

## Project 4 (Lego Mindstorms)

**Provide a definition and compare/contrast social networking and social media.**

Although social networking and social media both share the word social in them, it is describing that both involve people working on or with something socially. Both involve a connection between people, but one can be individually motivated and the other always involves a group of some sort. Social media involves the types of technology and sites that “enable users to create and share content” ([https://www.lexico.com/definition/social\\_media](https://www.lexico.com/definition/social_media)). Social networking involves using the social media items to find people with similar interests ([https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/social\\_networking](https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/social_networking)) and group with them.

Social media covers things like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, and more as a whole. They involve people in general sharing, talking, uploading, and friending each other from all over the world. Social media applications are meant to encourage people to connect and share their lives, likes, dislikes, and news with either a close group of friends or publicly. Social media also comes in the form of blogs, media sharing such as on YouTube and bookmarking type sites such as Pinterest (<https://seopressor.com/social-media-marketing/types-of-social-media/>).

Social networking can happen through the various applications and websites that I previously mentioned. In fact, Facebook is called the social networking app, but there is a bit more to it than that. Usually, social networking has to happen by a person or group of persons usually for a specific purpose. Networking also happens in the pursuit of business and personal contacts to assist a person along with their career and goals which we can see in apps like LinkedIn. Social networking usually involves a group of people that have similar interests or purposes for connecting to each other.

- 1. Visit the Lego Mindstorms website and identify specific social networking features. Based on what you’ve learned in this chapter, describe current developments in social networking that Lego will need to understand as it decides whether to continue, remove, or modify the social networking features you identified. In your discussion, identify at least two specific social networking features.**

I was disappointed when I visited the Lego site looking for Mindstorms information. I think that Lego needs to focus on actually creating a more Mindstorms related set of social media links and networking if they want people to be more involved in the project. If there were specific forums listed on their site before, they are not there now.

There are social media links to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and You Tube on the main page of the LEGO site (<https://www.lego.com/en-us>), but they are all the way at the bottom of the page. They also are not specific to the Mindstorms project. Also, the social media links are not available on every page of the Lego site. When a user does head to the social media links, like Facebook, and search for Mindstorms there aren’t a ton of posts of events being currently posted. For 2021, there are only 3 Facebook posts that show up when the search for Mindstorms is used on the Lego Facebook link.

A search for Mindstorms on the Lego site just gives you a list of sets that are for sale on the site. I was finally able to find a section that was called the Kids Zone (<https://www.lego.com/en-us/kids/search?q=mindstorms>) where I searched for Mindstorms. Several videos and articles

came up, but I still did not consider it a proper social networking style. Social networking involves a lot more than just a searchable list of things with Mindstorms in the title.

- 2. Lego provides a complete set of instructions with this product for building the basic robots. Explain how a new owner of this product might learn how to build and program complex robots using social networking elements provided by Lego.**

Aside from the available instructions that come with the set, owners of the set can check out some of the videos in the Kids Zone (<https://www.lego.com/en-us/kids/search?q=mindstorms>). The problem there is that most of the videos are not step by step instructions. They involve more ideas and quick run throughs on the sets being mixed together to make something. On their YouTube.com channel (<https://www.youtube.com/c/LEGO/videos>), Lego has several videos showing different sets put together or brief tutorials on how to program or make things. They aren't very detailed instructions or tutorials, and to search for all the ones specifically from the Lego company for Mindstorms, is a bit of a pain to do. There isn't a playlist set aside just for them.

Although it won't help someone build their Mindstorms product, Google Play has several apps sponsored by Lego to help program various products. There is a Mindstorms programming app sponsored by Lego that can be found at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.lego.mindstorms.ev3programmer>. Since they were created by the Lego company, or at least part of their company's sponsored programs, it could be considered part of their social network reach. It isn't something you can find from the Lego site though. A user has to go to the Google Play or Apple Store to do a search yourself. So, those facts might make it not a part of Lego's social network because they don't direct a user there.

- 3. In this chapter, you learned how newspapers, magazines and broadcasters are using participatory journalism to have their readers create news sites and stories. Outline at least 5 specific ways in which Mindstorms community members create value for Lego.**

I feel that it is Mindstorms users that are doing more to keep the community alive over Lego itself keeping the project alive. Lego's contributions in 2021 have not been anywhere near the amounts of contributions that others have given.

Using the following search link ([https://www.youtube.com/results?sp=mAEB&search\\_query=lego+mindstorms](https://www.youtube.com/results?sp=mAEB&search_query=lego+mindstorms)) on YouTube.com without any other filters, will show 2 Lego company posts to over 20 posts from other users about Mindstorms. There are a lot of review videos which seem to point positively for the product, as well as videos for integrating various programming formats into the Mindstorms bricks, quickened steps for putting a few unique ideas together that aren't part of a set, and other tutorials or creations. For each user that posts a video with Lego Mindstorms in the title, it grows Lego's value to the masses when the videos are found.

Robot Advance (RobotAdvance) has a site where both licensed Lego instructions and fan created models with instructions are offered. It brings both sides together to give everyone a chance to

get full instructions for the robotic creations. It is also an educational reseller for the Lego products and encourages the use of the robotic kits in the schools. Having a place to find detailed instructions is a big help to giving the Mindstorms projects more value. With other users/fans providing their instructions as well, it grows the value beyond Lego's original ability. They get more designs out of the same set of bricks.

The education arena is another area in which the community members for Mindstorms help give Lego value. By making them a part of certain curriculum for robotics and other classes, the teachers spread the Lego name as well as making them a requirement to have in certain schools. That brings money into the Lego company, and it makes more people aware of the expanding possibilities that a "child's toy" can provide to adults as well.

Although the Lego company doesn't have a lot on their Facebook site for a Mindstorms group, there are oodles of community created Lego Mindstorms groups on Facebook. So, with Lego directing people to Facebook they are leading them towards a place they can find more like-minded individuals if they know how to search for groups that focus on the product (FacebookSearch).

Various users on Twitter (Twitter) post their notices with and without pictures for the projects they've made. Some will link to a website, or another forum, where more information can be given. With the mention of Lego Mindstorms in their tweet, others on Twitter who have an interest can search for it. They bring value to Lego because they are exposing their hobbies and likes to others in the Twitterverse who follow them and might not know about the sets. Those tweets can bring more people to Lego as well.

## Works Cited

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