

Introduction to the Digital and Social Media Track

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Digital and social media continue to grow in importance to society, having become a main venue for work, education, politics, entertainment and socialization. Streamed music and video have replaced physical media such as CDs or DVDs. Email, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram are becoming preferred modes of contact. Understanding these developments and their implications is a challenge for researchers and the public.

The Digital and Social Media (DSM) track covers a broad range of topics, disciplines and approaches, fulfilling our intention that it be a convening platform for researchers to share and discuss cutting-edge research. This year, the track presents 73 papers organized into 15 minitracks.

Five minitracks gather research on different types of digital or social media.

Mediated Conversation: studies of digitally-persistent conversation and its implications for diverse forms of human interaction; that raises new socio-technical, ethical, pedagogical, linguistic and social questions; and that suggests new methods, perspectives, and design approaches for these systems.

Games and Gaming: digital games and sociality, e.g., papers investigating sociability, social practices, communities, use of social affordances or other related social dimensions.

Social Information Systems: explores the design, implementation, operation and integration of social information systems, those characterized by weak ties, social production, egalitarianism and mutual service provisioning.

Live Streaming Services: fosters understanding of the production and usage of, and user participation in social live streaming services.

Collective Intelligence and Crowds: work that analyzes, visualizes or creates novel sociotechnical configurations for collective intelligence, knowledge creation and crowdsourcing.

Another three minitracks examine DSM in particular settings.

Digital Social Media in Enterprise: studies of the use of social media in organizations, along with the opportunities and challenges addressing issues related to the role of enterprise social media in work.

Social Media and Communities: examines social media and their interrelations with communities (online and offline) in the context of work, personal life and education.

Social Movements and Social Technologies: addresses two themes: 1) the development of technology theories through the study of social-movement phenomena, and 2) the application of social-movement theory toward understanding of technology phenomena.

Two minitracks take a methodological focus to research on DSM.

Data Analytics, Data Mining and Machine Learning for Social Media: research that brings together DSM and data analytics, data mining and machine learning, including quantitative, theoretical and applied approaches.

Network Analysis of Digital and Social Media: research that uses network analysis to better understand DSM use, revealing the underlying structures and dynamic interactions among network components.

Finally, five minitracks examine a particular phenomenon or related phenomena as it or they unfold in the setting of DSM.

Decision Making in Online Social Networks: explores, extends and challenges existing knowledge of decision making in online social communities and networks.

Social Media Management: insights into current and future social media management: how to evaluate the impact of social media and how to manage them effectively from the management and economic perspective.

Learning within Digital and Social Media: examines leading-edge use of technology, research methods and system designs to analyze and support learning in social networks, including tools and social theories of networking and learning.

Social Media: Culture, Identity and Inclusion: interrogates how social media are being adopted in diverse communities and the new norms and practices that emerge from this use, with a focus on culture and identity.

Critical and Ethical Studies of Digital and Social Media: addresses two themes: 1) critical interrogations of the role of DSM in supporting existing power structures or realigning power for underrepresented or social marginalized groups, and 2) ethical issues associated with doing research on DSM.

In sum, the track offers a home for research on diverse types of DSM, in diverse settings, with diverse methods and examining diverse phenomena, but joined by an interest in these novel media.

Finally, this year is the final year of Karine Nahon's service as co-Track Chair. On behalf of the DSM research community, we thank her for her innovative contributions to the Track.