

Strategic Foresight and Innovation

2021

## Emerging Possibilities for Users in a Web 3.0 Social Media Ecology.

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# Helping social media users achieve *lift-off*

This research explores 2020-21 both as a paradigm shift, and an inflection point for an accelerated transition from Web 2.0 to 3.0, and seeks to understand what these changes in internet ecology will mean for the future of social media platforms and users. Can users defy gravity, become unstuck, and choose for themselves?

## SPACE EXPLORATIONS

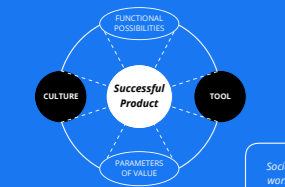
### MEDIA ECOLOGY

**MICRO** | This is technologies as tools, or the building blocks to create.  
**MESO** | This is the organizational layer, building on technical possibilities and cultural trends. This layer becomes platforms and models, like established companies like Facebook and emerging challengers like TikTok.  
**MACRO** | This is the culture, trends and world events (like COVID-19) that are shaping and reforming the industry.



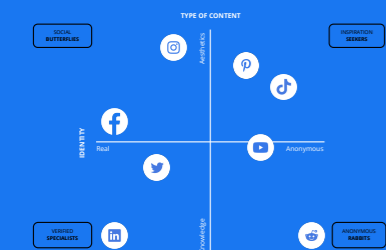
### CONSTELLATION OF CULTURE & TOOLS

• **Culture** as an intersection of values, goals and learning.  
 • **Tools** as technologies to carry out particular functions which can extend what is possible, generating a new set of actions and outcomes.  
 • **Culture** calls for a certain set of **Tools**, and in turn what is made possible by those tools shapes the culture and cultural imagination.



## WHO'S ONBOARD

People use social media in different ways based on the content they are consuming. **Social Butterflies** are users who value the people they follow and can connect with. **Inspiration Seekers** value the variety of content they can discover. **Verified Specialists** value the networks they can be a part of. **Anonymous Rabbits** value the depth of niche content they can find.



It's a part of my "phone routine."

All my friends are [on Facebook], I feel the need to be there too.

Generally, people consume their social media feed more than they post. Most common thing people liked about their most used social media platform was **keeping up with family and friends** (43%) (e.g., having connection); however sharing their own content wasn't as highly rated (5%).

### HOW WE USE SOCIAL MEDIA

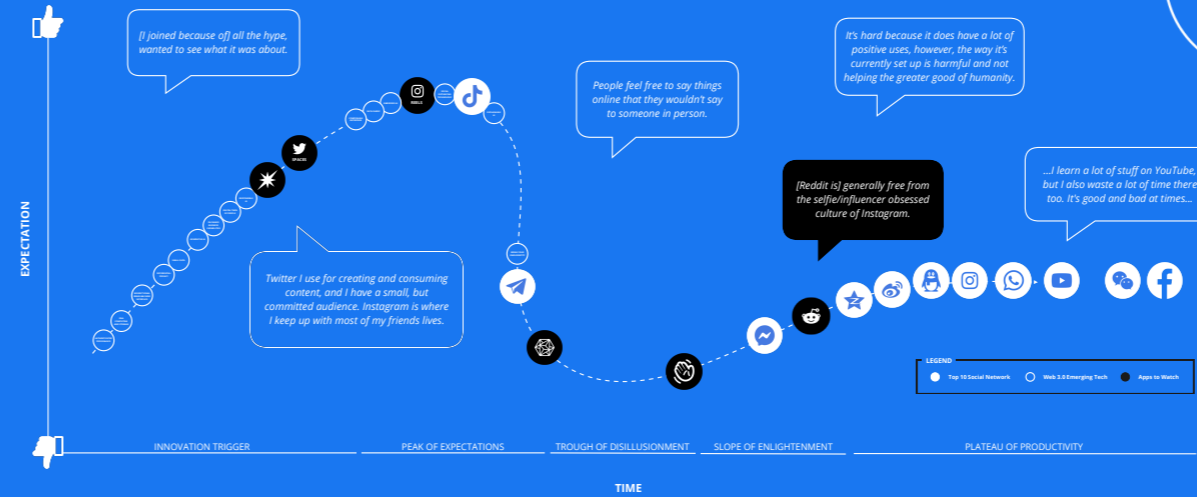
**How often do you check your Social Media?**  
 Multiple times a day (88%)  
 Once a day (8%)

**Do you post on Social Media? How often?**  
 I rarely post (36%)  
 A few times a month (27%)  
 A few times a week (18%)  
 I don't post (10%)

[We feel] empty, restless, or overall less well after spending time on these platforms, yet we keep going back for more.

[I've left] Facebook [because it's] become too toxic with misinformation, reactionary politics, and general hate towards scientists, doctors and frontline workers.

EXPECTATION



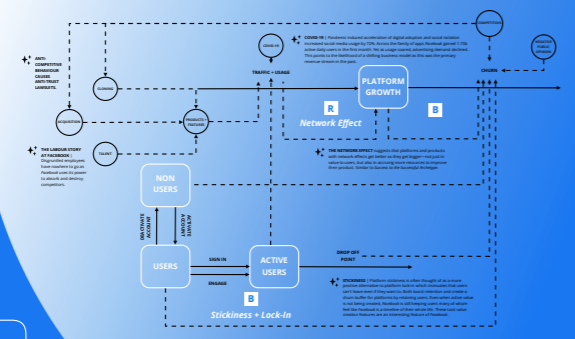
## PLANET FACEBOOK

Probing a Web 2.0 tech giant's gravity

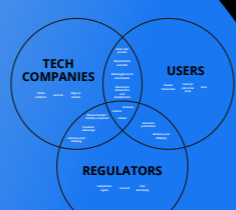
- Platform growth is a stock.
- Its inflow is user traffic and platform usage.
- Its outflow is 'churn' (the rate at which a customer stops engaging).

For social platforms, active users are the most fundamental unit of success or failure.

### MAPPING THE COURSE



### STAKEHOLDERS



### CHARTING THE FUTURE

"Our business has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and, like all companies, we are facing a period of unprecedented uncertainty in our business outlook. We expect our business performance will be impacted by issues beyond our control, including the duration and efficacy of shelter-in-place orders, the effectiveness of economic stimuli around the world, and the fluctuations of currencies relative to the U.S. dollar." — Facebook Statement



# "I hate & love social media."

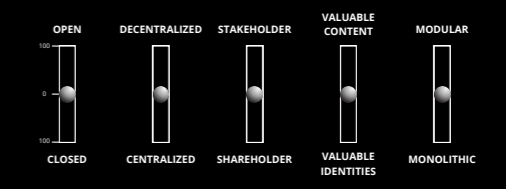
— Anonymous User

## EMERGING TRENDS in a Web 3.0 media universe

### Extreme User Archetypes

- Full Stack Freelancers**  
Leverage software-as-a-service and online platforms to vertically integrate a 'full stack' of capabilities, instead of focusing on one narrow function.
- DeFi Advocates**  
This group believes the world's traditional financial system is broken and is advocating economic inequality and they believe "decentralized finance," or DeFi for short, is the best way forward.
- NFT Artists**  
Radically altering the landscape of intellectual property and ownership in digital spaces, NFT artists are beginning to draw the blueprint for content becoming valuable to the originators in digital spaces.
- Micro Networkers**  
Micro social media users are users who are gravitating towards smaller networks where they can connect with close friends, family, and those who share similar interests and hobbies.
- Dust Miners**  
DUST is a crypto that you easily mine just by doing things you are already doing online.
- Portable Audiences**  
As creators finally begin to be financially recognized by the platforms deriving value from their work as the space of social media becomes more competitive, these folks are willing to leave for greener pastures rather than content to be victims of platform lock-in.

### Tuning the System Levels



### A Brave New Ecology

- MICRO** |
- Boundaries blur between applications on web and desktop.
  - Users will create and certify their own content and have potential to monetize their own data.
- MESO** |
- First class, cross-platform web services.
  - Living experts will earn their position by providing value within a community.
  - Content is generated and upgraded by platform users, who will require more power and data.
- MACRO** |
- Decentralized corporate and governmental power.
  - Rise of the passion economy and user power.
  - Multi-device, multi-channel and multi-directional throughput of information, involving sensors and many other devices we never see.
  - Regulatory tools and capacity will fail.

### AMA

Since a lot of you have asked, here are a few of terms & concepts to learn as we move towards Web 3.0. [#thefutureofsocialmedia](#)

- Web 1.0** | Read-only
  - Web 2.0** | Read and write.
  - Web 3.0** | Read, write and execute.
- Social media** is an online environment where content is created, consumed, promoted, distributed, discovered or shared for purposes that are primarily related to communities and social activities rather than to functional, task-oriented objectives.
- Social Network** is an online platform which people use to build social relationships with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections.