

THE BEGINNING OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has been at the tip of our fingertips since 1997. Who invented it? What was the first social media platform?

Bloggging and bulletin board systems started growing during the 1990s. The overall idea was that anyone could log onto the internet and publish their own piece about what their thoughts, feelings, and actions were at that specific time. Then these "posts" could be seen by anyone at any time of the day or night. People reading these posts could respond to them if they wished to. It was with this realization that people really began to fully understand the implications of what the internet was capable of.

The first website that was truly considered to be the first social media platform was called Six Degrees. This name came from the phrase "six degrees of separation" meaning that everyone in the world is somehow connected to each other by no less than six degrees.

Six Degrees launched in 1997. It is known to be the first social media platform because not only did it allow people to sign up with an email address, it also let them create their own profile, as well as add friends to their personalized network. In 1999, Six Degrees was bought out by YouthStream Media Networks for \$125 million. Unfortunately, the social media site closed down about one year later. At its peak, Six Degrees had around 3.5 million users.

In 2002, a new social media site, Friendster, launched in effort to compete with Six Degrees. Friendster included the same features as Six Degrees. However, it also showcased video and photo sharing, interacting with other users through messages, as well as the ability to comment on other users' profiles as long as they were in the same personal network. Friendster rapidly grew and eventually had over 100 million users. It eventually rebranded itself as a social gaming site, but ended up closing down its platform in 2019.

In the years to come, many social media platforms formed and are still in use today like, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and SnapChat. These social media platforms help people not only stay in touch with each other, but people can also start careers from them. There are roughly 2.62 billion people who use social media globally, and it is expected that this number will increase to over 4 billion by the year 2025!

1.What can the reader infer about social media from this passage?

- a. Social media has opened the doors to cyber-bullying.
- b. Social media has been a tool used since the 90s to connect people all over the world.
- c. Social media started with the site Six Degrees.
- d. Social media has opened up opportunities and connections for people all over the world and will continue to grow.

2.What can the reader infer about why social media sites are so popular?

- a. There are many different options for users.
- b. Many sites allow you to share pictures and videos with friends.
- c. They allow you to connect with people from all over the world conveniently.
- d. They allow you to search for jobs easily.

3.What text evidence BEST supports the claim that social media is easily accessible?

- a. "Social media has been at the tip of our fingertips since 1997."
- b. "Then these "posts" could be seen by anyone at any time of the day or night. People reading these posts could respond to them if they wished to."
- c. "it also showcased video and photo sharing, interacting with other users through messages, as well as the ability to comment on other user's profiles as long as they were in the same personal network."
- d. "it is expected that this number will increase to over 4 billion by the year 2025!"

4.What can the reader infer about how social media helps people find employment?

- a. Social media creates a platform for people to create connections all around the world quickly and easily.
- b. Employers can search for applicants' social media pages to find quality candidates.
- c. Companies can use social media for marketing their products to consumers.
- d. Social media is not a primary tool in a job applicant's search for employment.

5.Which sentence provides evidence of why Friendster became more popular than Six Degrees?

- a. "Six Degrees launched in 1997. It is known to be the first social media platform because not only did it allow people to sign up with an email address, it also let them create their own profile, as well as add friends"
- b. "However, it also showcased video and photo sharing, interacting with other users through messages, as well as the ability to comment on other user's profiles as long as they were in the same personal network"
- c. "Friendster included the same features as Six Degrees."
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