

What are current challenges and questions faced and posed by social networks?

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<http://www.research.att.com/~bala/papers>

Online social networks

- 500m+ users spending significant amount of time daily
- No published numbers on fraction of traffic but multiple sites are in top-10
- Unique visitors/members: 160M (MySpace), 55M (FB), LJ (11M)
- FB doubling bi-annually, almost all incoming freshmen are on FB, half visit twice a day at least (FB platform manager)
- Twitter alone has 120M pageviews daily
- Overall lack of privacy is severe

Why are they growing so fast?

- Users are first class objects
- Open APIs
- Applications spread semi-virally (100K req max in Facebook)
- Facebook apps are spreading at roughly twice the rate of growth of new members (2% day vs. 1.1%)
- 5000 Facebook apps, 84 account for 87% of usage
- Top apps have tens of millions of installs, millions of active users
- 45 applications have more than 100,000 active users.

Factors governing popularity and implications

Claims re power laws in FB apps - SIGH. (similar mistakes made in networking arena for years)

Facebook Long tail report

http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2007/10/facebook_long_tail_report.html Key differences:

1. Spread control
2. Temporal factor
3. Potential role of gatekeepers
4. Attempt to corral traffic
5. Application fatigue

Measurement challenges

- Can't do across OSNs, ROC high, spidering harder
- Can't do within OSN from outside
- Limitations to measure from inside
- Ajax screws things up; auto-load, js
- External applications are external
- Tail is long/heavy

Panel

Brief presentations:

- Virgilio Almeida, UFMG, Member BAS, long time Web performance researcher. - will talk about challenges in analyzing OSNs
- Mathias Grossglauser, Director, Nokia Internet Labs, ex-EPFL, ATT
- Neel Sundaresan, Director EBay Labs

Followed by questions to the panel