A Study on the Effective Social Networking in Emotional Communication – focused on internet user community

Young-Hwan KIM (titanhero@gmail.com), Jeong-Chan JO (jjcpost@empal.com), Seung-Kyu JEON
Graduate School of Techno Design, Kookmin University

Abstract: The environment of ‘Internet Community’ has such relations as unity, confrontation, and competition with each other. Among them, there are ongoing new Internet contents using ‘Community’, for example, new type of BLOG using the concept of Social Networking, and Mini Homepage dealing with personal daily life events. This type of relationship in Community is expected to be more actively reflected under the Ubiquitus environment. In this respect, our study (this study) aims to analyze, based on the emotional communication, how the tendency to be related within Community fascinates the users, and examine the factors and define them.

Keyword: Emotional Communication, Social Network, Internet, Community, Web, Design.

1. Introduction & Purpose
Since the introduction of Internet into Korea in the mid 1990’s, the transfer rate of Internet line for home use has developed from a modem used once in the personal communication service to subscriber lines (cables) as ADSL and VDSL, and now enables the users to be easy to communicate each other.

Furthermore, the steadily developing environment of Mobile and the Ubiquitus, which is currently getting influential are the representative future-oriented environment of advanced Internet. It is expected that the importance of mutual communication within Cyber Space would continue to increase as the number of network users under these real life-like Internet environment increases. (under these Internet environment which is getting closer to our real lives)

Accordingly, I aim to find a way to make the personal communication through network more favorable and effective, and examine the factors for expressing human psychological emotion through the analysis of communication types.

2. Social Networking within Cyber Space and Importance of emotional Communication
If BLOG was the key-word during the year of 2003, Social Networking would be the one for 2004.

Social Networking, called ‘building-up Human Connections,’ ‘Social Network,’ or ‘Acquaintance Network,’ is attracting an attention of local and foreign press. The concept of Social Network has already appeared since 1998. The demand for social network, however, has not been satisfied due to a lack of profitable model. This concept is recently being introduced again as if it is a totally new one. It is because large-scale investment streamed from investors as they expect that social networking, which has a proper demand market all over the world, would be possibly commercialized along with the users’ growing demand for Community. In particular, with the participation of Microsoft, Yahoo, and Google in this field, it sets a trend in the IT (Information Technology) industry.

In comparison with real life, the network (acquaintance)-building system within Cyber Space by sharing information each other shows a concurrency as a web network connected to each other.

Social Networking in Cyber Space is attracting public attention owing to this advantage such as an effective relation-building. It also becomes one of major business strategies among Internet companies because of its strong feasibility of commercialization.

Based on the Hierarchy of Needs Theory of Maslow, Abraham H., 1908~1970 regarding the concept of social networking, one has social needs in the phase of self-actualization. The relationship-building among people as such is differently expressed according to the respective cultures and environment of their nation or society, but what is in common is the one’s instinctive way to survive and live within the systemized human society.

According to the theory of Ferdinand Tönnies : 1855–1936, a German sociologist, the characteristics of Community could be considered in comparison between common society (Gemeinschaft) and interest society (Gesellschaft) depending on the one’s will.

Social Networking using the emotional communication defines Cyber Space as an imaginary society where those who have other purposes than acquisition of information,
and establishes mutual relationships with full of relevant contents. In this way, social networking forms a part of contents that enable people to have a psychological satisfaction, human network, and self-actualization which cannot be obtained in the contents of intellectual information.

3. Analysis of characteristics and types of Internet Community

Internet Community establishing relationships in Cyber Space may be classified into ‘purpose-oriented community’ and ‘relation-oriented community’ according to the characteristics. ‘Purpose-oriented community’ has a theme with characteristics of obtaining and sharing general information, and acts on its corresponding information. ‘Relation-oriented community’, different from the characteristics of ‘Purpose-oriented community’, is a chatting place about daily events, matters of interest, or inquiries without specific purpose. This community is defined as the same characteristics of social networking.

Table 1. The classification according to type of community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose-oriented</th>
<th>Relation-oriented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical structure</td>
<td>Horizontal structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>favor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>Occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Common Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Society</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selectivity</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With this classification, we may acknowledge that most environment of emotional communication is laid under the base of relation-oriented community. For the favorable environment of community, mutual trust and faith should be fundamentally premised among members to be emotionally open-minded each other.

4. Emotional communication factors for effective relation-oriented community in Cyber Space

The emotional expression in Internet begun with combination of simple letters, but now, with the development of Internet Technology and self-need of those who want to exchange even their emotion, a newly coined word, emoticon, as a tool for emotional communication appears. These emotional expressions in Internet characterize in its symbolization which representatively expresses one’s emotional state with a current feeling by means of letters or pictures (i.e. icon, emoticon, avarta).

Among the symbolization, there are basic feelings which satisfy the two conditions, that is differentiation and respondency (Russell 1980). In other word, it is important to respond clearly to the conveyed symbols and its symbolization which enables to precisely distinguish the difference of emotion. However, differentiation and respondency may have different behavioral styles before and after according to the characteristics of user’s emotion and environment.

In this way, it can be defined that the emotional expression in Internet for the first generation was a combination of letters, and emoticon and avarta for the second generation. In this respect, further study is required to examine the ‘transfer of emotion’ to communicate with more precise emotional expression for the third generation.

Table 2. The Generational types of emotional expression in internet community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>combination of simple letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>emoticon, avarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd generation</td>
<td>transfer of emotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transfer of emotion’ is defined as a basic concept of the form that enhances the effect of emotional transfer in an adjective as the user’s emotional state prior to expression and the emotion obtained through mutual community are successively developed.

With the growing Ubiquitus, it is possible to transfer emotion quickly through network at any place with real-time community through network contrary to time-consuming communication through e-mail or on board. Under this environment, the usage of ‘transfer of emotion’ may bring about joyful communication by means that transfer emotion to others in a more natural and precise manner.

5. Conclusion and future direction in the study

The charm of emotional communication in Cyber Space is to endow oneself with its own characteristics and personality while producing website or communicating with others. However, although implying emotion into several (only a few) data lists, it is hard to obtain objectivity to represent the entire scope of emotion because of strong tendency of subjectivity in emotion.

I’d like to make a model of emotion based on the classification and definition of emotion as above mentioned, and substitute for ‘transfer of emotion’. The purpose of model is to provide an effective emotional design in order to inspire a continuous using for web contents, and to provide more active communication in network.

6. References
4. Se-Jun Han (2002) Research on The Design of Web Icon from The Perspective of Symbol