

Ten Sources for Learning More About Social Media

One of the first steps that principals interested in incorporating social media strategies into their communication and professional development plans should take is to read about the role that new tools are playing in schools and businesses. The following readings and resources are good starting points for initial studies about the changing nature of communication, professional development, and learning in a world that social media spaces dominate.

Websites

There are literally dozens of blogs and websites—many of which were introduced in chapter 2—focusing on the role that social media tools are playing in education. Two in particular, however, are bound to be of value to principals interested in using social media tools for instruction, communication, and professional development.

edSocialMedia

www.edsocialmedia.com

The edSocialMedia website started in 2008 as a home for extending the natural conversations occurring between four friends interested in the role social media was playing in education. Since then, it has become one of the most significant online destinations for educators studying social media in schools. Anchored by a thorough and provocative blog (www.edsocialmedia.com/blog/topic) and offering opportunities for extended learning through social media boot camps, the edSocialMedia community is worth exploring.

Connected Principals

www.connectedprincipals.com

The Connected Principals website is a group blog that twenty different principals serving schools across the demographic spectrum maintain. Writing about topics ranging from best educational practices and distributed leadership to school branding and technology integration, the Connected Principals are generating content that you're bound to find valuable. Be sure to explore the comment section of each entry. Imagine how interactions between blog authors and readers can become a regular part of your school's communication plan.

Books

While there aren't many titles covering the use of social media tools in schools, there have been dozens of great books written for businesses interested in entering social media spaces. Consider the following.

Power Friending: Demystifying Social Media to Grow Your Business

Written by social media expert Amber Mac (2010), *Power Friending* just might be the most approachable explanation of the ins and outs of using social media to connect with communities ever written. Covering the characteristics of successful social media efforts and introducing the basic tools that companies are embracing, *Power Friending* is a great read for any school leader serious about exploring the role social media can play in schools. (Readers interested in listening to Amber Mac talk about social media in education with Steve Hargadon of Classroom 2.0 can visit <http://bit.ly/ambermacinterview> for a podcast.)

Twitterville: How Businesses Can Thrive in New Global Neighborhoods

Focused specifically on the role that Twitter is playing in 21st century communication patterns, *Twitterville* (Israel, 2009) is an easy read detailing the work of several different individuals and businesses that have used Twitter to authentically engage with the communities to which they are connected. Full of true stories culled from author Shel Israel's interviews during the course of his career as a social media blogger and public speaker, *Twitterville* can help principals understand Twitter, a social media tool that educators often misunderstand.

Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation Is Changing Your World

Designed as an introduction to the communication patterns and expectations of the Net Generation—individuals between the ages of thirteen and thirty-two—*Grown Up Digital* (Tapscott, 2008) is a must-read for any principal who wants to be responsive to the desires of younger teachers. Covering topics ranging from the way Net Generation brains process information to the kinds of strategies and behaviors businesses can use to recruit, engage, and retain younger workers, author Don Tapscott uses his experiences as the chief executive of a think tank focused on innovation in business to create one of the most useful guides to understanding today's employees.

Twitter Feeds and Diigo Collections

The best places to keep up with the ever-changing social media landscape are online conversations and communities. Consider searching for the following tags and hashtags on Twitter (www.twitter.com) and Diigo (www.diigo.com) to find the latest resources that educators interested in taking advantage of the power of social media in schools are using.

Twitter Hashtag: #cpchat

<http://bit.ly/cpchatresults>

The principals responsible for the Connected Principals website—and the readers who join them for regular conversations on the role that technology can play in education—use the Twitter hashtag #cpchat to make the resources they are sharing easy to find for other Twitter users. By visiting this link, you can quickly skim the content these leaders are exploring in the effort to make social media a more significant part of the work being done in schools.

Twitter Hashtag: #edchat

<http://bit.ly/edchatresults>

Many progressive teachers, administrators, and professional development providers interested in joining together to share meaningful resources related to the changing nature of education in the 21st century have adopted the hashtag #edchat. Here, you're guaranteed to find interesting links being shared and questions being asked. You'll also be able to spot like minds that may be worth adding to your personal learning network. Finally, you'll be able to join regular weekly conversations focused on aspects of education ranging from assessment to technology integration.

Twitter Stream: Pew Internet and American Life Project

http://twitter.com/Pew_Internet

The Pew Internet and American Life Project (<http://pewinternet.org>), a project dedicated to studying the impact that the Internet is having on American society, is the premier provider of research on topics ranging from the social media habits of teens to the ways demographic groups use online resources differently. This link connects to the Twitter stream of the Pew Internet team and is a great place to find direct links to new reports the Pew researchers are publishing.

Diigo Tag: Social Media

www.diigo.com/tag/socialmedia

Diigo, a social bookmarking service that allows users to easily share web finds with one another, has huge collections of current information on social media spaces. This constantly updated link includes every website that Diigo users tag with the label *socialmedia*. While not specifically created for or spotted by educators, the resources included in this collection are current and likely to contain reads that you'll find interesting.

Diigo Tag: Social Networking

www.diigo.com/tag/socialnetworking

Much like the *socialmedia* Diigo tag, this link connects to a constantly updated collection of resources that Diigo users are tagging *socialnetworking*. While the resources included here are not always specifically connected to education, they will keep you connected to the trends in conversations around the role that social media is playing in our lives.