



Florida Department of Transportation Research
 Utilizing Information Technology in Innovative Marketing Approaches for
 Public Transportation
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Public agencies, including transit authorities, have long used media to promote their services, however, the media landscape is rapidly evolving, providing new opportunities and new challenges. The most significant impact on media in recent years has been the appearance of the Internet, the impact of which is defined by how rapidly it has been adopted in homes and businesses worldwide. Despite how recent the introduction of the Internet is, it has also experienced rapid change as users and developers devise new ways of exploiting the connectivity of the ‘Net.

In this report, researchers from the University of South Florida surveyed the media landscape, especially Internet-based media. They reviewed the general decline in the dominance of traditional media, which still has a significant base of readers and viewers. Correspondingly, they report on the increasing reach of many forms of “new media,” including Web sites, blogs, podcasts, RSS feeds, and others.

The researchers introduce their readers to the important development known widely as Web 2.0. This is not a new version of the Internet, but refers to a second generation of computer media which are created and controlled by users. Examples of Web 1.0 technologies would include corporate, governmental, and educational Web sites at which users view professionally created content. At these sites, users can read and learn, and they may be able to provide feedback, but the primary interaction is one of receiving fixed content.

By contrast, Web 2.0 technologies engage users to create content, develop communities, and interact directly with other users. There are now many examples of these technologies, including collaborative projects like Wikipedia, photo-sharing sites, like Flickr, personal blogs facilitated through services like Google or Blogspot, and the social networking sites, like MySpace and Facebook. Hundreds of millions of people use



Americans’ use of media changed significantly between 2006 and 2008, as show in the graphic above. Red marks decreased use, and blue increased use. Even among New Media, interactive media like blogs, shopping, and social networking increased at the expense of passive media.

these sites collectively. With Web 1.0, Web site creators concentrated on delivering content through design. In Web 2.0, creators develop forums that allow users to create content and customize their experience.

The researchers reviewed each of the Web 1.0 and 2.0 technologies, including blogs, podcasts, social networking (Facebook), microblogging (Twitter), photo-sharing (Flickr), wikis, and virtual worlds. For each technology, the researchers provide a brief history, key features, and significant transportation-related sites using the technology.

While the report outlines the researchers’ efforts, an accompanying guidebook, *Routes to New Networks: A Guide to Social Media for the Public Transportation Industry*, provides transportation agencies with an equally thorough review of the technologies, their use, and important examples. The goal of the guidebook goes beyond describing new media, it is intended to help agencies define a mix of social media that best addresses the agency’s goals, target audiences, and desired outcomes.