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From First to Second Wave – the Emergence of a New Direction

Following “the bursting of the dot-com bubble in the fall of 2001” (O’Reilly 2005; Dot-com Bubble 2008), a turning point for the WWW was marked with the so-called “‘second wave’ of the Internet revolution” (Bulik 2006). However, some commentators question whether the ‘second wave’ was a resulting factor of the dot-com crash, or whether it formed part of the ‘inevitable’ evolution of the Internet (Bray 2005). Referred to as ‘Web 2.0’, a buzzword coined by O’Reilly Media in 2004 (Stern & Wakabayashi 2007, p6), the ‘turning point’ of the Internet was focused on the social and interactive opportunities that the Web offers (Bulik 2006). Whilst some feel that the name ‘Web 2.0’ is used largely as a marketing gimmick (Bulik 2006), others suggest it is “a signpost that something new is happening” (Stern & Wakabayashi 2007, p9).

‘Web 2.0’ means different things to different people (Maney 2005). Whilst ‘Web 1.0’ was generated by commerce (cited by Singel 2005), Mayfield describes it as being “created by the people”; a world that Dan Gillmor calls "we, the media" (Cited by O’Reilly 2005), “in which ‘the former audience’, not a few people in a back room, decides what's important” (O’Reilly 2005). ‘Web 2.0’ technologies are unique in that they ground interaction in “real people, their creations, and the people who interact with that software and with other people” (Katz & Rice 2002, p13). These technologies allow individuals “to communicate, collect, and disperse information in the form of Web text, Web graphics and images, digital audio, or digital video” (Bornman 2008).

Driven by the “wider availability of broadband... [allowing for] increased interactivity, speed and Web usability” (Van Wyk 2006), ‘Web 2.0’ thrives on the growing potential of person-

to-person interaction - 'read-write' content - (Bulik 2006; Colman 2007), connecting people via online venues that invite participation, in contrast to simply publishing documents or material online- 'read-only' content - (Franklin 2008, p38). The original WWW, or 'Web 1.0', was built on the idea that information was 'pushed' to a relatively passive audience (such as the early 'brochureware' websites), while 'Web 2.0' is "collaborative, and... depends on user created content" (Castelluccio 2008, p59). As such, the birth and advance of 'Web 2.0' opens up a new realm of possibilities for SMM.

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