Should Your Business Be Less Productive?

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Social Media: How important is it?

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With nearly 400 Million active users, Facebook is now the size of the country Germany.
Since the early 2000s, The Internet has become an integral part of our everyday lives. Allowing us the access to all sorts of information, games, and social media websites, The internet is now the #1 way to virtually connect to those around us. It offers a wide variety of endless communication from the touch of our fingertips at home. It is the new way to socialize, express our individuality, speak our mind, and market business. It is a powerful community that is expanding each and every year.

But how important is social media and is it dangerous to our humanity?
Although many argue that social media is actually changing our world for the better, Research shows that social media is actually insidiously changing the way we work, think, and feel. The everlasting effects can be quite detrimental and productivity is actually damaged the more we use it.
The internet and your brain!

With social media being used by most of our world's population, it clearly has an influence on our society. But what we don't know are the detrimental effects it has on our brain.

For instance, studies show that **5-10% of internet users** cannot control how much time they actually spend on the internet.

Brain scans of those users show similar impairment to those addicted to drugs, proving that the internet can quickly form physiological dependence on internet usage. This affects the parts of our brain that control:

- attention span
- memory ability
- emotions
- and decision making

Because the internet offers exciting and stimulatory pleasing to our minds with little effort required, our brains can actually rewire themselves into making you constantly desire and crave neurological stimulation after each and every use, making internet addiction similar to substance abuse.
But how does that affect productivity?

Because our brains are so used to having free access to all the joys and pleasures of the internet, we don't realize how it is affecting our attention span and memory consolidation. The internet is a distraction that can pry you away from concentrating on responsibilities because it's simply *that easy*. When we use websites such as Google for information versus learning for ourselves, all of that quick and easy information isn't actually building up in our brains. It is just temporarily there until you forget about it later. Making our ability to remember much shorter. The internet can have the same affect on your brain with everything else, making it increasingly difficult to focus on regular calmer thinking due to this new life of constant distraction and need for pleasure.
Is google making us stupid?

According to Nicholas Carr in both the previous video and his article, *Is google making us stupid*, He illustrates that google itself can have an altering affect on our minds. Researching quickly to just forget the information quickly after will never really implement the true knowledge of the context in your mind. It simply changes your thinking into a computer based process that depends on efficiency and knowing the answers faster. He explains that this can also affect our ability to focus on normal things, "*What the Net seems to be doing is chipping away my capacity for concentration and contemplation. My mind now expects to take in information the way the Net distributes it: in a swiftly moving stream of particles.*"
While many businesses use social networking sites to find and communicate with clients, the sites can also prove a great distraction to employees who may show more interest in what their friends are posting than in their work tasks. Wired.com posted two studies which demonstrated damage to productivity caused by social networking: Nucleus Research reported that Facebook shaves 1.5% off office productivity while Morse claimed that British companies lost 2.2 billion employees a year to the social phenomenon. New technology products have become available that allow social networks to be blocked, but their effectiveness remains spotty.
More facts on why it's a distraction and generally sucks

- 97% of college students are active daily on Facebook.
- Average college student spends more than 3 hours a day on social media websites while spending less than 2 hours actually studying.
- Study shows that the GPA of students actively on the internet is a few points lower than those that refuse to go online.

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Does social media really affect productivity?

The answer is yes. The internet has an evident affect on how we work, not only as humans in general, but even when we are to be focusing on work and responsibilities. It is a huge aspect of our everyday lives and many are unaware of what the internet can do to our brains and our bodies.

- Do you think we are able to change the way we use the internet?
- Do you think its easier to detox from social media?
- What can we do to raise awareness to the detrimental affects of internet usage?