

## Chapter 13

# Predicting the Usage Intention of Social Network Games: An Intrinsic–Extrinsic Motivation Theory Perspective

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Social network sites (SNSs) are new communication channels with which people can share information. The main functions of SNSs, such as MySpace, Facebook, and Orkut, consist of displaying a user's social contacts, enabling people to view each other's social networks and search for common friends or interesting content. Social networks are also connected to gaming and it is quickly becoming one of the most popular categories of applications on SNSs. The goal of this project is to gain insight into the factors that affect user intention to use a social network game. The study uses an extended technology acceptance model and focuses on combining personal innovativeness, personal involvement, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation to explain usage intentions for social network games. The proposed model was tested with data collected from potential users of a social network game. A multiple regression analysis and MANOVA analysis were then conducted to identify the key causal relationships. It is expected that personal innovativeness and personal involvement will have positive effects on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and ultimately influence usage intentions with regard to social network games.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Facilitating connections and displaying user profiles are key functions of social networks sites (SNSs). Furthermore, SNSs clearly display a user's social contacts, enabling people to view each other's social networks and search for common friends or interesting content. Today, websites such as Facebook, MySpace and Orkut are at the forefront of online social networking, attracting millions of Internet users. The social network Facebook is one of the largest of these social communities, and there, people convene online to post messages and pictures, chat and play games. In this context, the accessibility of social networks is an important issue, and a remarkable level has been reached (Ossmann & Miesenberger, 2010).

As mentioned above, social networks are also connected to gaming. For instance, casual games are quickly becoming one of the most popular categories of applications on Facebook. The most famous game on Facebook is Farmville (Facebook Statistics, 2010). However, social network games have garnered many different definitions. In this study, we define social network games as games that are relatively simple to begin and end at the players' leisure. The players should be able to get a sense of the entire game without committing excessive amounts of time to it, and the game should be easy to understand, even for players who have never played other games like this. In addition, messages between friends allow players to quickly broadcast their latest game successes and can also be used to invite others to join in a new game. Message boards allow friends to write notes for one another during the game.

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) is one of the most widely used models for predicting use intentions for information and communication technology systems. Davis et al. (1989) develop the TAM by adapting the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen,

1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) to examine the causal chain linking external variables to IT usage intentions and actual use in the workplace. In other words, TAM suggests that antecedents like innovativeness and involvement, which directly affect perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Dimitriadis & Kyrezis, 2010; Meuter et al., 2005), can be reflected in external variables (Benbasat & Barki, 2007; Lee, Cheung, & Chen, 2005). In addition, the concept of motivation as a key predictor of the use of technology-based products and services is theoretically well-supported in the literature (Barczak et al., 1997). Especially in social network games, users tend to be motivated mostly by intrinsic interests (Huang & Cappel 2005; Kim et al., 2002) and extrinsic motivation (Teo et al., 1999). We infer that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are important in influencing social network game usage intentions. Thus, this study focuses on combining TAM and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to determine usage intentions in social network games. The model presented in this paper will include a unique combination of factors that have not been combined previously combined.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Intention**

Intention is an individual's subjective likelihood of performing a specified behavior and is the major determinant of actual usage behavior (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Yi et al., 2006). Service providers should encourage usage when users are willing to use social network application services and utilize them. Thus, it becomes necessary to probe users' behavioral intentions with regard to social network games. In addition, this project, unlike previous research on the subject, distinguishes between user behavior and user intention.

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