

Other-Generated Disclosure: A Challenge to Privacy on Social Network Sites

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Abstract : Sharing on social network sites (SNSs) has rapidly emerged as a new social norm and has become a global phenomenon. Billions of users reveal not only their own information (self disclosure) but also information about others (other-generated disclosure), resulting in a risk and a serious threat to either personal or informational privacy. Self-disclosure (SD) has been extensively researched in the literature, particularly regarding control of individual and existing privacy management. However, far too little attention has been paid to other-generated disclosure (OGD), especially by insiders. OGD has a strong influence on self-presentation, self-image, and electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Moreover, OGD is more credible and less likely manipulated than SD, but lacks privacy control and legal protection to some extent. This article examines OGD in depth, ranging from motivation to both online and offline impacts, based upon lived experiences from both 'the disclosed' and 'the discloser'. Using purposive sampling, this phenomenological study involves an online survey and in-depth interviews. The findings report the influence of peer disclosure as well as users' strategies to mitigate privacy issues. This article also calls attention to the challenge of OGD privacy and inadequacies in the law related to privacy protection in the digital domain.

Keywords : facebook, online privacy, other-generated disclosure, social networks sites (SNSs)

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