert questions helps in doing better data analysis.

3.5 Tools and Tests

We have used Excel and SPSS as data analysis tools for this research. Data has been collected using Google forms and then entire data is exported to Excel. Excel is used to do data cleaning and then we have used SPSS to find various statistical results by using various techniques like Anova, T-test and Regression analysis.

Steps of Data Analysis:

1. Application of Microsoft Excel 2013 followed by SPSS 22.0.

2. Interpreting the results and then discussing recommendations for future use.

Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis is a statistical technique for investigating and modeling the relationship between variables. Regression analysis techniques are of two type first Linear regression analysis and second Multiple regression analysis. In this project report we are using Linear regression analysis for our data interpretation.

Regression functions for both of the types are:

Linear Regression: $Y = a + bX + u$

Multiple Regression: $Y = a + b1X1 + b2X2 + b3X3 + ... + btXt + u$

Where:

Y = variable which you are trying to predict (dependent variable)

X = variable which you are using to predict Y (independent variable)

a = the intercept

b = the slope

u = the regression residual

In Linear regression we try to make out the connection between various independent variables and dependent variable. The relationship usually comes out to be a linear line that best approximates all the individual information points.

T-test

A t-test is used to examine two population means. This is used when the variables are divided into two parts independent variable and dependent variable.

The variation in the mean score of the dependent variable is found because of the influence of the independent variable. By finding this insight we reject or accept the final hypothesis.

We have used Independent Samples T-test in this project report.

ANOVA

"Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is an investigation device utilized as a part of insights that parts the total fluctuation found inside an informational collection into two sections: systematic factors and random factors". Variance test analysis is utilized to understand the variation between both the clients.

At least 3 factors are used to check ANOVA. Variances are examined in as one-way (or unidirectional) and two-way. A restricted or one-way ANOVA decides if every one of the samples is the same.

Two-way ANOVA help an organization to look at specialist profitability taking into consideration the autonomous factors. Cooperation between two variables can be figured out using Anova. The impact of two variables simultaneously in mean time is also measured by Annova

One-Way ANOVA has been used for this project.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

- **Lack of time.**
- **Lack of feedback.**
- **Lack of peer group.**
- **Lack of relevant material.**
- **Lack of group activity.**
- **Lack of career prospects.**

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

- **Willingness to join a new ISNS**

4. Framework for evaluation of ISNS

This section discusses the Business Model Canvas in detail. Business Model Canvas is probably the best and the easiest way to explain the concept of a new company and what it is or will be doing. Now days a lot of VC firms just ask to submit the idea of new startup in the form of Business Model Canvas.

Business Model Analysis Framework

So this model was made by Osterwalder et al. (2010). It is a strategical template which can be used by startups which are lean to note down their companies business model.

Figure 3: Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder et al. 2010)

So the Canvas has nine core building blocks. In our report we have taken different ISNSs successful around the world and try to study their business model by breaking them down into these nice core building blocks mentioned in the canvas. A single defining approach used in all the ISNSs helps us to find out what all common aspects exist in various startups and what all things are unique to them. The findings and learning can be utilized by any new ISNS as a part of their b-plan strategy.

Table 3: Value chain order (Ostwalder,2010)

Value Creation	1. Value propositions
	2. Customer Segments
	3. Key Resources
	4. Key Activities
	5. Key Partnerships
	6. Cost Structure
Value Delivery	7. Channels
Value Capture	8. Customer Relationships
	9. Revenue Streams

So the nine building blocks of the canvas are very well defined and categorized in three main categories. These three categories gives a broader look of the company and helps the company owner to assess what all things in their company are helping in creating values, delivering them and finally capturing benefit of that value.

The analysis of various ISNSs on the same parameters has helped to focus on few major points like revenue streams. Every new startup wants to be profitable right from the start and the pressure for the same is on every company. Now in Indian context it is important for Indian ISNSs to understand the ways these case companies have applied their revenue model and then try to figure out a new revenue model for Indian context. The Indian startup owners should realize that the ISNSs in India are still new and they need to work on their sources of revenue so that to be at least sustainable from the beginning.

A. Pinterest (http://www.pinterest.com)

Ben Silberman, Paul Sciarra and Evan Sharp in the year 2010 founded Pinterest. The company has its headquarters situated at San Francisco. The founders define Pinterest as "Catalog of Ideas" where you can go out and find a new Idea of your interest and make something of your own. A small feature called PINit is available on all social websites which enable you to pin anything you want to under a specific interest to your dashboard. Other users on Pinterest can see your dashboard and ideas you are pinning on it. So you have the option of making your own Pin Boards. A user can connect to other Pinterest users with identical interest and follow their boards. According to comScore, "Pinterest was the fastest growing site in the history ever to break through the 10 million unique visitors mark".

1. Pinterest Business Model Analysis

a) Value Proposition

Pinterest's unique value proposition is that it allows its users to 'pin' any content available on internetholding any sort of interest to them. These pins serve as source of creativity for other people to do the same and use those ideas to develop something of their own. Pinterest follows a certain theme and combines these pinboards together. Pinterest provide visual satisfaction to its users by showing them some of the best content available on internet of their personnel interest.

b) Customer Segment

Pinterest allows user from all age groups, gender and section of society to show creativity and make their pin boards. What's interesting about Pinterest is that the type of interest they have in their catalog covers almost everything under the planet. So you might be a software engineer or an architect or a mom their re things you can follow and get creative ideas for the field you work in .

c) Key Resources

The funds Pinterest raised in from VC firms in the year 2012 and 2013 are their main resource along with the team they have which builds the product. There are only hundred team members in Pinterest thus this makes it a company with highest users per team member which turns out to be around 400000. The user base of Pinterest is 40 million. They are trying to increase their team size to a considerable amount to cater the needs of this growing platform.

d) Key Activity

As one of the founder told to the media that "Pinterest's main *Key Activity* is that the continuous development of its net and mobile platforms. The company released an improved version of its net service in Jan 2013 that featured larger pictures, higher navigation and a brand new menu of connected pins that produces the location stickier. It conjointly improved the performance of its backend systems to create the location run a lot of with efficiency". Pinterest is now becoming a platform for businesses to showcase their ideas to millions of people and directly target those people as per their interest.

Pinterest association with Skimlinks is a n example of associating affiliate marketing on their platforms. The association proved beneficial for Pinterest as there are many influencers on Pinterest with whom the businesses want to get associated to promote their own product.

e) Key Partnerships

E-commerce retailers are the Key partners of Pinterest. These e-commerce players showcase their items and ideas and generate sales through Pinterest. In a way these e-commerce retailers help Pinterest to generate fresh content for their visitors.

f) Cost Structure

It has a lean cost structure. The most important cost is the cost of maintenance which includes the salaries of team members and maintenance of hardware and software. Still the type of user-employee ration they have maintained this indicated the way they are reducing their expenses. They continuously optimize their website to suit the requirement and to reduce their cost of hardware.

g) Channels

Channels which distribute services of Pinterest are web portals and mobile app. Pinterest have mobile app for both android and iOS platforms. Moreover more that 10 million of daily active users of Pinterest use mobile apps to use the services. A unique "pin it widget" which enable anyone to access Pinterest from any third party app is again a useful channel for Pinterest. Those who want to do business on Pinterest they have a separate dedicated online channel provided by the company.

h) Customer Relationship

The website requires compulsory login to use the services of Pinterest or even open its website to browse. Thus as the user log on to the website that particular moment a relationship starts between the user and Pinterest. As browsing of things of your interest is free on Pinterest users are happy to log in and spend time on the website.

i) Revenue Streams

Currently Pinterest only backs on the funding they have raised and also the amount they receive from their partnerships with e-commerce players. Pinterest founders are working constantly to devise a new business model which is profitable and also sustainable.

Pinterest revenue streams can be divided into four categories a) They charge from their advertisers b) They charge users to promote their post c) they charge e-commerce partners and also take commission on the same d) It also charge from various businesses it they want to use Pinterest to promote their thing

The company is planning to start having advertisements which are paid. As per one of the founder "It'll possibly supply further options for firms that they'll use in their native ad campaigns. The service can naturally take a proportion of brands' sales revenue that's generated through Pinterest. The trend is additionally to supply premium options to individual users United Nations agency would like to form their profiles/boards a lot of enticing and appealing (highlighted posts etc.). Pinterest has established itself together of the key social networks with a singular worth proposition. It's fascinating to envision however users can react to its validation plans and the way it'll have an effect on the expansion of the service".

Figure 4: A Pin Board on a Pinterest Platform

B. Tumblr (http://www.tumblr.com)

Tumblr is a micro blogging platform which allow users to read and write on topics based on their interest. The multimedia options available with users while creating content makes Tumblr stand apart among youth compared to other blogging platforms. Here the social network of a blogger starts to build when he/she start following other bloggers of similar interest. Tumblr is a Yahoo company now. It was founded by David Karp in 2007.

According to Quantcast, "the service had 170 million visitors in January 2013. 360 employees currently manage it. Tumblr has started monetizing its service sharply and it launched its first major crusade with Adidas in June 2012. It's additionally introduced a spread of services and options that users should purchase through the service. Tumblr desires firms to form native advertisements and 'tell stories' through their micro blogs so as to create them additional appealing to the customers". The company believes they are all set to revolutionize the advertising Industry.

1. Tumblr Business Model Analysis

a) Value proposition

Easy to use user interface and rich content provided by youth around the world are the two main value proposition for Tumblr. What makes Tumblr an interesting blogging platform is the option it gives to its users to attach all sort of content to make the blogs look super rich and attractive. Another attractive feature which adds to the value is the availability of themes for bloggers to make their profiles very expressive for the visitors. Users create unique content, by giving very little time in its cosmetics.

b) Customer Segment

Though Tumblr is out for all the age groups or internet user but the bold use of colors and styles make it a hub for teen aged and college going students. The current generation needs some funky creative UI and that is the reason they love Tumblr. The quality of content and website features enable users to stay there once they start posting stuff.

c) Key Resources

Funding from different capital organizations of more than 150 million US dollars is the key resource the company is backing on. The founders are currently trying to raise more funds. The team consist of around 200 members of various expertise. The UI team which designs the layout, decides color and other visual features is again an excellent resource Tumblr has.

d) Key Activities

The main activities are to develop and enhance the user experience on their website as well as on their mobile app. For example its 2012 update of iOS was a complete mind blowing upgradation. They are also trying to increase engagement with existing users and for this they are trying to develop apps which share photos and videos and share instantly on their platforms just like Instagram. Tumblr allow users to Google analytics which they use to see the traffic on their blogs etc but the company is also trying to build their own analytical suit.

e) Key Partnership

In this age of Data Analytics and Data mining, Tumblr has its key partnerships with organizations which constantly need data to analyze the need of younger generation particularly teen. Businesses too launch their sponsored portals and have key partnership with the company.

f) Cost Structure

Ttumblr's cost structure consist of cost employed on web development, its regular maintenance, and hardware /software upgradation. The scale on which Tumblr is working the main cost is of maintaining that database and making it better day by day. To catch up with business users Tumblr employed extra cost to fulfill their needs.

g) Channels

Channels which distribute services of Tumblr are web portals and mobile app. Tumblr have mobile app for both android and iOS platforms. Moreover more that 5 million of daily active users of Tumblr use mobile apps to use the services.

h) Customer Relationship

The website requires compulsory login to use the services of Tumblr or even open its website to browse. Thus as the user log on to the website that particular moment a relationship starts between the user and Tumblr. Tumblr allows a very active FAQ section and solve various issues faced by its users. The discussion forums made by Tumblr also enable them to ask their users about things they have to in their websites.

i) Revenue Streams

According to an inside source "the primary substantiation theme was the 'highlighted posts' feature that permits individual users to push their posts on the dashboard that is equivalent of stories prey on Facebook. The second theme was launched in March 2012 and introduced premium themes that users should purchase to form their blogs stand out from the gang."
Advertisers pay to promote their blogs. These are mostly company blogs who want their followers to be updated about any new message a company want to convey. These paid blogs are displayed on a separate tab called SPOT LIGHT.
Tumblr took a time of as much as five years to monetize their platform

C. Tribesports (http://www.tribesports.com)

Tribesports was founded by Steve in the year 2010 was an interest based startup based on the type of sports you are interested in. There is a concept of 'Tribes' and according to the founders interview "anyone can join a tribe of any sports interests, location, playing position, ability level and attitude". The interactions with your tribe members introduce the element of social network based on interest. People of same tribe give feedback to each other help each other and also motivate each other to fulfill their tasks. The website also launch "Challenges" from time to time to keep its users engaged. According to a small report in the newspaper "by April 2012 over 80,000 challenges had been taken, with nearly 50,000 achievements and one million 'encouragements' recorded by users".

1. Tribesport Business Model Analysis

a) Value Proposition

The value it gives to its users is that it connects individuals who are active and are interested in any of the sports with other individuals of same locality or even of different locality. Tribesport values health and give its users its own e commerce portal to buy products like apparels, equipments and other health and sport related products.

The Challenges feature it has and also the way it connects people online to do activities offline is a great value proposition.

b) Customer Segment

Tribesports is targeted to any individual but it majorly focuses on those pursuing sports as one of their interest. Most individual customers segments are by default activeandthey convey and help others to reach their health and sports goals by the help of social communities built on Tribesport.

c) Key Resources

Funded by two VC firms enable it to create a sustainable business. Apart from the money being the key resource Tribesport have a lot of sports enthusiast in every community who want to be community leaders and monitor sports activity in their region. They do it involuntary and so no cost is involved and they enable all the Challenges launched on website.

d) Key Activity

First key activity is to develop web interface and match it upto the expectations of the users. Then Tribesport is in continuous collaborations with organizations to launch challenges for their organization and make a tribe of their own. Every week the challenges should motivate people to play more and more sport is also Tribesport continuously work on.

f) Key Partnership

Sports event organizers, clubs, gym, sports merchandise companies and sports enthusiasts are the Key partners which Tribesport continuously work on.

g) Cost Structure

Tribesports's cost structure consist of cost employed on web development, its regular maintenance, and hardware/software upgradation. Tribesport also spend money on constantly procuring products for its online portal.

g) Channels

Channels which distribute services of Tribesports are web portals and mobile app. Tribesports have mobile app for both android and iOS platforms. Tribe sports also operate offline in a way of creating events and challenges. And so these channels are also important to build business and brand of Tribesport

h) Customer Relationship

The website requires compulsory login to use the services of Tribesports or even open its website to browse. Thus as the user log on to the website that particular moment a relationship starts between the user and Tribesports. Moreover the sports representative which conducts offline challenges also represent company and so they again can build or break the customer relationship..

i) Revenue Streams

E-commerce portal available on Tribesport Website is the main source of revenue.
Tribe sport also goes for business associations and charge for conducting offline challenges and sports events to encourage corporate people to pay and remain healthy.

D. Getwings (http://www.getwings.in)

Getwings is an interest based social network created to motivate the talented people in India, who give up on their hobbies and interest due to some or the other reason. Some of the unique features of Getwings are:

1. A wonderful to editor to upload your work
2. Concept of Neighborhoods, Collaborations
3. Opportunity to earn from your talent
4. Creating an online portfolio, unlike any other Social Network
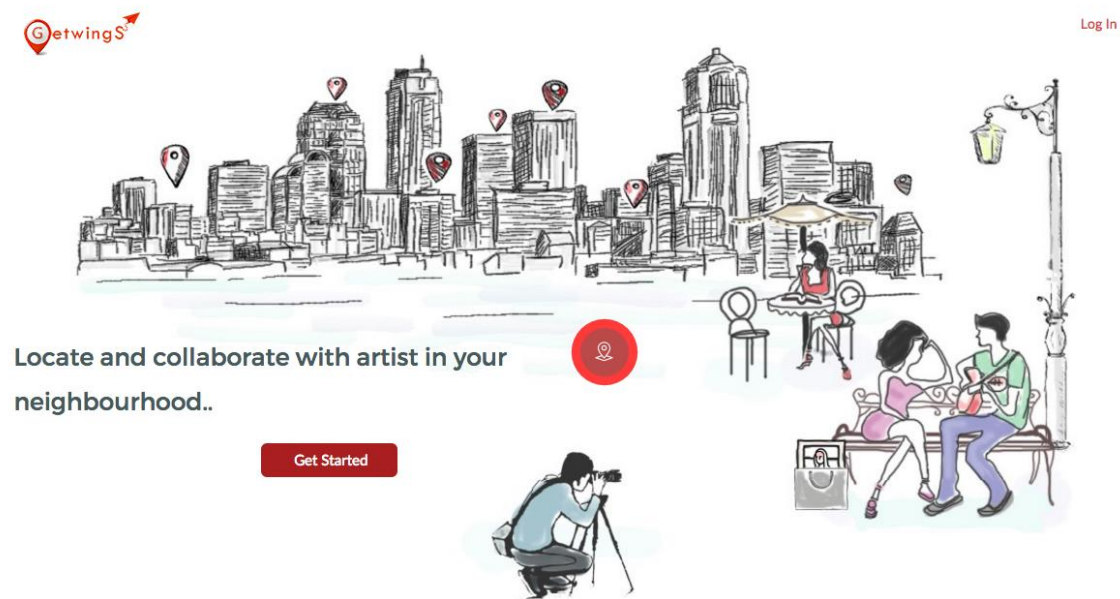5. Strong off-line presence that aids the online community

Figure 5: The Proposed Homepage (getwings.in)

Since the website is still in the development phase, the details of the features have not been shared by the founders. However, the broad concept and some screenshots have been shared. Getwings has identified the needs of the people and have tried to bring solutions in a structured manner. Insights have been taken from various current networks like LinkedIn, Pinterest, Tribesports, Cucumbertown etc. 'Google Helpouts' was analyzed by Getwings in details and because it was shutdown, Getwings changed their propositions and delayed their launch. Learning from the mistakes of Helpouts, Getwings have realized that the market is not yet mature to launch a service that provides guidance over Internet for a charge. Thus they decided to rather introduce the concept of collaboration, where people can interact, learn, get feedback etc. for free and from their peers in their neighborhood. The concept of neighborhood also keeps open the option of meeting and collaborating in the real world.

The feeds for the users would also be highly customized based on the interests and locality. In the beginning, Getwings is planning to launch with four selected interest areas: Art, Photography, Music & Writing. Slowly Getwings would increase their categories in next phases. Getwings is yet not sure about their starting point in terms of the user base and this research would help them identify the same.
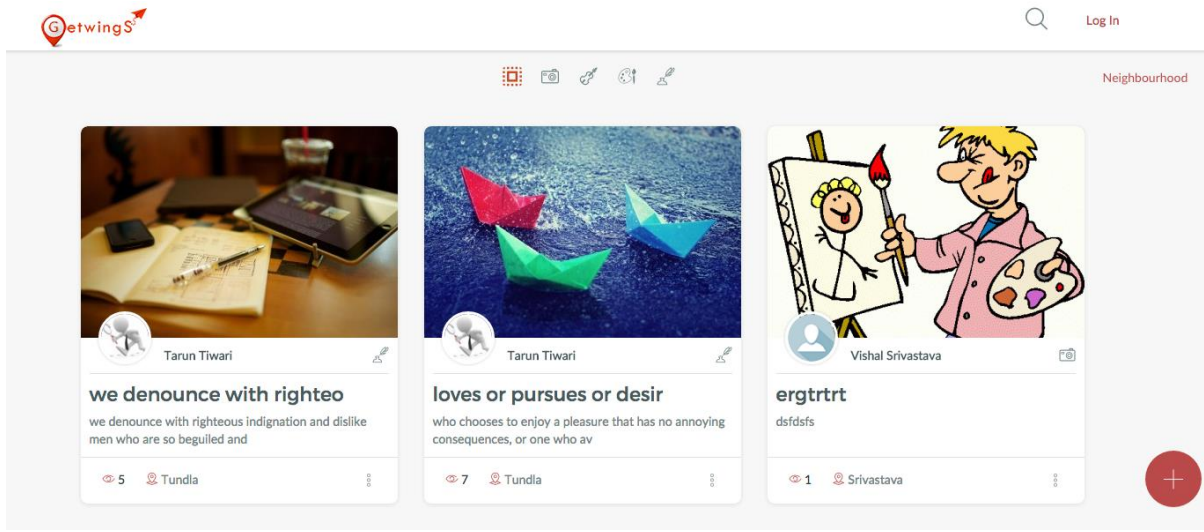

Figure 6: The Feed Page(getwings.in)

Once a substantial user base is achieved, Getwings is also planning to allow users to offer their services physically using the platform. Getwings would take a small share and hence be able to generate revenues for its sustainability. Getwings has partenered with startups like UrbanClap to create an effective eco-system for the same.

Figure 7: The Neighborhood (getwings.in)
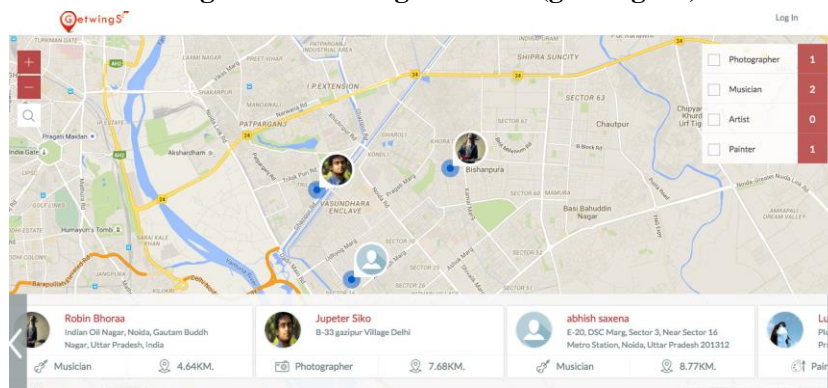
5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was sent to 150 people across gender, geography and occupation. 142people responded to the survey having the following mix.

Primarily the survey was conducted to get the two major insights: 1.Target Group for the Indian ISNS, 2.What are the problems this ISNS must solve-to develop the features for the platform. To understand the target group, the respondents were classified on the basis of gender, age, city-type, occupation, acquaintance to SNS and ISNS like Pinterest, Tumblr etc.

Only those people have filled the survey, who have some or the other hobby/interests like music, photography, art, fitness, cooking etc.

To make a decision on the features to be offered in the new ISNS-Getwings, users were asked to rate the various factors, which are a major constraints for them to continue following their hobbies/interests. The factors that were considered included:

1. Lack of Time,
2. Lack of Peer Group,
3. Inaccessibility to relevant material (Like key-notes for guitarists),
4. Not having future career prospects,
5. Group Activity (Unable to find a group in your locality),
6. Lack of feedback. These factors were decided on the basis of personnel interviews conducted for Getwings Stories.

a) Demographic Analysis
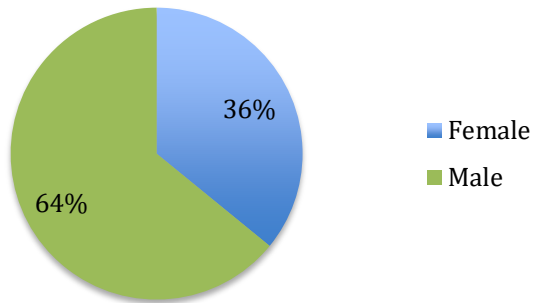
Gender Wise Distribution

Fig. 8

Out of all 142 respondents there where 64% Male and 36% female respondents

Different Places of Respondents

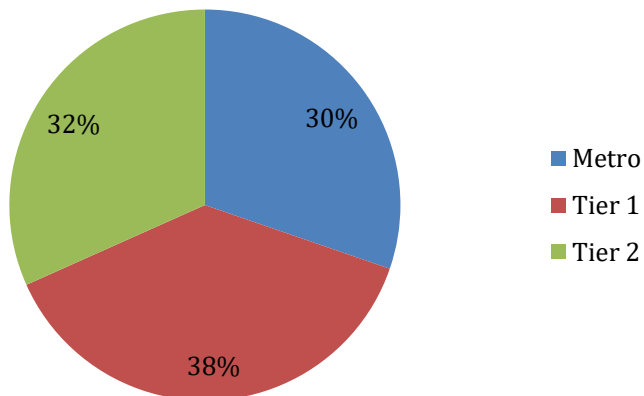**Fig. 9**

Our respondents belongs to three major locations Metro , Tier 1 cities and Tier 2 cities.

Occupation-Wise Distribution of Respondents

- Business
- None
- Service
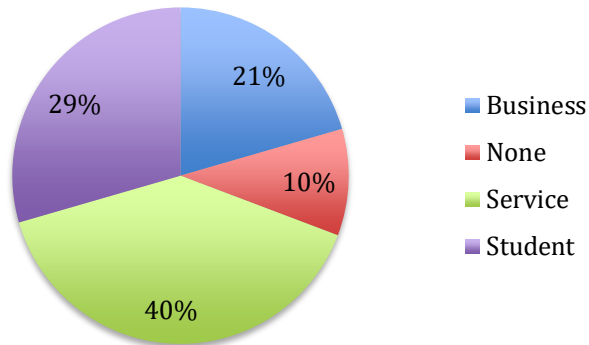- Student

21%
10%
40%
29%

Fig. 10

The majority of respondents are from the Student category. Then we have 21% Business class respondents and 29% Service class. We also have 10% non-working respondents.

b) Data Analysis using SPSS

Table 4: Summary of the Results of Survey

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. deviation
L.O . Time	142	3.013	1.525
L. O . Peer G.	142	2.179	1.365
Unavailable relevant material	142	2.038	1.427
No carrer opportunties	142	3.282	1.385
Lack of group activeness	142	3.077	1.466
No proper feedback	142	3.564	1.383

Inference:

We have calculated the mean of all the 142 observations. Mean lies in the range of 2.564-3.282. From the current mean values we can figure out that Lack of feedback in an online platform often stops people to pursue their hobby or interest. We can also make out that respondents feel that a lot of relevant material is accessible to them and the accessibility of the same is not a major concern.

Deviation is least in Lack of feedback and maximum in Lack of time.

1. T-test

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no gender difference with respect to willingness to join new ISNS

Alternative Hypothesis(H1): There is gender difference with respect to willingness to join new ISNS

Table 5 : Group Statistics

Dependent Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Would you like to register to new ISNS	F	48	3.833	1.4341	.2070
	M	94	3.436	1.4032	.1447

T-TEST Analysis

Demographic factor	Independent variable	Sig. level	Null Hypothesis
GENDER	Lack of time	0.417	Accepted
	Lack of peer group	0.454	Accepted
	Inaccessibility of relevant material	0.682	Accepted
	Lack of feedback	0.964	Accepted
	Lack of career prospects	0.641	Accepted
	Lack of Group Activity	0.547	Accepted
	Would you like to register on a new ISNS	.114	Accepted

Table 6: T-Test analysis between Gender and Independent Variables

Inference:

The Sig (2-tailed) comes out to be more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that there is no significant gender difference with respect to willingness to join new ISNS. The mean value of both the gender comes out to be nearly same.

This means if we launch a new ISNS then the user will be both male and female. So we need to target both the gender set.

2. Anova Table : Location Vs Factors

Null Hypothesis H 0: Location bears no difference in the opinion regarding independent and dependent variables

Alternative Hypothesis H 1: Location an individual belongs to affect the opinion on dependent and independent variables

Table 7: Location Vs Factors

Demographic Factor	Factors	Significance Level	Null Hypothesis
Location	Lack of time	.216	Accepted
	Lack of peer group	.874	Accepted
	Lack of feedback	.078	Accepted
	Lack of relevant material	.731	Accepted
	Lack of group activity	.298	Accepted
	Lack of Career Prospects	.293	Accepted
	Would you like to join ISNS?	.567	Accepted

Inference:

The Sig. (2-tailed) comes out to be more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that there is no significant difference with respect to willingness to join new ISNS irrespective of where the individual is located. Our null hypothesis is accepted.

The new ISNS can start their operations from Metro areas but they should be prepared that they will get users from all Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities.

3. Anova Table: Age Vs Factors

Null Hypothesis H 0: Age bears difference in the opinion regarding independent and dependent variables

Alternative Hypothesis H 1: Age bears no difference in the opinion on dependent and independent variables

Table 8: Age Vs Factors

Demographic Factor	Factors	Significance Level	Null Hypothesis
AGE	Lack of time	.013	Accepted
	Lack of peer group	.165	Rejected
	Lack of feedback	.003	Accepted
	Lack of relevant material	.799	Rejected
	Lack of group activity	.339	Rejected
	Lack of Career Prospects	.032	Accepted
	Would you like to join ISNS?	.007	Accepted

Inference:

People belonging to various age groups have different opinions regarding dependent and independent variables.

Post Hoc analysis tells us that age group of 31-35 has maximum difference in opinion. And also the most important age group for us to target is of 21-25.

Age group of 21-25 is basically a college going segment and they are highly active on social media and also have an urge to pursue their hobbies and even they want to make a career out of it if possible.

So the new ISNS can start with various colleges and plan a launching strategy for the same.

3. Regression Analysis

Table 9 : Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.610[a]	.469	.470	1.3336	.168	4.448	6	132	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Lack of feedback, Lack of Peer Group, Lack of career Prospects, Lack of Time, Inaccessibility to relevant material, Group Activity(Unable to find a group in your locality)

Table 10:Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.124	.498		8.281	.000
Lack of Time	.118	.082	.278	1.439	.002
Lack of Peer Group	.036	.090	.240	.396	.092
Inaccessibility to relevant material	-.046	.087	.237	-.530	.070
Lack of career Prospects	-.063	.089	.266	-.705	.048
Group Activity(Unable to find a group in your locality)	.152	.097	.433	1.558	.012
Lack of feedback	-.440	.094	.595	-4.659	.000

Inference:

Regression Equation: 4.124 + b (.118) + c (.036) +d (-.046) + e (-.063)+f(.152)+ g(-.440)

We have Adjusted R square value to be .470 which means we have 47 percent acceptance of results.

We have considered six independent variables out of which three are found to be significant.

The three independent variables which are found to be of significance are:-

45

- Lack of time
- Lack of feedback
- Lack of Group Activity.

Significance level of these factors are : Lack of time (.002), Lack of feedback (.000) and Lack of Group Activity (.010).
This clearly shows that Lack of Feedback is the most important concern of people following their hobbies and provision for same need to there on the new ISNS.

6. Findings& Recommendations

a) Primary Survey Findings

Customer Segments

ISNSs target niche user segments. There are many interest based networks for travelers, sports enthusiasts, artist, dancers etc. and these are next social networks in the making.

The detail findings of the primary survey in Indian context are:-

- Type of city plays no role in the individuals opinion to join an ISNS
- There is no difference among the opinion of two genders regarding the use and willingness to join such services.
- Age group is found out to play crucial role and we need to focus on specific age groups while launching a new ISNS. 21-25 is the age group we will be targeting.
- Students and Working professionals are the type of occupation we need to target.
- Now the three deciding factors which are affecting users to not to pursue their hobbies and interest and to join an interest based social networks came out to be
    - No mechanism of effective feedback.
    - Unavailability of time with these age groups and professionals
    - Lack of group activity in the area they live which is important for inculcating a hobby.
- So our recommendation to any new ISNS is to focus on the age group of 21-25 when deciding your launch strategy. This can be done by launching the startup by targeting college cultural events or annual fests.
- The startup can be launched Pan India as location is not an issue
- The new ISNS should have features to provide feedback of the interests users are undertaking
- There should be a mobile app which could provide small minute modules on a daily basis related to the interest of users so that they do not have to spend much time on a daily basis
- Provision of a virtual neighborhood should be there which may encourage group tasks and then group activities online.

b) Secondary Research Findings

Value Propositions

User interface with unique features which actually help the users in some sort of value addition in the hobby they are pursuing. The value proposition should ensure that users land on the new ISNS and similar needs cannot be fulfilled by any existing SNSs.

Key Resources

Apart from money which is a rare possibility at the time of launch of a new ISNS, team is the most important resource which should be present with the company. The team should be capable enough to give excellent online hardware, software support and also offline support in case if it is required.

Key Activities

Development of web portals on a continuous basis to give better experience to the user is one of the key activities. Apart from this corporate relations, understanding the need of users by meeting them and figuring out ways to incorporate in the ISNS which can help users indulge more in their hobby.

Development is the key activity for every interest-based social network since the competition is fierce and the ones that are technologically, functionally, and visually superior will usually win. The mobile revolution has also made it a necessity for new ISNSs to provide mobile applications to supplement the web service. The other major activity that ISNSs concentrate on is expansion. The fact to the matter is that there are so many networks that users can choose from that expansion has to be done with more unconventional ways than in the past. The majority of new interest-based social networks organize events in collaboration with local organizations/institutions to host events where the two join forces to promote both entities.

This can be seen as one of the most effective new user acquisition strategies because physical presence is still considered more effective than digital presence.
Physical events usually create a lot more buzz around a service because they reach individuals in more appealing ways.

The new ISNS can first start with a web-based platform only and can later add a mobile platform. The expansion would be triggered by on the ground activities. Since the biggest target segment is students and working professionals, it must try and connect with them on-ground by identifying the *key cluster* areas.

They must try and create on-ground communities following the patterns of toastmasters. These on-ground communities would pave the way for on-line growth. It must meet the key deliverables in order to gain user satisfaction and trust. They can also make campus ambassadors at various colleges and corporate, which could act as their point of contact and helps in on-ground activations.

Key Partnerships

Interest-based social networks establish numerous partnerships already in the early stages of their existence because it is one of the main ways for them to grow in terms of users and geographical reach. Partnerships are commonly established with organizations that provide similar types of services in on the ground.

ISNSs heavily rely on the activities that their users do in the real world, which makes these partnerships a crucial part of their strategies. The other major type of partnership is the ones with data analysis companies. The user data is something that the service providers may not be able to handle by themselves and therefore there is a need for a company that is specialized in data analysis and recommendation engine tuning.

The new ISNS could also partner with some organizations that have reach to the college students and help in getting an early set of users, whose feedback could be of great use with the beta testing.

Cost Structure

It is clear that most costs stem from platform development and maintenance. Services that wish to remain relevant and successful need constant platform development, which eats up resources and remains usually constant the entire life cycle of the service. Maintenance costs remain relatively low during the initial stages of a service due to low traffic and the possibilities that cloud hosting providers offer nowadays. As the traffic to the service grows, maintenance costs can become the single biggest cost that a company will ever see.

As discussed earlier, expansion of interest-based social networking services follow more unconventional ways than their predecessors did. User acquisition is done through localized promotional events, which can result in significant costs if these types of events are hosted in multiple sites around the globe. Establishing local offices is also a growing trend in the industry and this shift has changed the cost structure as well.

Channels

Internet browser and native mobile applications are the major ways for reaching the users of ISNSs. The difference to the older social networks comes with the *'physical integration'*, which means that ISNSs are often used in combination with the physical world and the surrounding environment. Therefore, the main channels need to be designed in ways that allow users to interact with the service while they are performing activities in the real world Different channels should therefore have tight integration with one another in order to provide a universal experience. The key to success is to integrate the different channels with

Naturally, the physical integration also means that companies need to establish physical channels to reach the users of the services. Physical channels, such as promotional and marketing events are a way for these services to reach existing and potential users. These physical channels are fundamental in helping users to evaluate the value proposition behind a service. Successful ISNSs have realized this notion of delivering the value proposition to the customers in physical ways as well.

The new ISNS will have to make sure since the beginning that they are able to create that physical connect with the users, which would ultimately define its success and sustainability.

Customer Relationships

User account creation allows the services to be able to offer personalized content to individual users. This is one of the key features of any interest-based social networking services and service providers need to consider this when developing a service. Personalization allows companies to offer unique customer experiences and relationships but there is also a risk that the personalization engine is misbehaving in the background and does not provide any additional value to the end-users.

ISNS companies have recently started introducing business accounts that are specifically designed for promotional purposes. Usually fee-based features allow companies to customize their accounts so that they resemble the company's usual colors and themes. Functional personalization is one of the key success factors for these types of services.

For the ISNS, it would be necessary to keep everything free-of-cost and ad-free in the beginning. The sole customer would be the user who wants to visit new ISNS to help him/her in pursuing her talent with effective networking and prospects. As already mentioned, apart from online, physical relationship with the customer would also play a great role towards this.

Revenue Streams

In the current scenario specifically in India, startups cannot just focus on external funding to make a sustainable revenue model. They need to come up with innovative business models and revenue streams at least to such a level that they are able to survive any sort of cash crunch.

Constant interactions with businesses and how the ISNS can be made useful to them is again something ISNS founders need to think. B2b is always the best source of revenues in India where the early adoption of new concepts are slow.

7. Conclusion

The research data or literature available is not updated. Data is available for websites like Facebook , Orkut , Linkedin but companies like Pinterest , Tumblr ,Indiefolio, yaamo donot have any research study done on them which somehow stops us to lead to any definite conclusion.

We are in a transitional state from SNSs to ISNSs and nobody can still predict the fate of ISNSs. Talking about Indian context the user base here are very slow adopters of technology and once they adopt a technology they do not leave it easily. This means that it would be difficult for ISNSs to make a space in India but once they are a part of an individual life, they will use it on a daily basis.

The core ISNS services are same, you need to cater to the need of a particular section or a particular interest but a lot of scope is there in the business models adopted by these ISNS.

As the number of services will grow, more of them would become public and the data would be made available and thus there would be a possibility to do a quantitative study based on KPIs and define them better.

The over increasing user base and individual friend lists on Facebook created these new services, to provide more personalization and relevant community. The pace at which these is moving forwarded, there is a great possibility that the next big things is just around the corner. It makes complete sense for the new ISNS to enter into the Indian market at this time and grow internationally from there. However, most of this would ultimately depend on the funding that they could get to grow. The mobile internet and device revolution (smart watch, smart glass etc.) would also help in interlinking the digital world with the physical world even more and thus would create numerous possibilities for the new companies to change the way people interact with these different realms.

Finally this project sets a small guideline for the new ISNS to be launched in India and also mentions that there is enough scope left to research in this field

8. FUTURE SCOPE

- A more exhaustive primary research can be done taking an more exhaustive set of respondents.
- There is a lack of research data available on Interest based social networks so it would be advisable if further research should be done in association with few already existing ISNS and learn what are their views on the target audience and factors they are focusing.
- Focused group interviews of users already using few of the ISNS will be helpful to understand what real needs are being fulfilled and what else can be done.

9.References

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Appendix 1 - Questionnaire:

Name

Age

Occupation

1. Student
2. Service
3. Business
4. Other

City of Residence

1. Metro/Tier1
2. Tier 2
3. Others

Hobbies/Interests

1. Music
2. Cooking
3. Fitness
4. Writing
5. Photography
6. Art
7. Any Other :

What are the various Social Networking Sites (SNS) you use regularly?

1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. LinkedIn
4. Google +

Does these SNS helps you in anyways with your hobbies/interests?

1. Yes
2. No

Which of the Interest-Based Social Networking Sites are you aware of?

1. Pinterest
2. Tumblr
3. Tribesports
4. Any Other :
5. None

If yes, does these helps you in pursuing your hobbies/interests?

1. Yes
2. No

Rate these factors based on the criteria: that they stop you/make you loose your motivation in pursuing your hobbies/interests?

Grid: 1-5

1. Lack of Time
2. Lack of Peer Group
3. Inaccessibility to relevant material(Like key-notes for guitarists)
4. Not having future career prospects
5. Group Activity(Unable to find a group in your locality)
6. Lack of feedback

Does the current advent of Internet has helped solving these problems

1. To a great extent
2. A little bit/Insignificantly
3. Not at all

Would you like to register yourself on a Network that solves all of these problems for you? Would you visit it regularly?

1. Definitely yes
2. I would register but not sure regarding my regular visits
3. If it helps me, I would be a regular visitor
4. Would have a look
5. I don't believe a social network can provide a solution