An Overview of Privacy and Security Issues in Social Networks

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Abstract : Social networks, such as Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Google+, and Twitter have experienced exponential growth and a remarkable adoption rate in recent years. They provide attractive means of online social interactions and communications with family, friends, and colleagues from around the corner or across the globe, and they have become an important part of daily digital interactions for more than one and a half billion users around the world. The various personal information sharing practices that social network providers encourage have led to their success as innovative social interaction platforms. However, these practices have resulted in ample concerns with respect to privacy and security from different stakeholders. Addressing these privacy and security concerns in social networks is a must for these networks to be sustainable. Existing security and privacy tools may not be enough to address existing concerns. Some guidelines should be followed to protect users from the existing risks. In this paper, we have investigated and discussed the various privacy and security issues and concerns pertaining to social networks. Moreover, we have classified these privacy and security issues and presented a thorough discussion of the implications of these issues and concerns on the future of the social networks. In addition, we have presented a set of guidelines as precaution measures that users can consider to address these issues and concerns.