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PEOPLE. CONTENT. CULTURE.

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The Future Laboratory is one of Europe's leading trend, brand and futures consultancies. With its 3,000-strong global LifeSigns Network, it connects over 250 clients with all aspects of culture set to impact on consumer change. The Future Laboratory publishes quarterly insight reports on retail, technology, design, luxury, interiors and leisure, and THE magazine, a quarterly snapshot of design and social trends. Its biannual Trend Briefings take place in March and September. Details and tickets from sales@thefuturelaboratory.com.

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Introduction: 05

The best Future Laboratory reports attempt to capture a snapshot of what is new and set to dominate social, cultural and lifestyle thinking in the near future. To do this, we evaluate change in a quantitative and qualitative manner. Our work for MySpace was no exception. Here, 1,000 social network users in key regions across the UK and from core age groups and income brackets were polled about their usage habits both within and outside social networks.

We then set up an online 'hide' within MySpace and carried out over 1,500 conversations with users on how social networks impacted on their lives. In the process, we had 15,000 visitors, many of whom later became the subjects of our case studies, or whose experiences were used to underpin the key findings of the report, both qualitative and quantitative.

When our initial research was complete, 15 experts from a range of disciplines were interviewed or asked to comment upon or validate our initial findings and insights.

Once this process had been carried out, 20 researchers in London worked via our 2,500-strong global LifeSigns Network to once more check and assess our findings against a broader, more global audience. So our report, which started out as an investigation into how social networks were used, became an investigation into how these networks were enriching the lives of a new generation of users, not only in the social sense but also culturally and financially.

Executive Summary : 07

Report highlights and key findings

Executive Summary

Social destinations like MySpace have quickly become a staple media of choice for a generation of 18-to-24-year-olds who are using them to 'put their lives online'. This networked generation are using these sites to explore new levels of creativity and develop new ways of doing business online, according to a ground-breaking report, MySpace 08 : People. Content. Culture, by MySpace from The Future Laboratory.



The Shape Of Trends To Come

Over a six week period researchers at The Future Laboratory used a variety of quantitative and qualitative techniques, including an online 'virtual hide', to carry out over 15,000 'conversations' with social network users to explore how people, content and culture are colliding on the web.

The results were astonishing – we found new and emerging tribes, trends and lifestyles that had previously gone undetected by the fashion and lifestyle mainstream.

18-to-24-year-olds also told us that if they had 15 minutes of free time they would rather spend it checking out their favourite social networking sites (45%) than watching TV (9%), reading (6%), playing video games (5%) or talking on their mobiles (4%).

The fact that social networking has become more popular than watching television is a major new development in media consumption, and shows peoples own lives are entertainment in the new world.

The research shows that people are now spending longer on social networks than any other sites.

In 2007, the average visit length of the top 20 social networking websites was 25 minutes 27 seconds, compared to 10 minutes two seconds for other types of websites.

And as our survey reveals, women are now more likely than men to choose Internet and social networking sites for pleasure, spending an average of 22.5 hours online compared to the 20 hours spent by men.

Using social networks has also changed the way we engage with media in general.

Some 43% of respondents to our survey said that using social networks had substantially driven up the amount of emails they send and receive, while 22% said that it had decreased their use of video games, 25% said it had increased their use of instant messaging and a further 25% said it had decreased the amount of television they watch.

The survey, which polled 1,000 social network users across key regions and user age groups in the UK, also discovered that for 18-24-year-olds and 35-45-year-olds in particular, social networks are one of the key places to discover a new band, pop star and DJ, with 35% of the 18-24 age group saying they did so and 30% of those in their mid-thirties.

More than ever, social networks are blurring the online and offline worlds, evolving into social destinations that are driving the wider direction of the web and affecting industries like advertising, music and politics.

More Demanding Users

The survey reveals that networks like MySpace have raised our expectations about the brands we buy on a regular basis.

They have made us more demanding and discerning as shoppers, with 22% of 18-24-year-olds believing that brands 'have to work harder to earn their respect' and 13% saying that social networking sites have made them expect more from brands and their online content in general.

In terms of content, creativity and generating ideas, more and more people are looking to social websites like MySpace for help, inspiration and new ways of making money.

Some 13% of respondents say these social destinations are the best place to look for creative ideas, or to plug into the more trendy, unusual and bizarre aspects of global culture.

Many young people are also using social networks, instant messaging (IM) and email to talk about subjects and issues they have difficulty broaching face-to-face.

In our survey, 44% of 18-24-year-olds said they used social networks to discuss ideas and to find out more about politics, their community, charities and political groups, challenging the idea that networks are just about meeting friends.



Social Niceworking

The term 'social niceworking' was used by some of the correspondents to describe the growing number of people or micro-sites that promote charitable causes or offer free advice and feedback.

As our respondents indicate, the nature of social networks themselves is maturing and is now much more than just friending.

Culturpreneurs

According to our research, many now see them as a way to put their commercial, creative and cultural skills to profitable effect. Indeed, 14% of these so-called 'culturpreneurs' between 18 and 24 have already earned money through social networking, and 12% think a good social networking site should allow them to make money as well as connect with friends and people with likeminded interests.

On MySpace, earning good money from art is not looked down on but is in fact the goal, with many users – 12% according to our survey – keen to create money-making sites or schemes.

Culturpreneurs such as indie film maker Omelihu Nwanguma of Inspire Media and t-shirt designer Kesh both use MySpace to raise funds – the former by offering production credits in exchange for cash to shoot a movie and the latter by selling limited edition t-shirts to a select but powerful group of fans.

Other case studies identified in the report include Warrington-based Nico Reynor, who runs his own music-based charity initiative via his MySpace page. There is also Liam Walsh, a street magician who has developed a cult following offline thanks to his cut-to-the-beat tricks and street patter online, not to mention a team of Roller Derby Girls from Glasgow (a cult activity in its own right) who manage and grow their league nationally and internationally via their MySpace page.

We asked social network users to determine the kind of networker they are based on usage, activity and their ability to create, consume or sell products. The major typologies to emerge were the moneymaking Culturpreneurs, link-passing Connectors, network-using Transumers, 'people power' ethos Collaborators, new-movement-seeking Scene Breakers and the friends and family-only messaging Essentialists.

All are covered in-depth in the main body of the report, along with the growing number of Tribes, Trends and Super-Consumer groups identified via our PROJECT: CREATIVE LAB, an online 'virtual hide' established by MySpace and the Future Laboratory's research team to identify and interact with new and emerging sub-groups that are set to influence creative and cultural thinking over the coming year.

As the team discovered, and as the full report illustrates, social networkers who use MySpace as a 'try-space' (as one of our correspondents put it) are spearheading new behaviours that represent their 'can-do' mind sets and, increasingly, their cultural and commercial outlooks.

Fly Solo

MySpacers, for instance, are using the site to its maximum potential, handling their own management, distribution, sales and marketing with little or no input from outside sources.

Do-It-All

This DIY (Do-It-Yourself) culture is mutating into a new DIA (Do-It-All) culture. In the same way that MySpace allows creatives to handle all aspects of their career it is also encouraging them to diversify and expand their skills, with musicians often producing their own album covers, events flyers and t-shirts.

Know Thy Digital Neighbour

Despite its global reach, MySpace has also been pivotal in fuelling the growth of local scenes and community-based activities. As up-and-coming audiovisual DJ VJ1000Errors says, 'the fact that you can search for people within a distance radius and add them to your mailers can really help spread awareness of a local scene'.

Glocal

It has also become much easier to connect with like-minded people from around the world rather than just the immediate vicinity. Many examples of this are contained within the report. For example, the second-ever issue of Fever Zine, a 28-page photocopied fanzine, has contributors from the Netherlands, Belgium and America, despite the fact that its creator, Alex Zamora, lives in East London. The contributors contacted the zine through MySpace, and were happy to contribute for free.

Talent Exchange

Talent swapping, talent exchanges, and talent-tanks (as opposed to think-tanks) are also becoming a key phenomenon of note for 2008, thanks to the activities of talent swap or trade sites on MySpace.

Work Space

MySpace, as the report indicates, is increasingly a breeding ground for new occupation and interest-based communities that were previously unconnected. For example, young chefs demonstrate their skills with slide shows of their most impressive culinary achievements, while barbers specialising in black and Asian hair styles swap tips, big up each others' clipper work and give advice to junior stylists.

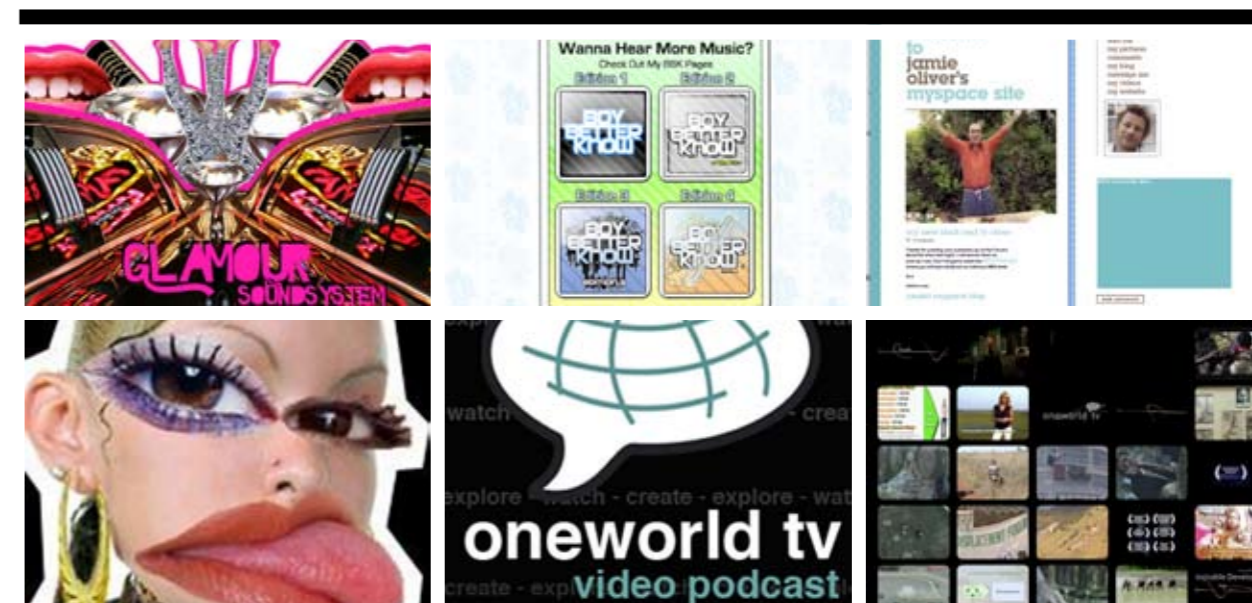
Online Angels

MySpace also contains a burgeoning community of amateur Agony Aunts. Up-and-coming singer Karen Bishko started an official Dear Karen problem-solving blog after the emotional songs she writes encouraged friends to ask her advice on situations. Meanwhile, Carly from Edmonton in North London, aka hotblacchic, also regularly answers problems in her blog, as does 25-year-old Josh, aka Swish Bish.

Issues Networks

With cable and terrestrial TV channels awash with soaps and reality TV shows, social networkers are turning to MySpace to access issue-related programming, as the report shows.

OneWorldTV and BigPictureTV show documentaries and videos on human rights, sustainable development and environmental issues. OneWorldTV boasts work from film makers in Britain, Afghanistan, Indonesia and the Congo, and gives its members the opportunity to connect with 4,500 international filmmakers concerned with issue-related programme making.



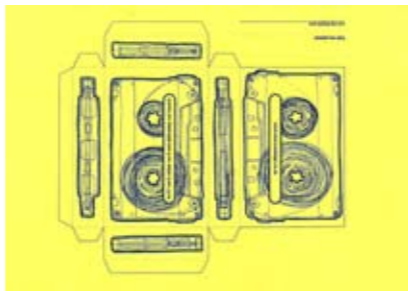
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New trends on the rise

Now that users are familiar with the formats and array of communications and expression tools found on social networking sites, MySpacers in particular are pushing the boundaries of what can be done online, as the Future Laboratory team discovered when they established PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB, their online 'virtual hide' and trend anthropology site inside MySpace.

The first of its kind, the hide was established to understand and capture the new tribes and trends set to emerge in 2008.

Groups identified include;

: Slash/Slash Kids (Multi-skilled kids with a do-it-all creative ethic for music, fashion and design)

: Double Dressers (teens who dress, act and behave like twins)

: Tea Cake Tuesday Boys (mad-hatter types who prefer tea to alcohol)

: Mindies (non-drinking, underage indie music fans, who look, dress and behave like their teen band tee-totalling idols)

Among the more involved activities identified by the PROJECT: CREATIVE LAB and its research team are several trends that are expected to make big inroads in 2008:

Everyday Heroes

Many MySpacers are using the site to pay homage to their favourite everyday heroes by creating 'shrines' or profiles for them, often without their knowledge.

Social Niceworking

Launched by hip-hop producer Nico Rayner of Warrington, MagicPass aims to raise money for Oxfam through a musical chain. An Akai MCP4000 digital recording device is sent to a global chain of recognised music producers who Rayner invited to contact him through MySpace. Each producer or artist is required to leave a beat, track or rap on the device before passing it on. When the uncomposed MPC400 device returns to Rayner, he will compose the music into a compilation, the profits of which will go to Oxfam.

Brand Me

Paul Griffiths is a MySpace 'me-brand', as he calls himself. He has 62,826 friends (and growing), his own t-shirt line (Babycakes) and a promotions company called The Secret Party Ltd that manifests on MySpace as The Club Kids. He has sold 10,000 t-shirts since March 2007, a fact he attributes to 'people buying into his personality' (he doesn't sing, play an instrument or tell jokes) through reading his blog, viewing his pictures and watching video uploads of his drunken rants.

Pepperpot Publishing

So called traditional media – printed magazines and newspapers – have long cited the Internet for their diminishing sales, yet for niche appeal fanzines and microzines, social networks have proved a real boon. Alex Zamora, editor of Fever Zine, a photocopied black and white zine that sells 600 copies per issue, says that 'if it wasn't for MySpace, we'd probably only sell 20 issues in a couple of shops in London. We have followings in creative, graphic design-hungry spots like Paris, Bangkok, Barcelona, Gothenburg and Sydney, which without MySpace would never have transpired.'

Micropreneurialism

Nineteen-year-old Kesh, an East London designer, stylist and DJ, releases new t-shirts and hoodies one design at a time and in small batches of 20-200 onto her Big Cartel Kesh Wear retail space. Before doing so, she uses the power and the 'pass it on' effect of her friends network to tell them to tell others about the pending arrival of new stock – which, she says creates a rush of potential buyers to her Big Cartel site in 'much the same way crowds gather outside an Adidas or Puma store before the release of a limited-edition trainer'.

Tribes

MySpace is a riot of new and experimental culture and styles, largely fuelled by the explosion of teens who rifle through bygone eras, some as recent as just two or three years ago, for cultural inspiration to put together a constantly evolving mish-mash of looks.

Some of the topline findings among the many new looks currently simmering on MySpace and set to appear in a club, store or bar near you for 2008 include:

Slash/Slash Kids

Slash/Slash Kids are creative multi-skilled and cultpreneurs who define the DIA (Do-It-All) mindset. They don't just design clothes but also style, DJ, present and act and have no qualms about self-promotion and putting their image 'out there'.

Double Dressers

In a world that prizes individuality, a growing number of youths are embracing sameness – albeit of the studied and deliberate kind. What used to be every girl/boy's nightmare – accidentally wearing the same outfit as a peer – has become a contrived style statement known as 'twinning' or as we like to call it, Double Dressing, that is spreading throughout Asia, Europe and the US.

Mindies

These under-18 indie fans are as earnest, dedicated and passionate, if not more so, as their elder indie counterparts when it comes to their music of choice. Free from the distractions of sex, drugs and alcohol, the scene focuses purely on the music. They love the more established indie groups, but this tribe's real heroes are their similarly aged peers in teen bands such as Pull In Emergency, Kid 4077, Forty Fives, Lion Club and US alternative punk/garage duo Tiny Masters.

Urban Bikers

Urban Bikers are racially mixed, inner-city bikers who team their love of urban street culture with a passion for motorbikes. Their obsession with how they dress and look make them the antithesis of the stereotypical Hells Angels/tourer biker scene that has dominated British motorbike culture for the last three decades. Supreme Riders in South London are the unofficial scene leaders, with a dedicated team, garage, and salesroom. Since 2005 they have hosted the annual Urban Bike Fest event.

Super Heroes Anonymous

Super Heroes Anonymous are individuals who give themselves superhero aliases and dress in matching costumes in order to become real life citizen do-gooders, crime fighters or public activists. They use MySpace as a place to communicate their mission and connect with other super heroes around the globe, and sometimes only accept friend requests from other super heroes.

Tea Cake Tuesday Boys or Mad Hatters

Mad Hatters are local teen communities based around the old-fashioned pastime of throwing a tea party with close friends. Nostalgic, young, fogeyish and cheerfully middle-class, this group is also about resisting youth stereotypes and dissociating from virtual socialising.

Green Gauges

For the Green Gauges tribe, gardening is not just a relaxation activity, it's a way of life, a political statement and about making a stand against an increasingly desk-bound, concrete heavy, manufacturer dependent (as opposed to agriculture-based), 9am-9pm society. They revel in teaching and sharing their gardening knowledge with novice and wannabe gardeners, particularly when it comes to growing vegetables, fruit and herbs.

Alt.black

One of the most interesting groups to watch for in 2008 (according to our PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB correspondents) are what we call Alt.blacks, a group of people who say they are rebelling against the stereotype of what it means to be black. Alt. black youth have experienced a comparatively racism-free society (compared to their parents) and are confident enough to mix their roots with current white and cross-over culture movements and genres.



Conclusion

The overall data collected by the hide has been instrumental in helping us work with MySpace members to identify and isolate the new tribes, tastes, buzzwords and must-do or must-have lists for 2008 – a full index of which can be found in the final section of our report.

Established originally to make contact with friends, family and colleagues more convenient and manageable, as this report indicates, social networks like MySpace have evolved into highly articulate, heavily visual, extremely collaborative and creative hubs, which have become for many a vibrant and engaging way to keep up to date with, and comment upon, changes in the wider cultural scene.

They have also become ‘culturpreneurial’ platforms that are increasingly used to manufacture, market, distribute and retail brands, products and services created by a new generation of ‘canny, can do’ teens.

This is the Internet economy in its maturing stage, one where the user is also the creator, buyer, seller, retailer, distributor and ever-critical and passionate consumer: a blurred world where the traditions of the market have been collapsed and superseded by the new traditions of the network economy.

If anything, then, this report, offers us a small but significant and revealing snapshot of the shape of things to come – in business, in pleasure, in culture and in how we collaborate at the personal level.

And for that reason alone, social networks deserve to be studied more seriously and readily by anthropologists keen to understand how our sense of community has shifted from the real to the virtual and, in the process, back to the real again but in a way that empowers the many, as we see in ‘My Space 08: People. Content. Culture.’, as well as the few.

Networked Futures : 17

The facts and stats behind the changing nature of social networks

Networked Futures

Social networks are encouraging people to be more adventurous, creative, global, and collaborative in their thinking and lifestyle, according to our UK social network users' survey. They are also changing our current media consumption habits, as a new generation of twenty-somethings shift their focus from television to the Internet and social networks as their prime source of entertainment and information. As we shall see, social networks are fast becoming the place many turn to for local as well as global news and information. Here, 1,000 social network users were polled about their views.

Women On Top

Our own survey for MySpace also reveals that women are now more likely than men to choose the Internet and social networking sites for pleasure, with women spending an average of 22.5 hours a week online compared to the 20 hours spent by men. Women are also more likely to use a social networking site if they have 15 minutes to spare – 30% versus 25% of men.

New Media Engagements

Social networks have also changed the way we engage with media generally, our survey suggests. Some 43% of respondents say using social networks has substantially driven up the amount of emails they send and receive, while 22% say that it has reduced their use of video games, 25% say it has increased their use of instant messaging and 25% believe it has reduced the amount of television they watch.

In terms of time spent on favourite social networking sites, 41% spend between 15-30 minutes managing and maintaining their sites, while 31% spend between 30 minutes and one hour and 12% of those surveyed are happy to spend as much as 60-90 minutes checking out their favourite site. Around 7% of users confess to spending a minimum of two hours visiting their favourite site.

And when it comes to 'accepting' unsolicited friend requests, 18-24-year-old men are more likely to accept a friend for their business and creative contacts than women in the same age group – 13% compared to just 6% of women. Women in the same age group, perhaps more conscious of safety and security issues, are more likely than men to see how many friends they have in common with the person requesting to join their network group – 26% compared to 16% of men.

The Networked Generation

Social networking has become the new medium of choice for a generation of 18-to-24-year-olds who would rather spend 15 minutes of free time checking out their favourite social networking sites (45%) than watching TV (9%), reading (6%), playing video games (5%) or talking on their mobiles (4%).

According to research by U Switch, 'the average Briton spends six days a year networking online – but 780,000 Internet addicts are devoting over 24 days a year to this activity, longer than they do on 'real life' socialising.'

The same research found the average Briton spends five weeks a year (34 days) online – that's longer than the time spent on socialising (22 days), eating/drinking (21 days) and personal grooming (11 days).¹

Anytime, Anywhere

Of current Internet users, those aged 18-30 were also more likely than other age groups of Internet users to go online at another person's house, a place of education, a public library, or an Internet café,² rather than surf at home alone.

Some 23% of 18-24 year olds also own up to being embarrassed by finding 'incriminating' photos and video clips online, although 14% in the same age group say that they have also met a partner there, with 3% even admitting to having lost their virginity with a 'friend' they met online.

While 18-24-year-olds and 35-45-year-olds may not have much in common on the surface, our research shows that for both groups social networks are now one of the key places to discover a new band, pop star or DJ. Some 35% of 18-24-year-olds do so, followed by 30% of those in their mid-thirties.

Get On

The rise in popularity of heavily customised social network profiles and multimedia social networking sites ties in with the rise in home broadband connections. According to a report by UK telecoms regulator Ofcom, in 'the seven years since its mass market introduction, broadband has become one of the fastest growing communications technologies...50% of UK adults now have broadband at home – up from 39% a year ago and a seven-fold increase over the last four years. More than 13 million UK homes and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are now connected to broadband, compared with 9.9 million a year earlier and 330,000 in 2001.'³

Wifi hotspots are also becoming integrated into street furniture, coffee shops and waiting areas at such a rate that the teens and twenty-somethings surveyed now refer to no-signal areas as 'coldspots', in contrast to the more familiar 'hotspots' where they can log on. In September 2006, there were 12,000 commercial wireless hotspots across the UK, an increase of 32% over the previous 12 months.

The New Box

On average, people now spend 20 hours online, compared to 14 hours watching TV, three hours listening to their MP3 players, three hours playing video games, two hours talking on their mobiles, and one hour reading magazines, according to our survey of social network users in the UK.

Some 59% of those interviewed for MySpace said their use of the Internet had increased since they started social networking. The Scots are the most avid social networkers spending 23.04 hours a week doing it, followed by those who live in East Anglia (22 hours), the South West (21.85), and the West Midlands (21.85).

The report credits the continuing rise in popularity of major social network sites to the 'network effect', the theory that as more people join and put up content, the more people the site will appeal to, thus increasing the number of users.

More, More, More Consumption

Modern day consumers expect brands to have a social networking presence that is innovative, creative and beneficiary. Our survey found profiles that simply advertise or market products and services are viewed with disdain, with 22% of 18-24-year-olds believing social networking sites have shown that brands have to work harder to earn their respect (for example with incentives such as free downloads/content). Some 13% say social networking sites have made them expect more from brands and online content while 17% think social networking has made brands feel more friendly and creative.

We are witnessing the rise of so-called catapult networks – bigger, more influential networks that are used by members to 'ease them into using more niche or specialist networks', according to the Future Laboratory's Martin Raymond. 'We tend to find this when any new technology or trend becomes increasingly mainstream. Users are wary of them at first, leaving it up to the early adapters to forge the way. Then the majority of people start using the more familiar networks – MySpace and so on – and then see these as a launch pad or 'port' for exploring more niche or specialist sections within the socialised media landscape.'

This is why networks have become one of the key areas for developing new ideas, as well as for users to explore new specialisms and ways of engaging with the world. While people still rank keeping in touch with friends as one of their primary reasons for using social networks, 13% regard them as the best place to look for creative ideas or to plug into the more unusual and bizarre aspects of global culture (also 13%).

Visualise

Uploading and viewing video clips and photos has also become a staple part of many Internet users' online activity. According to a recent Ofcom survey, '51% of adults with broadband access at home had accessed online video clips with 26% saying they did this weekly. Some 43% of adults with broadband at home had uploaded images while 15% had uploaded video content at least once.'⁵

Express Yourself

Photos are now the preferred mode of expressing yourself on social networking sites, according to 68% of 18-24-year-olds and 65% of 25-34-year-olds responding to our own survey 10 months after that carried out by Ofcom. This is followed by music (46% and 31% respectively), other friends' sites (24% and 22%), blogs (23% and 21%) and wallpapers or skins (21% and 15%). Skins are more important to women than men, with 17% of women compared to 11% of men using them to express themselves.

Out Of The Comfort Zone

As our survey shows, social networking sites also allow people to connect with individuals and scenes they wouldn't usually come across or have the opportunity – or in some cases the nerve – to interact with in the real world. Some 37% of 18-24-year-olds and 39% of 25-34-year-olds said that this was the case with them.

The initial meetings between grime and indie music fans happened online (and gave birth to sub-genre grindie), as did dialogue between artists situated in remote places, and communication between fans and their icons. These online meetings and the styles they have led to include new musical genres such as Toystep/Joystick, Children, Screamo and Acoustmatic.

Networks, then, are not simply generating individual sounds but are increasingly driving trends and encouraging the development of very specialist and unique genres, sub-genres and cross-fertilised creative opportunities.

Bold Type

Many young people are using social networks, IM and email to talk about subjects and issues they have difficulty broaching face-to-face. According to a recent report entitled 'The Circuits of Cool/Digital Playground' from MTV and Nickelodeon, many of the 14-24-year-olds surveyed said that these different forms of communication enabled them to talk about more intimate subjects than they would have otherwise done.

Social Do-Works

Correspondingly, many of those surveyed by the Future Laboratory said that social networks are becoming more like 'social do-work' sites or news and activity sites, where they log on to find out what's new and what's next, as well as sorting out their social diaries and finding out more about places and clubs or 'cool stuff they can do'. 11% said they increasingly use networks to do this.

Some 44% of 18-24-year-olds however, are using it to discuss ideas and to find out more about politics, their community, charities and political groups that they want to support, which challenges the idea that networks are just about meeting friends.

Women are more likely to use networks to find out about politics or their local community, while those between 35 and 45 or 55 and above are the most active when using the networks for a political or community based activity – 44% and 46% respectively.

Glocal

The global aspect of networks, and the global nature of the people found on them, are one of the key attractions of networks like MySpace: 43% cite this as a reason for belonging to a network, far more than those attracted by the fact that the site 'may have cool looking people on it' (12%).

However, 30% say that they use and like social networks because they have more local ideas and items on them as well – which suggests that more and more users are taking advantage of them in the way they formerly used listings magazines. Many others use the networks to personally recommend places to go to – bars, clubs, even plumbers and trades people – creating in the process a new kind of peer-driven ratings system.

Social NiceWorking

The term 'social niceworking' was used by some of the correspondents interviewed for qualitative feedback purposes to describe the growing number of people or micro-sites that promote charitable causes or offer free advice and feedback.

As one interviewee put it, 'it's better than 'Which' because I can chat with people and ask them directly for their advice and even talk to the people they use or work with. It's more democratic, and puts you in control. And if they don't deliver you can say so on their site and on their friends' sites as well, so people are less inclined to cheat you.'

No Excuses

Social networks, as our survey reveals, are also challenging accepted ideas about the number of people we can access, maintain and manage within our personal networks.

In 1993, anthropologist Robin Dunbar created the Dunbar Number, a theory which states that there is an upper limit of 150 to the number of friend networks of any one individual. But he believes that social networking sites break through this 150 barrier 'in principle' if we use Dunbar's definition of friends as 'people who help you out when you have big problems'. Dunbar also concedes that 'social networking sites are a cheap and easy way of staying in touch with people you would have otherwise lost contact with'⁶, which means that, in the future, friend groups will simply get bigger, rather than evolving and changing as they have done in the past.

Amassing huge numbers of friends, however, is not the norm for the majority of young social networkers. The 'Circuits Of Cool/Digital Playground' report found that the average young person (aged 8-14) has 94 numbers in their mobile phone, 78 people on a messenger buddy list and 86 people in their social networking community.⁷

Selective Networking

There is already evidence of a backlash against the unfettered accumulation of friends, with many people preferring to join 'gated' networks focusing on individuals or specialist fields. In October 2007, Reuters launched Reuters Space for hedge fund managers, traders and analysts, making the platform available to companies such as Schroders Investment Management which says it uses it to give a sense of community to its employees in 24 offices around the world. In April 2006 a network called Inmobile.org was launched to service an elite level of executives working in the wireless industry. Diamond Lounge launched in November 2007 and is a network with a membership determined by a selection committee elected by all members on the site. In his article 'Velvet Networks' on reveries.co.uk, editor Tim Manners states that 'so far about 100 have made the cut out of some 7,000 applicants...like Facebook, members can exchange gifts, but at Diamond Lounge the gifts include real Gucci bags and tickets to business events'.⁸ At a more mainstream level, in April 2007 LinkedIn, the online networking site for professionals, signed up its ten millionth user.⁹

In the UK Dazeddigital.com is a community of creatives – photographers, stylists, illustrators – who have their work vetted by the Dazed and Confused style magazine team before being allowed to join the network. This ensures a high standard of members which will allow Dazed, as predicted by Callum McGough of Live Marketing, 'to sometime in the future be in a position to charge brands and businesses a fee for accessing the pages of the site members'.

Health 2.0

Patients are also coming together online to discuss and offer advice and support to fellow sufferers. MySpace's Health and Fitness, Fitness and Nutrition forums are extremely popular as they allow users to seek advice from MySpacers around the world. According to research company Jupiter Research, 20% of US Internet users have created some kind of health-related online content on sites such as MySpace. For example, BrainTalk is an online patient support group for neurology problems. In its latest survey, 40% of respondents said they used the site because their doctors did not or could not answer their questions.

Social networks power to connect people is what makes the number of health-related forums so significant, and offsets potential concerns about people getting wrong or misleading information about their illness. People diagnosed with rare conditions can find hundreds of other sufferers across the world and many feel that the collective knowledge of a group of, say, 300 epilepsy sufferers probably outweighs the knowledge of one individual doctor, something Daniel Hoch, a professor at Harvard Medical School and co-founder of BrainTalk, describes as 'crowd wisdom'.¹⁰

Revenue Line

Social networking is no longer simply about making friends and contacts, or indeed about offering advice – it is also about making money. According to our research, 14% of 18-24-year-olds have already earned money through social networking and 12% think a good social networking site should allow them to make money rather than just collect friends.

Social Tail

The 'long tail' business theory (given to the relatively new phenomenon of niche, discontinued or rare products having greater sales potential thanks to the Internet) is also manifesting itself within social networks. Creators of niche appeal products – fanzines, hand-made poetry books, mixtapes and so on – can sell their wares to creative communities around the globe.

Julius Wiedemann, digital editor at Taschen books, who uses sites like MySpace to source and track new ideas and trends, says that 'social networks and the Internet in general have allowed me to sell niche books worldwide. For example, I can now sell a book on Latin American graffiti to a small amount of buyers around the world but previously it would only have been sold in Latin America. The globalisation of the niche market is one of the most important contributions social networks have made to the creative industries in terms of economics. It has greatly increased the amount of people who are now able to make a living from their creative passion.'

Examples include Culturpreneurs (see section three) such as indie film maker Omelihu Nwanguma of Inspire Media, or t-shirt designers such as Kesh. The former used his MySpace site to raise funds for a film he was making, while the latter used his site to sell more than 10,000 limited edition t-shirts to a select but powerful group of fans.

Other examples we look at in our report include Paul Griffiths, who has 62,826 friends, and has managed to sell 10,000 of his Babycakes t-shirts via his site alone.

Pay-Per-View

All Dig Down (alldigdown.com) is a new music-specific social networking site due to launch in February 2008. The site will pay musicians royalties for track plays and experts such as DJs, journalists and enthusiasts will have the possibility of earning money by uploading their impeccable music library onto the site for others to peruse.

Big Cartel (Bigcartel.com) is an online retail space that allows 'micro-preneurs' making small runs of products such as limited edition t-shirts or jewellery to have a professional online retail page that comes with easy functions for managing/sending stock and building customer databases without having to manage their own website. Increasingly, networks like MySpace are key to the success and profitability of these pages.

Network Convergence

In an increasingly cash-rich, time-poor society, social networkers are creating single online identities or avatars that they can launch into a variety of social networking sites and online worlds.

Callum McGeoch, creative and insight director at Livity, the socially responsible marketing agency behind the UK's first multi-platform, interactive soap opera, Dubplate Drama, says that 'the prospect of a site where you can build your ultimate avatar then launch it into a variety of worlds by simply ticking a few boxes is the future. The developments of Web 2.0 are user driven and this is something that's inevitable.'

I Can See You, You, You...

As the current generation of 8-12-year-old Internet users grow into teenage social networkers, the use of webcams and live video streaming will proliferate. According to a recent Ofcom report, 7% of British 10-year-olds and 15% of 13-15-year-olds have a webcam, so their experience of the online world is increasingly image-based, rather than simply typing on a keyboard.

Code Spotters

The number of amateur HTML and widget customisers is growing at such a pace that special competitions are being launched to test their skills. In December, Widgety Goodness and Channel4 launched a Platform4 mash-up competition to offer a cash prize of £1,500 for the most creative mash-up or widget using Channel4's Film4 RSS feeds. In a similar vein, crunk artist/producer Lil Jon had a 'Pimp My MySpace' contest in 2005 to test the skills of HTML customisers.

Tech-Lex

One of the key elements of language within social networking is how the tools within these sites increasingly mimic and influence the complexities of verbal and face-to-face communication in the 'real world'.

The child-teen demographic kickstarted the use of emoticons, yet they are now used by adults as simple ways to ensure messages are read with the appropriate tone, particularly when making a joke that could be misconstrued.

Digital Democracy

The process of displaying creative work has been democratised thanks to the availability of cheaper, broadcast-quality equipment (hand-held digicams and camera phones), software (music- and film-editing home computer programmes) photo- and video-sharing sites such as MySpace.

Nearly 4,000 photos a minute are uploaded onto some social network sites while videos such as animation, amateur music videos and performances of dance, poetry or music can be uploaded onto sites like MySpace, with features available for viewers to leave comments.

Matthew Taylor, director of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts (RSA) says that 'thanks to digital and online developments, the opportunity for young people from all backgrounds to be part of the creative community has soared. A decade ago, making a music track or a short film was virtually impossible for most British children but now it's an everyday thing. You only have to look at the number of young people involved in the grime movement as an indicator that we're moving away from the era with a small number of artists and a majority of spectators and towards an era where every young person feels they can be creative.'

Cultural Capital

There has never been a better time to be a creative in Britain. Careers that were once considered un lucrative and unstable have become feasible career paths thanks to sites like MySpace. The UK is now recognised on a global scale as a hotbed of creative talent, innovation and expertise, as section three of this report reveals in more detail.

A calendar of new, must-attend events, a portfolio of internationally-renowned artists, the rise of social networks and an exploding community of creative businesses have added to Britain's ever-growing cultural capital.

Typologies

It Takes All Sorts

Based on usage, activity and their ability to create, consume or sell products via social networking sites, we asked users to determine what kind of social networker they were.

Connectors

Connectors know what you like and how you like it. They revel in passing on contacts, links, sites and groups that they think friends should know about, will enjoy, or get something from. Unlike promoters, they pass information on with no motive other than to benefit the people they are sending it to. Some 10% of 18-24-year-olds and 9% of 25-34-year-olds we interviewed described themselves as Connectors, and as social networking continues to become ever more embedded in friendship networks, we suspect that connectors will creep up the hierarchy of friendship pools.

Transumers

Transumers, as in users in transit, graze, engage and interact with networks on an ongoing basis. They shy away from being online movers and shakers and instead prefer to graze content and follow the lead of others. They join friend groups according to the things they like – clubs, fashion labels, films, political movements – but do not instigate actions or new initiatives within them. They are nonetheless a vital part of the social networking structure, as they bulk up friend groups, buy products and attend events. Some 28% of the 18-24 age group and 25-34-year-olds we interviewed described themselves as Transumers.

Collaborators

In contrast, Collaborators believe in 'people power' and have a natural ability to reach out to others to make things happen. Of the 18-24-year-olds we interviewed, 5% described themselves as Collaborators who used social networking sites to create events, ideas and activities by collaborating with other people.

Depending on the project, Collaborators use social networking sites to link-up with people according to their beliefs, locale, talent, skills or shared goals to come together on one-off or long-term projects. Looking to the future, 7% of 18-24-year-olds and 25-34-year-olds think social networking sites will increasingly be about sharing and promoting creativity and new ideas.

Scene Breakers

Our Scene Breakers are early adopters who use social networking sites to discover and be part of new and emerging scenes, movements and individuals. They have no interest in being the 'next big thing' themselves and are more concerned with discovering that person or group, or being among their original supporters.

Of the people interviewed, 5% of 18-24-year-olds and 25-34-year-olds described themselves as Scene Breakers, with a further 20% of in the 18-24 age group and 16% of those aged 25-34 saying that they used social networking sites to discover new DJs, bands and artists.

Netrepreneurs

According to UK Inward Investment, there are over 120,000 creative businesses within the UK, while the creative industries account for 7.3% of all gross value-added (GVA) in the UK economy and 4.3% of all UK exports.

Netrepreneurs use social networking sites for the sole purpose of generating income, with no concern for whether the way in which they do it is creative. This tended to be the case for the older demographics, with 4% of 45-55-year-olds and 3% of those over 55 describing themselves in this way. Netrepreneurs focus on generating fast cash rather than building movements and scenes.

Essentialists

Despite all the possibilities social networking offers, the vast majority of users – 38% of those aged 18-24 and 34% of the 25-34-year-olds – simply use social networking sites to stay in touch with friends and family. These people like networks to be simple and user friendly. Essentialists are much more likely to make new friends in the real world rather than online, and that is unlikely to change. Some 52% of 18-24-year-olds and 54% of 24-35-year-olds think social networking sites will, in the future, still primarily be about staying in touch with friends.

As social networks embed themselves into our culture and become the new media choice that increasingly connects us, we believe that they will be a staging post and factory for new ideas, trends, tribes and super-consumer groups, as the following section reveals.

- 1 BROADBAND BRITAIN SPENDS NINE WEEKS A YEAR ONLINE, U SWITCH, 20/07/07
- 2 FOCUS ON THE DIGITAL AGE, OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS & PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, VIENNE AVERY, 2007 EDITION
- 3 OVER HALF OF UK ADULTS HAVE BROADBAND AT HOME, OFCOM PRESS RELEASE, 02/04/07
- 4 PRESS RELEASE FOR COOL CIRCUITS/DIGITAL PLAYGROUND GLOBAL STUDY, FROM MTV, NICKELODEON AND MICROSOFT, 25/07/07
- 5 THE COMMUNICATIONS MARKET: BROADBAND DIGITAL PROGRESS REPORT, OFCOM, 02/04/07
- 6 DUNBAR'S NUMBER. REVERIES.COM, TIM MANNER, 21/11/07
- 7 CIRCUITS OF COOL/DIGITAL PLAYGROUND GLOBAL STUDY, FROM MTV, NICKELODEON AND MICROSOFT, 25/07/07
- 8 VELVET NETWORKS, REVERIES.CO.UK, TIM MANNERS, 21/11/07
- 9 JOINED-UP THINKING, THE ECONOMIST, 04/04/07
- 10 HEALTH 2.0, THE ECONOMIST, 06/09/07
- 11 ANNUAL SURVEY, OFCOM

MySpace 08 Mindsets : 25

How the attitudes and outlooks of MySpace users are kickstarting new ideas online

MySpace 08 Mindsets

Now that users are familiar with the formats and functions found on many social networking sites, MySpacers in particular are pushing the boundaries of what can be done online. A 'virtual hide' – an online tracker known as PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB (www.myspace.com/projectcreativelab) created by the team at Future Laboratory to monitor, explore and explain the many trends, tribes and emerging social shifts taking place inside MySpace – has revealed that many of these trends are also set to have an impact on mainstream social, cultural and lifestyle thinking in 2008.

'The object of the hide was a simple one', says Neil Bennett, PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB site manager. 'We wanted to identify what was new in the social networking culture, and we wanted to do it from inside both the general media and the more specific social networking medium. We knew from previous research that sites like MySpace were extremely influential in kickstarting trends that eventually spread into society as a whole and influence our behaviour patterns.'

Style

'People talk about the death of style, but already via our profile we have identified groups like Super Super Kids (highly colourful, highly stylistic crosses between Nu ravers and 80s-style new romantics), Grindies (a mixture of grime and indie music and fashion), Double Dressers, (teens who dress, act and behave like twins), Tea Cake Tuesday Boys (mad-hatter types who prefer tea to alcohol), and even Mindies (non-drinking, underage indie music fans, who look, dress and behave like their teen band tee-totalling idols).'

Music

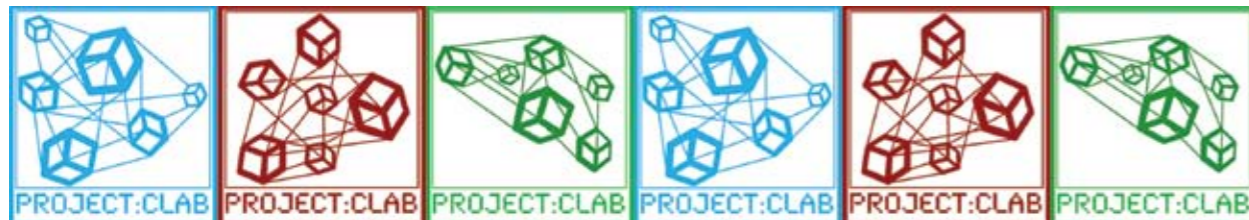
Alongside this new generation of style tribes, new musical genres and sub-genres to watch out for in 2008 include Toystep/Joystick Jungle, Bassline, Tape Music, Acousmatic, Children, and

IDM (Intelligent Dance Music). One particular genre, Screamo, described as a cross between emo and hardcore punk, is tipped by many on MySpace to be the mainstream music industry's next big 'musical fling'. According to Bennett, 'the beauty of hides like the PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB is that they are on-going and live – so they allow us to capture what's new and next in the MySpace culture on a 24/7 basis.'

Among the more creative activities identified by the PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB and its research team are several groups and terms that are already making inroads into mainstream society. These include Everyday Heroes, Social Niceworking, Gripe Casting, Pepperpot Publishing and AIY or 'air it yourself', describing the phenomenon of TV channels and clips created by MySpace members for other MySpace members to watch.

'In the past, it was difficult for trend and lifestyle forecasters to establish the 'newness' of a trend, or indeed how quickly it would spread and to where. But the 'friends' links on MySpace provide a clear map of a trend's trajectory and allow us to more accurately gauge its impact,' says Bennett.

So here is the Future Laboratory trend team's assessment of the most noticeable mindsets driving the trends, shifts and social changes that are set to make an impact on general culture in 2008 according to MySpace users.



Activity over Apathy

MySpace has kickstarted a new generation of 'can-do creatives' who define themselves by what they do as opposed to what they look like or buy into. This mindset is the antithesis of the Paris Hilton/WAG school of being famous for the sake of being famous. For those in their teens and twenties, as our research shows, the emphasis is on being famous for being talented, creative and a 'doer' rather than simply a consumer.

Mark? and Mark! (they refuse to use surnames) of Theatre of the Now, an art, music, film and performance collective on MySpace, say that 'the concept of stardom itself will be challenged in 2008. Stardom is no longer about aspiring to be the lowest common denominator but being true to one's art and dreams and being the best at what you choose to share with the world.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEATREOFTHENOW

Fly Solo

Thanks to the promotion, distribution and expansion possibilities of MySpace, and the social networking phenomenon in general, many young creatives are, we believe, choosing to 'fly solo' and promote, connect and sell their talent with little or no input from outside parties. Up-and-coming street magician Liam Walsh is his own manager, booker, merchandise seller, DVD distributor and promoter, all of which he does through MySpace. 'Until I'm massive, I don't need a team,' he says. 'Because MySpace allows you to do so much, I can easily handle bookings, DVD sales and promotion myself. For me to do all that five years ago would have been impossible.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WALSHMAGIC

BELOW LEFT
URBAN MAGICIAN LIAM WALSH'S MYSPACE PROMOTIONAL BANNER, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WALSHMAGIC

BELOW RIGHT
ILLUSTRATION WORK BY 'DO-IT-ALL' MYSPACER SARAH J TINGLE, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SARAJTINGLE



Quinn Stainfield-Bruce of youth marketing company Youth Conspiracy agrees. 'Before MySpace, there used to be an intrinsic industry structure that young creatives had to follow to get into an industry. Now they can take care of all areas – PR, distribution, sales and marketing – themselves via their MySpace page, which has proven to be hugely empowering and a major contributor to the current explosion of creative cottage industries in the UK.'

Do-It-All

DIY (Do-It-Yourself) culture has also mutated into DIA (Do-It-All) culture. In the same way that MySpace allows creatives to handle all aspects of their career, it has also encouraged them to diversify and expand their skills, with musicians producing their own album covers, events flyers and t-shirts.

Sarah J Tingle is a Scottish fine art artist, poetry book writer and maker, events promoter, art collective founder and musician. MySpace allows her to bring all these disciplines together neatly in one space.

'A few years ago it would have seemed like you were lacking focus if you did so many different things, but I think MySpace has had a big influence on this and now it's almost expected that you create everything on your page yourself,' she says. Indeed, to not do everything (unless your page is seen to be about mash-up and collaboration) is seen to be 'fake or lazy', she says.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SARAJTINGLE





Lighten Up

MySpace has also stripped the pretension out of creativity and online publishing, with the bulk of users communicating via informal conversations and through sharing funny clips, virals and pictures.

Phil Cooper, director of viral and internet marketing agency Creative Cultures, believes that 'the most popular virals are the funny ones, whether it be nonsense like the Cadbury's gorilla or dark humour like the VW Terrorist viral. We are all so used to censored editorial and adverts that when we see something off-the-wall and a little controversial it sets our minds running wild and we want to share it with our friends. After all, jokes are always better when they are shared.'

Know Thy Digital Neighbour

Despite its global reach, MySpace has been pivotal in fuelling the growth of local scenes. Up-and-coming audio/visual DJ VJ1000Errors says MySpace 'is a great tool for connecting people and promoting nights out. The fact that you can search for people within a specific distance radius and add them to your mailers can really help spread awareness of a local scene.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VJ1000ERRORS

Internet radio station Korruption UK even has widgets on its MySpace page that allow listeners to contact the studio and put their location on a Google map so that other fans can link to them. This was so that the station could map its reach and determine geographically (as well as emotionally) where its individual listeners lived. This in turn allows it to build up a playlist and station chart that is street-specific, thus making the station even more local and relevant to its listeners.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KORRUPTIONUK



After television programme 'Location, Location, Location' in 2006 cited Hackney as being one of the worst places to live in the UK, local residents set up a MySpace page to celebrate the positive aspects of the East London borough. The page currently has 3,870 friends, the majority of them residents and businesses from the local community.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HACKNEYNEEDINGSOMESPACE

Kay Withers is a researcher on the democracy and power team at the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), specialising in technology. She says that 'digital networks are much easier to join and leave than real life ones. As far as enhancing local community goes, they are a fantastic tool for fulfilling people's need for localised news and information and as gateways to official websites such as local councils, government websites, tenancy laws, etc. that social networkers wouldn't usually connect to.'

Culturpreneurs

MySpace has also been the incubator of teen and twenty-something 'culturpreneurs', a new generation of business-minded, culture obsessives who seamlessly generate income from arty pursuits – club nights, fanzines, handmade jewellery, street theatre, stand-up, indie clothing lines, films, street art, DVDs – that have previously been notoriously poor sources of revenue. On MySpace, earning good money from art is not looked down upon but is, in fact, the goal for many users – 12% according to our research – who are keen to create money through sites or schemes. Via MySpace, raising funds for worthy creative projects has also become much more effective, as it is easy to connect with like-minded people from around the world and not just the local network.

Yvan Rodic is a photographer who puts all his paid work down to his blog – Facehunter.org. 'My blog is my full-time job and a source of revenue. Before starting my blog, I hadn't taken a picture in four years and now companies and magazines hire me as a photographer. Men.style.com asked me to cover NYC Fashion Week for them and last year, Motorola invited me to Sao Paulo Fashion Week. MySpace is sending me to Miami Beach next month.'

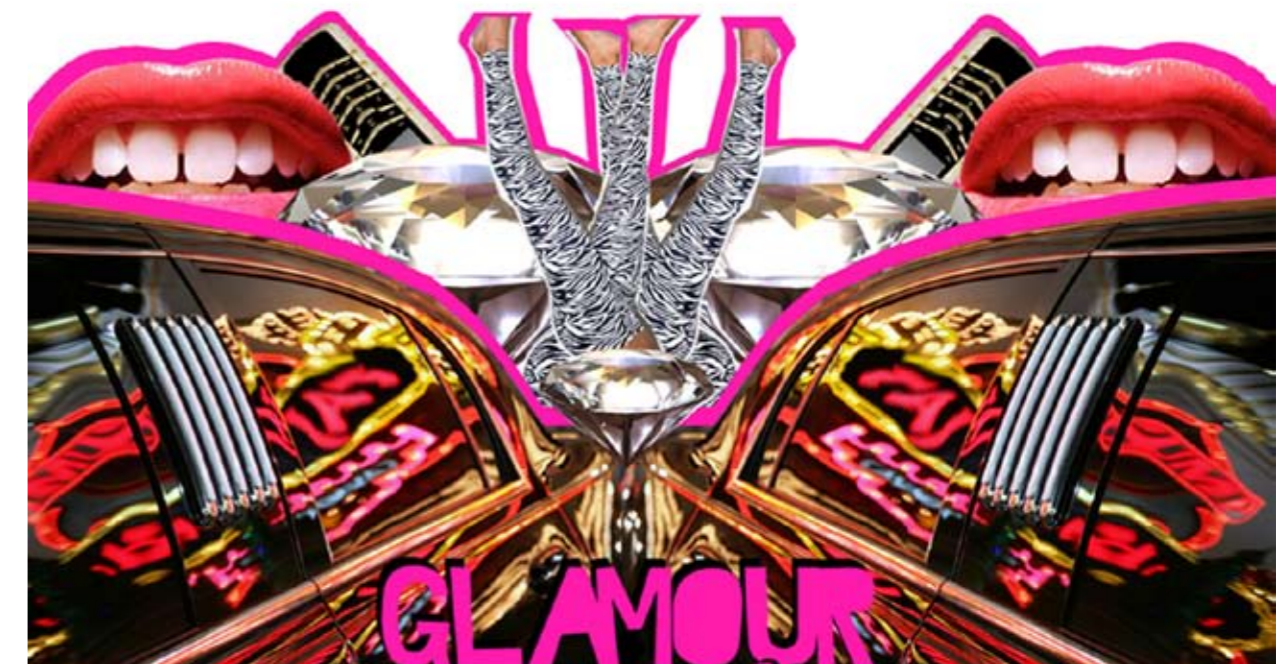
London-based film maker Omeliu Nwanguma of Inspire Media used MySpace to generate funds to shoot 'Area Boys', a short film documenting Nigeria's gang culture. The 30-year-old, who has British-Nigerian nationality, shot the film entirely on location in the Nigerian capital, Lagos, and raised the cash by offering an Executive Producer credit to anyone making a donation of £150 or more.

Grime emcee JME likewise used MySpace to promote and sell t-shirts featuring the slogan 'Boy Better Know', the name of his label and musical 'camp' style. The t-shirts generate enough revenue for him to live off and fund his musical career and allow him to avoid taking a day job which could deplete his energy and creativity. The t-shirts are so popular they are now being bootlegged en masse in the same way that the then barely-known Wale Adeyemi beanies and denims were five years ago. Market stalls across the UK, including areas where grime music has a small following, are selling 'Girl Better Know' and 'Girl Better Blow' t-shirts, something JME ardently disses on his 'MySpace Freestyle' and 'Expensive Freestyle' tracks uploaded on his MySpace site.

OPPOSITE LEFT
KORRUPTION RADIO GOOGLE MAP WIDGET,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KORRUPTIONUK

OPPOSITE RIGHT
JME'S MYSPACE LINK FOR HIS 'BOY BETTER KNOW' T-SHIRT
RANGE, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JMESERIOUS

BELOW
GLAMOUR SOUNDSYSTEM'S MYSPACE BANNER,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GLAMOURSOUNDSYSTEM



In addition to being a hot up-and-coming musical force, Birmingham electro/nu wave/disco house outfit The Glamour Soundsystem, aka 20-year-old James Glamour, runs a complementary clothing line via his MySpace site. He also offers free digital content to his MySpace friends, such as wallpapers and downloads, using his creative and commercial abilities to cross-sell and promote himself and his work.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AREABOYS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JMESERIOUS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEGLAMOURSOUNDSYSTEM

Glocal

Despite the fact that its creator Alex Zamora lives in East London, the second issue of Fever Zine, a 28-page photocopied fanzine, featured contributors from the Netherlands, Belgium and America, all of whom had contacted the zine through MySpace and were happy to contribute for free.

Qio, a rapper from East London who is barely known in the UK, has nonetheless managed to bag himself gigs in other countries thanks to the connective possibilities of MySpace. 'Here, no one knows me, but I've still been able to secure gigs in America and Germany thanks to the online response,' he says. 'All I can say is, thank God for MySpace.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FEVERZINE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/QIODEGRATE

Talent Exchange

Talent swapping, talent exchanges and talent-tanks (as opposed to think-tanks) are also likely to be a phenomenon of note for 2008 thanks to MySpace. Via MySpace, the underdogs of the global creative industry are becoming a force to be reckoned with as they swap their talents to help bolster fellow creatives' projects and careers, allowing people to build highly professional creative images and empires with very little backing.

When aspiring Sheffield-based music video production duo H&H wanted top quality acts to demonstrate their video-making skills for their first showreel, they scoured MySpace for the finest unsigned acts from four different genres and offered to make them a video. Happily, all of them obliged.

Fever Zine editor Alex Zamora says he could fill the 32 pages of the zine 'ten times over' with the offers he gets from creatives around the world via the zine's MySpace page, despite the fact that he cannot offer them a fee. Instead, he simply runs their contact details near their work in the magazine and profiles them in the zine's list of MySpace top friends.

Loughborough-based Music video production unit Enter The Tree House have 'networked like mad' on MySpace and consequently were commissioned to create the video for up-and-coming Hollywood band Simple Machine, who were looking for a top-quality video produced on a very limited budget.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MUSICVIDEOSUK
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ENTERTHETREEHOUSE

Work Space

MySpace has been a breeding ground for new occupation- and interest-based communities. Sous-chefs Tom, a 24-year-old from South Yorkshire, and Peit Leigh, a 26-year-old from Barnsley, use MySpace to show off their skills with slide shows of their most impressive culinary achievements. Both have signed up to Jamie Oliver's excellent MySpace page as friends and have participated in events such as calling Jamie's BBQ hotline and voting for which unsigned band should provide the music for his forthcoming podcast.

Barbers specialising in black and Asian hair are using MySpace to swap tips, big up each other's clipper work and give advice to junior stylists. Big Boy Barber Kash is a 23-year-old barber from Dudley and winner of the 2007 Barbers Brawl contest. 'Thanks to MySpace, I regularly communicate with 30 barbers, including Craig David's barber Five, across the UK,' he says. 'I knew eight before.' Kash also uses his MySpace to connect with musicians and sportsmen in order to attract a more exclusive clientele. 'Before MySpace, to connect to Dizzee Rascal or Megaman would have been difficult. Now I can message them, they see my work, are impressed, and I start to have more exclusive clients.' The international links within MySpace have been beneficial to Kash as well. Next year he plans to visit his father in Miami and has secured a job at The Chop Shop, a concept barber and car valet frequented by the elite hip-hop community there, including 50 Cent, Akon and Fat Joe, simply by messaging them via MySpace. 'They were so impressed with my work they said there was a job for me whenever I wanted it.'



OPPOSITE
JAMIE OLIVER'S MYSPACE PAGE,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JAMIEOLIVER

ABOVE LEFT
BIG BOY BARBER KASH'S PORTFOLIO OF CREATIVE BARBER
WORK, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BIG_BOY_BARBER_KASH

ABOVE RIGHT
CHANEL & CANDICE'S CHAVE AGONY AUNT PROFILE PICTURE,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHAVSSUCKEGGS

Carly from Edmonton, aka hotblacchic in North London, also regularly answers problems in her blog, as does 25-year-old Josh, aka Swish Bish. 'It's almost duty to make people feel better if they are crying out for help in bulletins,' says Josh. 'For some people, its impossible to communicate those feelings outside of this forum. It's only through the words on the screen that some people seem able to take advice.'

The brilliantly conceived Chav Agony Aunt page, where Candice & Chanel Lambrini offered to solve problems such as 'Are you banging your wife's sister? Are your feral children out of control?' has, sadly, relinquished its problem solving duties.

The thoughts of Dr David Lewis, research director of The Mind Lab, a research company which specialises in measuring how the human brain and body respond in different situations, confirms Josh's observations. 'British teenagers, particularly males, on a whole lack the vocabulary to express emotions. They're emotionally constipated. The Internet and social networks induce people to make confessions as it feels anonymous even when it isn't because typing into a screen is less emotionally involved than speaking face-to-face.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KARENBISHKO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HOTBLACCHIC
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AUNTYREENA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SWISHBISH
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHAVSSUCKEGGS

Chefs

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHEF_TOM
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/REELTIMEFISHING
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/171527520

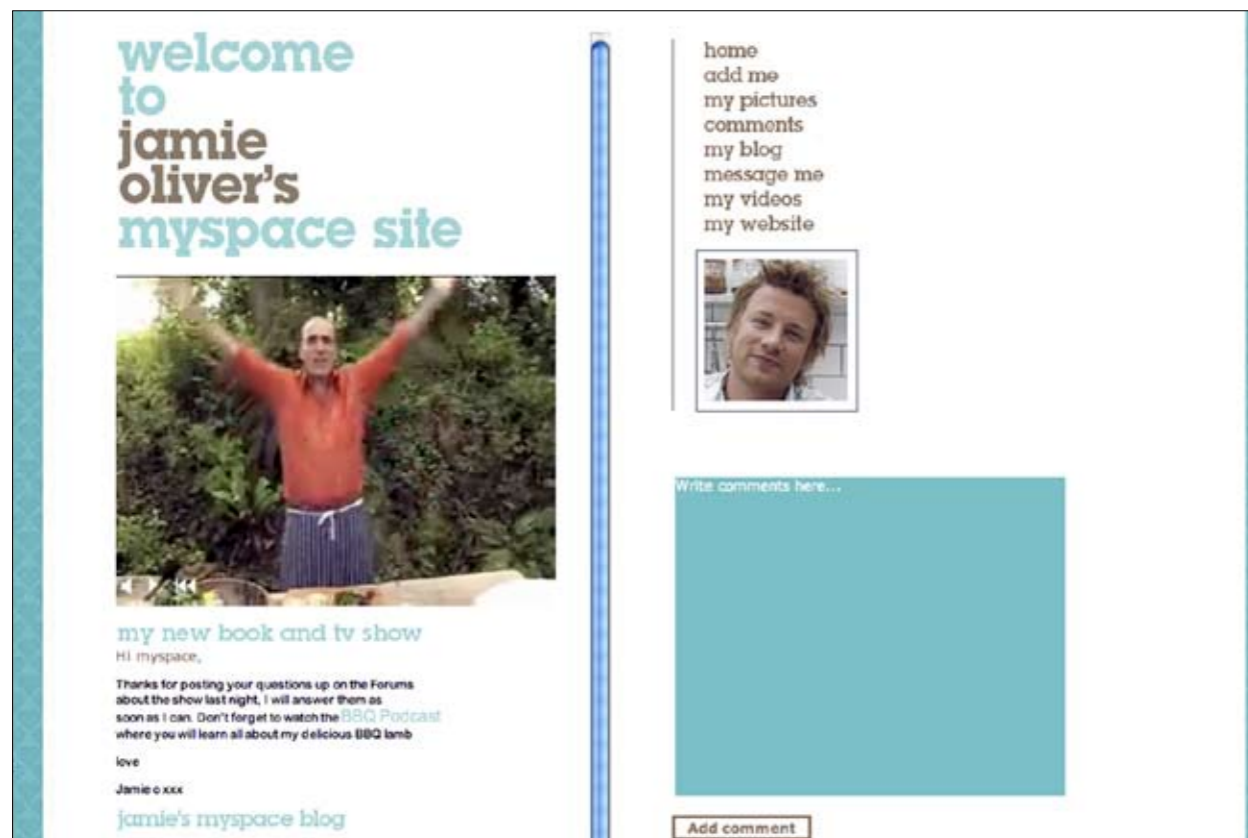
Barbers

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BIG_BOY_BARBER_KASH
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DOUBLEM_BARBERS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SCISSOR1

Online Angels

MySpace users are reaching out to fellow users as agony aunts and shoulders to cry on, with many dedicating blog sections to solving the problems of their online peers.

Up-and-coming singer Karen Bishko has started an official Dear Karen problem-solving blog after the emotional songs she writes encouraged friends to ask her advice on situations.





ABOVE
ONE WORLD TV VIDEO CONTACT LINKS,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ONEWORLDTV

New Trends Rising : 33

Everyday Heroes, Social Niceworking, Pepperpot Publishing, and those who DIA (as in 'do-it-all') – just some of the many trends identified by our online researchers

Keep The Link

MySpace is being used to maintain relationships during periods of separation for art collectives, creative partners and even families. Waygood in Newcastle is a thriving community of artists. Their building is currently undergoing massive regeneration, so to ensure the community ethic isn't lost during the period they use Flickr and MySpace accounts to share work, give each other feedback and arrange social events.

Separated families, particularly ones with children at university, have started to arrange specific times to meet on social network sites such as MySpace and in virtual worlds like Second Life for activities like bowling, to have family chats or look at photos together so they can react together to the images in real time.

For the past two years, virtual anthropologist Tom Beoellstorff has been conducting research into social networks and digital worlds for his pending book 'Coming Of Age In Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores The Virtual Human', to be published in spring 2008 by Princeton University Press.

'Parents with kids away at college and university feel a closer bond if they can do something together rather than just talk,' he says. 'In Second Life, I've found families who've built houses so parents, grandparents, children and grandchildren can all be at home together in the digital world even if in reality they are spread around the globe. Uploading a slide show or music onto a MySpace page and then sharing it with your friends in real time is an immensely bonding experience, especially if a physical meeting is impossible.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/69887607
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/39000574
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LAURA_LANCASTER

Issues Networks

With cable and terrestrial TV channels awash with soaps and reality TV shows, social networkers are turning to MySpace to access, and get aired, harder-hitting, issue-related programming.

Documentary 'stations' OneWorldTV and BigPictureTV are dedicated to showing documentaries and videos on human rights, sustainable development and environmental issues. The content is unique and combines documentary work from around the globe. OneWorldTV boasts work from filmmakers in Britain, Afghanistan, Indonesia and the Congo, and offers its members the opportunity to connect with 4,500 international filmmakers concerned with issue-related programme making.

Formed in 2006, Green TV is the world's first broadband TV channel dedicated entirely to environmental films, with content coming from Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, WWF and IFAW.

Steve Bridger, a social philanthropy expert behind blog nfp 2.0 (Not For Profits 2.0) says that 'the issues people are most concerned about often reflect who they are and the things they feel most passionately about. In the last decade, being engaged and informed about world issues has shifted from being a niche to a mass preoccupation and social networks will reflect that, and indeed are reflecting it more and more.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BIGPICTURETV
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ONEWORLDTV
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MYGREENTV

Overall, as the above indicates, social networks are increasingly becoming 'do-spaces' rather than talk spaces. And it is this shift that is driving many of the trends we look at in the section that follows.

New Trends Rising

Trends are the profit centres of tomorrow. They are also the result of very specific and creative changes in the culture that in turn produce very new, vibrant and culturally diverse groups, as this section indicates.

Everyday Heroes

Thinking outside the 'friends' and 'creative' box, MySpacers are using the site to pay homage to their favourite everyday heroes by creating 'shrines' or profiles for them, often without their knowledge. And in most cases, this is an act of spontaneous generosity for people as diverse as dinner ladies, head teachers, plumbers and even skip-hire companies and window cleaners - people they feel are 'good and worth plugging', as one MySpace user put it. Fans or 'shrinesters' keep their comments short, and their sentiments positive and upbeat.

Students of Aquinas College in Stockport, for instance, have created a page in homage to their dinner lady Pat and have listed cheeky statements about her such as 'having the window open at all times, even in icy weather...clearing the canteen ouuutt...eating students chips.'

In the UK, everyday businesses such as skip-hire firms, builders merchants and window cleaners - particularly ones with creative pages - are garnering a cult following on MySpace. Chris Donohoe is a Northampton-based window cleaner whose MySpace page includes a video clip of George Formby's 'When I'm Cleaning Windows' and clips from the 2007 Window Cleaning Championships.

Meanwhile, Able Skips skip-hire firm in Lancashire has 1661 friends and a site that includes video clips of a skip being emptied, a 'Skip Hunk Of The Month' posting featuring a nearly naked man posing in front of a skip and an illustrated superhero flyer stating 'Have No Fear, Able Skip Hire Is Here'. Able's business development manager Steven Bradley, who came up with the idea for the MySpace page in July 2007, admits that 'you wouldn't expect to find a skip-hire firm on MySpace but we've had a number of orders through it. Initially we had a lot of friend requests from people in the local area but then it caught on and people were joining because they liked the bizarre normality of it. When we started it, there were no other skip companies on MySpace but now there's skip-hires, recycling plants, window cleaners - we seem to have started a trend.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PAT_THE_DINNERLADY
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AMBROSEMSITH
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JDICKINSONS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ABLESKIPSMYSPACE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WIDNESSKIPS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UKWINDOWCLEANING
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BUILDERSSUPPLIES

Social Niceworking

Now that the trends of flirting and friend finding are increasingly 'done' (as in 'no longer cool'), in the parlance of social network users, social networks are being increasingly used to promote good causes, according to the users who contacted PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB. As our survey showed, 14% thought being able to talk to celebrities makes a network good but a staggering 41% said it was because they could learn more about ideas, their community and charities that they wanted to support - hence 'social niceworking' and the growing number of networkers keen to use their friends contacts for good causes.

According to Peter Deltz in his book 'Group Fundraising 101: From Benchmarks To Success', in 2007 alone, group fundraising websites and social network sites generated \$3 million in donations through 8062 campaigns. And for 2008, many of our PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB respondents and interviewees tell us that 'fractional pledging', as one put it, is set to become a new way for charities to raise money. People pledge to increase their individual donations if other people work with them to reach an agreed or collective target.

Individuals, friend networks and dedicated campaign groups are also using MySpace to promote their cause, raise funds and launch petitions, says online philanthropy expert Steve Bridger. 'The most effective campaigns are creative, quirky and in some way capture the imagination.'

He gives the example of Tacheback, a campaign calling on men to grow a moustache and raise funds for research into testicle and prostate cancer, but according to PROJECT:CREATIVE LABbers, MySpace sites like MagicPass are a better example of how commerce and creativity can be harnessed in a positive and collaborative way. Launched by hip-hop producer Nico Rayner of Warrington, MagicPass aims to raise money for Oxfam through a musical chain, that follows the style of old-fashioned chain letters but with a positive and beneficial twist for everyone.

According to Rayner, the idea is a simple but effective one. An Akai MCP4000 digital recording device is sent to a global chain of recognised music producers who he invited to contact him through MySpace. Each producer or artist is required to leave a beat, track or rap on the device before passing it on. When the un-composed MPC4000 device returns to Rayner, he will compose the music into a fresh and exciting compilation and sell the finished CD or beat download via his site and any friends or associates who want to become his distributors. 'I wanted to challenge the boundaries of communication and music composition whilst doing something for a good cause,' says Raynor. 'Without MySpace, the logistics of a project like this would be a nightmare. I doubt I'd even attempt it.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MAGICPASS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WNBR_LONDON
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YORKNAKEDBIKERIDE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NOMOTTRAMBYPASS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FIGHTINGTHEPIPE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CAMPOFHOPE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SAYNOTOFASHION
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NIMOMASHTIC
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HADDONBROWN

BELOW RIGHT
 PAT THE DINNER LADY'S MYSPACE PAGE,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PAT_THE_DINNERLADY

BELOW LEFT
 ABLE SKIP HIRE'S MYSPACE PROMOTIONAL BANNER,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ABLESKIPSMYSPACE



BELOW RIGHT
 SAY NO TO FASHION PROFILE PICTURE,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SAYNOTOFASHION
 BELOW LEFT
 FIGHT THE PIPE BENEFIT GIG FLYER,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FIGHTINGTHEPIPE



Brand Me

MySpace and social networks in general are encouraging people to sell their intellectual property and ideas, or offer a 'chance to hang out with them, and do the things they do'.

Through the capacity to upload photographs, blogs and video clips, users are letting people into their lives – the parties they go to, the work they do, the friends they have, the outfits they wear – and are using this to inadvertently create brands around their personalities, or to use their personalities, and the high rating of their friends, to endorse and market their skills and talents. Not surprisingly, they all love the camera, and understand the importance of looking hot in a constantly evolving gallery of pictures on MySpace. Yvan Rodic, the street- and club-style photographer behind Facehunter.org, says that 'in the club, posing is definitely part of the new party culture. Otherwise most people, MySpace generation or not, are shy in front of a camera.'

Up-and-coming 20-year-old stylist Richard Shoyemi from London (see his case study on page 80) says his presence on MySpace is the reason people increasingly book him for jobs. They are 'buying into me and who I am' just as much as they are 'looking at my portfolio and my work experience', he says.

Paul Griffiths (see on page 56) is another MySpace 'me-brand', as he calls himself, with 62,826 friends (and growing) and his own t-shirt line (Babycakes) and promotions company The Secret Party Ltd, which goes under the MySpace moniker of The Club Kids.

BELOW RIGHT
'SLASH SLASH KID' PAUL GRIFFITHS,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXANDOVERDRAMATICS

BELOW LEFT
SUPERSTAR STYLIST AND MYSPACE CELEBRITY RICHARD
SHOYEMI, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RICHARD_SHOYEMI

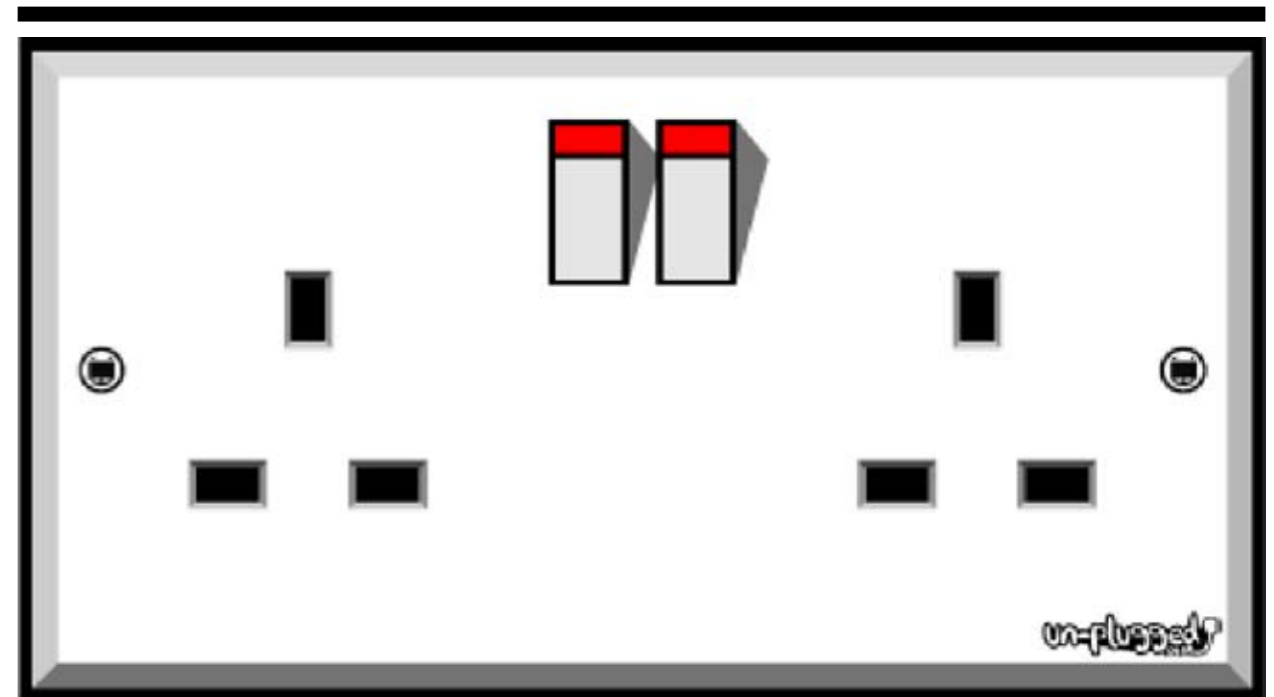


Unknown outside the world of social networks, he models his own t-shirts ('I tried using proper models but it didn't feel right'), and has become a network personality or 'me-brand' in the process, with a growing band of stylish followers who in turn use his fashion, and his online looks and poses, to create their own sub-genre or style. He has sold 10,000 t-shirts since March 2007, a fact he attributes to 'people buying into his personality' (he doesn't sing, play an instrument or tell jokes) by reading his blog, viewing his pictures and watching video uploads of his drunken rants. He is so popular that people have made pseudo profiles about him, and his profile headline is 'Internet stars are the new rock stars'.

Scene documenters, particularly photographers, are expanding their skills and personalities into the world of television production by turning their MySpace profiles into ad hoc TV stations laden with documentary-style video clips. This does away with the traditional channels of distribution, commissioning and broadcast restrictions.

TimandBarry are a photographic-duo turned TV-station. They specialise in short, sharp video clips, many of them exclusive performances for Timandbarry TV, featuring musicians from underground music scenes, grime, UK hip-hop and dancehall.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TIMANDBARRYTV
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RICHARD_SHOYEMI
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXANDOVERDRAMATICS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/204906566



ABOVE
UNPLUGGED'S UK DOUBLE SOCKET STICKER,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNPLUGGEDSOCKETS

Limited Appeal

Cashing in on the power of networks to create market openings and niche opportunities, MySpace Culturpreneurs, as we've dubbed this group of canny, can-do creatives, are likewise designing and selling their own limited edition runs of indie clothing lines.

Kesh, a 19-year-old East London designer, stylist and DJ, releases new t-shirts and hoodies one design at a time and in small batches of between 20-200 via her Big Cartel Kesh Wear retail space. Before doing so, she uses the power and the 'pass it on' effect of her friends network to tell them to tell others about the pending arrival of new stock – which, she says, creates a rush of potential buyers to her Big Cartel site in 'the same way crowds gather outside an Adidas or Puma store before the release of a limited-edition trainer'.

She recently hosted a Christmas hoody 'auction' where she released five limited-edition highly desirable customised hoodies onto eBay, then messaged all her MySpace friends to tell them about it, thus creating a 'double hit' that both publicised her site and drove the value of the hoodies up further as bids for her work increased because of the buzz she was causing via her friends network.

For their clothing line Stiff Couture, London-based punk/electro group Punks Jump Up collaborate with different designers to create a limited line of t-shirts, tote bags and sweatshirts. The current line is a limited run of hand screen-printed t-shirts and bags from Kate Moross which are only available to buy via their MySpace page.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THAT_GIRL_KESSHIA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PUNKSJUMPUP

Team Fan

Fans of street artists and musicians who are happily being turned into free publicists who spread viral campaigns using video clips and promo stickers in exchange for being part-owners of a project or movement they like or feel passionate about, according to our researchers.

UnPlugged is a street artist famed for his plug socket graphics that are a comment on connectivity and energy and the places where the plugs appear. Via MySpace UnPlugged has generated such a large following that he no longer has to stick the stickers up in public himself but instead posts them in batches to fans for them to 'bomb' their local area, belongings and bedrooms. Fans request the stickers via MySpace.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNPLUGGEDSOCKETS

Street wear label Carhartt is heavily involved in the street art scene. Richard Boyd, manager of UK Carhartt Stores and Carhartt Digital says, that 'social networks mean artists (such as UnPlugged) can spread the word about their work so much quicker than, say, five years ago. Back in the day, artists would pay someone to stick their work up on the other side of London, but now street artists can reach all over the world through fans who are willing to put work up purely because they want to feel part of something. It's that Scarlet Pimpernel thing – even if you didn't create the work, you know you stuck it up there.'

A new breed of zines and magazines have likewise taken the philosophy of social networking and applied it to content. Talenteers is a not-for-profit networking zine designed to expose and bring together the talents of up-and-coming illustrators, artists, philosophers, stylists, poets, photographers and writers. How does it work? Each issue has a theme around which the contributing creatives produce a piece of work. They then photocopy this piece 101 times onto A4 paper and send it in to the Talenteers HQ in Colchester for them to construct 101 fanzines containing the work of 49 other creatives, all of whom will be sent a copy of the zine with the remaining 50 dispatched to galleries, societies and indie bookshops – with one final copy kept in the Talenteers archive.

Super Super magazine is, according to editor Steve Slocombe, 'MySpace in print. It is the only magazine that looks and reads like MySpace except for we don't bother with news, as news is what happened five minutes ago on the MySpace site.' Super Super is renowned for sourcing raw talent, staff and collaborators via social networks for high-profile performances, editorial interventions and events. According to Slocombe, the magazine sourced its first fashion editor from MySpace. 'A 19-year-old girl with no formal experience, just an amazing look, attitude and DIY clothing line,' he says. For its recent event at London Fashion Week, the magazine recruited five unknown designers, DJs and acts from MySpace and based the entire event around them. 'No magazine has ever done anything like that before,' says Slocombe. 'When we say new talent we don't mean up-and-coming, we mean absolutely raw.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TALENTEERS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THESUPERSUPER
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ANUNRULYCONDUCTOR
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FEVERZINE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BEARDMAG
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FUTUREFANTASTEEL
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BUMSICKZINE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VOPBOX
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WEARSTHETROUSERS

If You're Not On MySpace, You're Not On

A slew of club nights and Internet radio stations are cropping up that exclusively source acts/music from MySpace. Your Space Dust is a club night in London with such a policy. 'We use MySpace for screening new talent by checking out mixes, tracks, mix links, charts and so on on their homepages. Sourcing any other way is fiddly and time consuming,' says promoter Dan Hayes.

DJ Glitch hosts the Odylic Force show on Internet radio station Radio Magnetic. The show features brand new music, 99% of which Glitch finds through MySpace. Meanwhile, D'n'B Revolution Radio is dedicated to giving new D'n'B DJs the chance to have a radio show. The genre is notoriously difficult to break into, with an elite pool dominating the radio and club scenes, something D'n'B Revolution Radio hope to address.

In late 2007, the Tate Modern gallery held Tate Tracks, a contest that invited 18-25-year-olds to compose an original piece of music inspired by a piece of art in the gallery, and then upload it onto their MySpace profile for judging. John Stack, editor of Tate Online says that 'only allowing entrants via MySpace wasn't restrictive as so many of this demographic have them now, particularly if they're making music. Using the medium was key for us as it allowed us to engage with a demographic that may have written off galleries as being 'not for them', and we're definitely planning more of this type of activity in the future.'

Topshop recently used MySpace as its primary source of identifying illustration talent to work on new graphic t-shirt designs for 2008. In addition to securing underground stars Kate Moross and Will Broom, a selection of relatively unknown talent was recruited for unnamed freelance work. A Topshop spokesperson said that 'there's some brilliant talent on MySpace. For our design team it's a great way of quickly identifying artwork styles big in different music scenes, and then tracing back to the original creators whom can then be approached for freelance work. We'd much rather employ and support the original creators than mimic something.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YOURSPACEDUST
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GLITCH
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DNBREVOLUTIONRADIO

Audio Flyers

Club night and events promoters are now using MySpace profiles as audio flyers with each track on their media player – effectively creating a jingle for a forthcoming event, recorded in the same style as a pirate radio advert.

Fortunately, unlike the radio ads they imitate, listeners can play them back as many times as they like, which eliminates the mad dash to grab pen and paper or, worse still, the downright suicidal attempt to key information line numbers into a mobile phone while driving.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SILKCITYONLINE
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SLAPNTICKLETEAM
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SIMPLYGARAGE

Space-Exclusives

Creatives across the board are increasingly creating works exclusively for their MySpace pages. Grime emcee JME features freestyles on his MySpace profile recorded specifically for the site. Under 18s indie night Same Teens, held in Manchester, releases a fanzine onto its MySpace blog once a month that can't be viewed or read anywhere else. All the footage on Timandbarry TV is shot exclusively for 'broadcast' on their MySpace page. Similarly, the music provided by experimental/dubstep/hardcore producer, The Burial, on his page is one long-playing mix, exclusive to MySpace.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JMESERIOUS
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SAMETEENSMANCHESTER
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TIMANDBARRYTV
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BURIALLUK



ABOVE LEFT
 YOURSPACE @ DUST'S MYSPACE PROFILE PICTURE,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YOURSPACEDUST

RIGHT
 VAROOM MAGAZINE FRONT COVER ISSUE 5,
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VAROOMMAG

The Making Of...

Creativity is no longer simply about the end result – it is now about the entire creative process. Creatives from all backgrounds – painters, actors, musicians, illustrators – are uploading images and video clips of their work in progress, rather than merely the finished piece. Illustrator Rod Hunt has uploaded a slide show gallery of images onto his blog showing him drawing live for the Varoom/Doolearth Collaboration at the Cut & Paste Tournament. On the MySpace page of interactive soap opera Dubplate Drama, the outtakes and behind-the-scenes clips are almost as popular as the episodes themselves. Meanwhile, Paul Griffiths has gone as far as creating an animation showing the life of his Babycakes t-shirts from design inception to being parcelled up and posted off, including snaps of him and his mates sitting on his local post office floor.

Callum McGeoch, creative and insight director at socially responsible marketing agency Livity – also the creative team behind Dubplate Drama – says that 'Stickam.com was created for businesses to use during video conferences, but it was teenagers that really embraced it. Looking to the future, I think we're going to see the explosion of webcam communities, particularly in the creative fields, so that we'll be watching sculptors, actors, painters, singers, producers and so on actually creating and working on a day-to-day basis.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RODHUNT
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DUBPLATEDRAMA2
 WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXSANDOVERDRAMATICS





OPPOSITE LEFT
GUERRILLA ZOO EVENT FLYER,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GUERRILLAZOO

OPPOSITE TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT
BIKE POLO AT BRICK LANE, LONDON
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BRICKLANEBIKEPOLO

Rep Your (Crap) Ends

Building on the success of the book *Crap Towns*, an emerging sub genre of hip-hop (and sometimes garage) called *Crap Town Hip-Hop* has started to emerge, with artists waxing lyrical about 'goth battering', 'birds' in shellsuits and what the local Londis sells. This is less about hard-hitting social commentary and more about tongue-in-cheek monologues about life in the suburbs and estates in Nowheresville.

Hailing from Toxteth, Liverpool, rapper Riuven became a Liverpoolian cult figure after tracks such as 'What Lad' and 'The LIV' received thousands of plays on his MySpace page and were Bluetoothed around the city. Meanwhile, En8Reincarnated raps about Wrexham, a town in Wales, while DJ Inn Truf raps about Glasgow.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RIUVEN2
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/EN8REINCARNATED
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DJINNTRUF

Virtualpedia

A number of MySpacers have turned into enthusiastic 'virtualpedia' creators by constructing pages for inanimate items such as colours, places, objects, insects, flowers and sweets that have turned MySpace into a sort of online encyclopedia. The pages often outline the history, meaning or reasoning behind the items, and the entire audiovisual content of the site is often themed to match. These sites are then networked with related pages – such as items on Cabbage White butterflies and aphids to allotment and gardeners' profiles, or Asda milk bottle sweets that are linked to pages by confectionery enthusiasts.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LETTUCEAPHID
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CABBAGEWHITE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ASDAMILKBOTTLES
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BLUEBLUAZULBLEU
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PINKROSAROSAROSE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TURQUOISETURCHESATURQUESA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YELLOWGIALLLOAMARILLOJAUNE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JOSH_AND_ARCHIES_SHOP

Community Arts

Collectives of art activists who have joined together in the real world use MySpace to ensure they maintain a strong connection and work bond regardless of situations such as changes to their studio spaces or the closure of squats.

The Children of !WowWow! is an art-squatter collective that keeps strong links to the many people who have worked with it on projects, events or parties, or lived with other collective members at their various squats over the past five years, through their 'digital squat' on MySpace.

In the same way, Guerrilla Zoo brings together a disparate band of alternative artists – acrobats, film makers, subvertors, anarchists, art activists – by connecting and sourcing talents on MySpace and offering them a space to perform or showcase their niche talents. Rampart, meanwhile, offers a space for creatives to use for exhibitions, meetings and events.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GUERRILLAZOO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHILDRENOFWOWWOW
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RAMPARTLONDON
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IDLESTYLE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/REDMANGOILLUSTRATIONS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THECRAZYWOLFMAN
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VAROOMMAG

Indie-Sports

MySpace is a hotbed of quirky and inventive sports as it is the ideal forum for spreading awareness, gaining fans, sourcing new team members and demonstrating the sport in action through pictures and video clips.

The UK's Women's Roller Derby teams – a sport that involves careering around a rink on rollerskates and knocking down members of the opposing team – have used MySpace to source new team members, connect with other teams across the country to arrange training and matches and to maintain a strong link to their US counterparts (see case study on page 76).

Similarly, the Brick Lane Bike Polo club – polo on bicycles – has used MySpace to spread awareness about its weekly meetings and annual tournaments.



ABOVE LEFT
COLIN FURZE'S WALL OF DEATH,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/COLINFURZE

ABOVE RIGHT
I KNIT LONDON'S MYSPACE PROFILE PICTURE,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IKNITLONDON

RIGHT
MEMBER OF I KNIT LONDON,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IKNITLONDON

Perhaps the most quirky sports phenomenon on MySpace are underground sports or Tube Chancing. Literally underground, they use London's Underground transport system to engage in sports such as Underground Skiing, Tube Chancing and Tube Running. The escalator at Angel Tube station is the longest in Europe, and plays host to Underground skiing. According to its dedicated MySpace page, Tube Chancing is all about speed 'on the beeps of the Tube train, just before the doors slam shut, you must make it across the platform, touch the wall and back onto the train before departure.' Points are also given for style when passing through the door, and for entering and exiting with élan.

Encouraged by the fact they now have a platform to air their escapades, a new breed of DIY stunt men with a 'Jackass'-style ethic are also posting videos of their stunts and dares on MySpace under the indie-sports label. Hailing from Stamford, Lincolnshire, Colin Furze is notorious for creating the world's largest bonfire and a DIY 18-metre-high wheel of death made of wooden pallets which he spectacularly rode on a moped. Meanwhile, 19-year-old Andi Briggs from Stoke-On-Trent is the UK's very own incarnation of 'Jackass', with a plethora of new stunts and clips constantly uploaded onto MySpace TV.

- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LONDONROLLERGIRLS
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BRICKLANEBIKEPOLO
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TUBECHANCING
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TRIXIECHICS
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FREERUNNING
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LDMPARKOUR
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/COLINFURZE
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BRIGGZY11
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DAREDEVILSWITHEDEATHWISH

Knittens

MySpace has been a boon for people with unfashionable or unusual hobbies, allowing them to unite with fellow 'believers'. For example, a new breed of young, funky, mainly but not entirely female, devotees of knitting have found a home on MySpace to share their skills, unite with fellow knitters and form local clubs. According to our PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB respondents, the trend is so popular that variants have emerged ranging from Stitch'n'Bitch, Go-Girls and pirate knitting clubs to Women's Institute and traditional sewing/knitting club knitters.

KnittingLeeds is currently running an extreme knitting project that challenges knitters to construct an alternative vision of the city in wool. Knitters have been asked to 'challenge the developers' high-rise visions with ideas of the city's spaces and shapes' and to use their imagination to either design or knit a building. The works will eventually be displayed in an exhibition in Armley Mills in Leeds.

- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KNITTINGCREW
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IKNITLONDON
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HACKNEYKNITTINGCLUB
- WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KNITTINGLEEDS

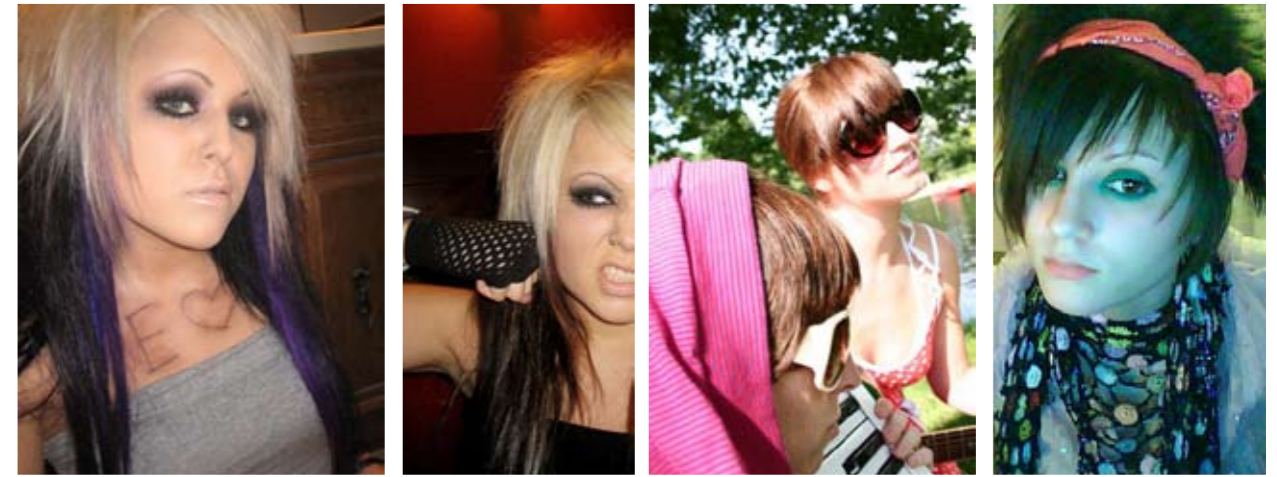
In tandem with a number of new trends emerging for 2008, we are likewise witnessing the emergence of new tribes.

Tribal Forms : 45

Slash/Slash Kids, Double Dressers, Mindies, Urban Bikers, Tea Cake Tuesday Boys and Alt.blacks are among the key music, fashion and lifestyle tribes set to make a significant impact during 2008

Tribal Forms

MySpace is a riot of new and experimental fashion styles, largely fuelled by the explosion of what we call Rolodex Teens who rifle through bygone eras, some as recent as five years ago, for cultural inspiration and create a constantly evolving mish mash of looks. What starts with one or two individuals can soon blossom into a full-blown trend, as we witnessed last year with the mainstream explosion of Nu-rave. Here are a few of the many new looks currently simmering on MySpace and which are set to appear in a club, store or bar near you in 2008.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
CHEEMO DANIELLE, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DANIELLESOMETHING;
RUDETTE DON'T CAN DJ, WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DONTCANDJ;
RUDETTE THE UNORMAL EMO,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEUNORMALEMO;
PUNK'D DANDY TOM,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BOBBYSHAFTOE;
PUNK'D DANDY MAX,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LOMTICKSOFTOAST

Cheemo

An emerging look for adolescent/early teens is the cheemo, a chav/emo hybrid that combines the goth-like make up and skinny jeans of emos with the oversized gold jewellery, sportswear (mainly velour hoodies and matching pants) and brutally straightened hair of a chav. Yes, you read it here first.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEUNORMALEMO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DANIELLESOMETHING
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HOTTRASHLISA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YENNYBEAN
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RUMISNOTFORBURNING

Rudettes

Lilly Allen has a lot to answer for in spreading this look across the UK. This is the 21st-century rude girl and she wears the clothes of an ultra-fem lady and the crass, oversized accessories of a 90s rude girl – gold hoops and chains, logo hoodies and air force trainers.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/EVIL_THUNDERCAT
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BIALAMARCA @
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEUNORMALEMO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/XXXDANNIEXXX
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DONTCANDJ

Punk'd Dandies

Dandy meets punk-indie to amazing sartorial effect. This is a younger, less time-warped, more solid interpretation of dandyism than that of the burgeoning UK burlesque scene. Only this time around, it is very male, coy and coquettish. It's Syd Barrett rather than Noël Coward, as one Punk'd Dandy revealed. 'Cravat and skinny jeans over top-to-toe tailoring; suit-wearing guitar bands trump big bands.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEREALHOTFUSS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IM_BLOOD
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THOMAASSSS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LOMTICKSOFTOAST
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BOBBYSHAFTOE

Slash/Slash Kids

Slash/Slash kids are creative multi-skills and culturpreneurs who define the DIA (Do-It-All) mindset. They don't just design clothes but style, DJ, present and act and have no qualms about self-promotion and putting their image 'out-there'.

Photo shoots are a weekly occurrence and their MySpace profiles are a constantly evolving portfolio of self-portraits and documentary style shots of them 'in action'. Kesh is a 21-year-old designer, DJ, stylist and model with a successful clothing line, Kesh Wear, a DJ career as one part of The Coconut Twins and a modelling career that already includes shoots for Vogue and Grazia.

Steve Slocombe of Super Super magazine says 'Slash/Slash Kids are the stars of tomorrow. They don't know the limitations of the old creative industries. They have an idea and just go for it. Kesh is the ultimate Slash/Slash Kid.'

Kesh – she never discloses her surname – says 'I do everything from my MySpace page. I don't know what I'd do without it. I'd probably just be sitting at home watching Oprah, wishing I was doing loads of things but not knowing how. MySpace made everything easy.'

In typical Slash/Slash style, Kesh's MySpace page groans with photographs of herself, press clippings of articles about herself and links to indie documentaries made about her life. Somehow though, and this is what makes you warm to the Slash/Slash kids, it is the indifference, excitement and enthusiasm for everything that makes them endearing and commendable, rather than smug and annoying.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THAT_GIRL_KESSHIA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXSANDOVERDRAMATICS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JLUCASARTS

Double Dressers

In a world that prizes individuality, a growing number of youths are embracing sameness – albeit of the studied and deliberate kind. What used to be every girl/boy's nightmare – accidentally wearing the same outfit as a peer – has become a contrived style statement known as 'twinning', or as we like to call it, 'Double Dressing', and is spreading throughout Asia, Europe and the US.

Richard Ascott and Phillip Colbert, founders of fashion label Rodnik's, started double dressing in trademark matching bowler hats to create a respectable uniform for their brand. Amy Harrison and Antonya Allen, 24 and 25 respectively and both web presenters, started the double dressing look after turning up for university on the first day of term to find they were both identically dressed. 'Rather than be freaked out,' says Amy, 'we decided to embrace it and after a couple of years it just became natural. You could say double dressing was the foundation of our friendship and now we probably couldn't even stop if we wanted to.'

Asian fashion labels Giordano, Baleno and Samuel and Kelvin have started capitalising on the trend by producing double dresser outfits.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AMYANTONYA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RODNIKHO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/2BROKENHEARTS

Mindies

These under-18 indie fans are as earnest, dedicated and passionate about their music of choice as their elder indie counterparts, if not more so. Free from the distractions of sex, drugs and alcohol, the scene focuses purely on the music. They love the more-established indie groups, but this tribe's real heroes are their similarly aged peers in teen bands such as Pull In Emergency, Kid 4077, Forty Fives, Lion Club and US alternative punk/garage duo Tiny Masters.

They are avid attendees of underage parties and will travel across the UK to get to events hosted by promoters such as The Underage Club and local weekly parties such as Generation at Wolverhampton's City Hall and Same Teens at Manchester Contact Theatre. Mindies will mature in step with their idols, so watch as this generation seizes the reigns and takes control of the charts.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PULLINEMERGENCY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FORTYFIVES
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNDERAGE_CLUB
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LIONCLUB
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KID4077
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TINYMASTERS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ELPOLICIA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SAMETEENSMANCHESTER



ABOVE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
DOUBLE DRESSERS, PHOTOGRAPHY BY GILES PRICE;
MINDIES, PHOTOGRAPHY BY GILES PRICE;
FLYER FOR UNDERAGE CLUB,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNDERAGE_CLUB;
FLYER FOR SAME TEENS EVENT,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SAMETEENSMANCHESTER



Urban Bikers

Urban Bikers are racially mixed, inner-city bikers who blend their love of urban street culture with a passion for motorbikes. They are the antithesis of the stereotypical Hells Angels/ tourer biker scene that has dominated British motorbike culture for the last three decades.

They began their affair with bikes at an early age and progressed to sports performance bikes as soon as they were old enough. Like the status labels on their clothing, their approach to bike customisation is about 'badging' – kitting out their bikes with expensive brand name parts and accessories.

Urban riders are expected to master at least a small repertoire of stunts such as wheelies and rolling burn-outs. The customisation trends of the urban bike scene, such as all-black bikes and black peg coating, are already influencing manufacturers like Yamaha, which is now releasing bikes aping the styles originally created by urban bikers.

Supreme Riders in South London are the unofficial scene leaders, with their own dedicated team, garage, and salesroom. Since 2005 they have hosted the annual Urban Bike Fest event.

Supreme's head honcho DJ Supreme says that 'inner city kids are taking to bikes now in the same way that we did to BMWs back in the 90s. Give it five years, and this scene will be nearly as big as the mainstream biker scene.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SUPREMERIDERS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/URBANBIKEFEST
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RIDERKID
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/83862025
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUTHSIDEDOLLAR

Super Heroes Anonymous

Super Heroes Anonymous are individuals who give themselves super hero aliases and dress accordingly to become citizen 'do-gooders', crime fighters or public activists. They use MySpace as a place to communicate their mission and connect to other super heroes around the globe, and sometimes only accept friend requests from other super heroes.

Some carry out their missions within the digital world but many now extend their activities (by popular demand) out in the real world. Trained in surveillance and martial arts, Zeitgeist is a real life crime fighter whose MySpace mantra is 'I am out to further the greater good in any way I possibly can and to do the right thing, whether it is the easy option or not. I prefer to stay in the shadows and operate from a distance when tackling crime'. On the other hand, Captain Ozone, a US-based super hero and friend to many of the UK Super Heroes Anonymous, describes himself as 'the most phenomenal environmental activist of all time' due to dedicating himself to activities like 'saving endangered species, promoting renewable energy and ecological art and teaching school kids how to become environmental activists'.

Our favourite super hero, Anglegrinderman, is a digital and real world super hero who is dedicated to overpowering the 'curse' of the wheel clamp, offering to come and angle-grind clamps off vehicles to set them free.

To request his services, clamp 'victims' call the anglegrinder hotline listed on his MySpace page and leave a message 'after the grind – rmmmmhh'. On his profile, he helpfully states that during the week he works in the Kent area, moving to London at weekends.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ANGLEGRINDERMAN
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ZEITGEIST_99
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RLSH_BLACKARROW
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CAPTAIN_CHAMPION
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CAPTAINOZONE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DALZILLA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ELBASTARDOMAGNIFICO



OPPOSITE LEFT
DJ SUPREME OF SUPREME RIDERS,
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SUPREMERIDERS

OPPOSITE RIGHT
SUPERHEROES ANOMYNOUS

ABOVE
TEA CAKE TUESDAY BOYS WILL AND HENRY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEAMHENRY

Tea Cake Tuesday Boys aka Mad Hatters

Mad Hatters are local teen communities dedicated to throwing a tea party with close friends. Nostalgic, young, fogeish and cheerfully middle-class, this group is also about resisting youth stereotypes and dissociating from virtual socialising.

Their most distinguishing feature is that they have not banded together through music or fashion, but over the quirky pastime of tea-drinking.

Our favourite tea-drinking group is the Tea Cake Tuesday gang, formed by 16-year-old Henry Preen after he discovered a teashop in his hometown of York one Tuesday. After he popped in for an enjoyable brew with teen chef Sam Stern, their group of friends ran with the idea and decided that every week should have a 'Tea Cake Tuesday' when he and friends could get together in a civilised manner at local cafés or in each other's homes.

Now, thanks to word-of-MySpace, there are Tea Cake Tuesday chapters all around the UK and as far away as Madrid, Paris and Los Angeles.

The founding tribe consists of seven members, both girls and boys, who know each other socially and from school in York. Type 'tea' and 'cake' into the MySpace search engine and reams of profile listings emerge featuring teenage MySpacers who felt it necessary to express their love for tea and cake on their profile descriptions, and even more who have invited friends to meet them, rather excitedly at that, for tea and cakes.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEACAKETUESDAY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEAMHENRY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KATIEANTSEY



Green Gauges

For the Green Gauges, tribe gardening is not just a relaxation activity, it's a way of life, a political statement and means of making a stand against an increasingly desk-bound, concrete-heavy, manufacturer-dependent (as opposed to agriculture-dependent), 9am-9pm society.

They revel in teaching and sharing their gardening knowledge with novice and wannabe gardeners, particularly when it comes to growing vegetables, fruits and herbs.

They are often trained in horticulture and dream of passing on their skills to as wide a demographic of people as possible through teaching or being involved in community allotment projects.

They are our oldest tribe, with members in the mid-twenties upwards with no inter-group age discrimination.

GetPlanting urges fellow MySpacers to utilise empty ground by giving vegetable planting a go with the slogan 'When you grow your own veg, it is so much healthier than buying vegetables and you get 10 times as much, for a fraction of the price! Join us in our crusade to plant veg where we can!'

Many Green Gauges are friends of Gardenmonster, an NYC-based gardener with a talent for growing oversized vegetables, various scarecrows including Worzel Gummidge and Stanley the scarecrow – 'the UK's only blogging scarecrow' – and profiles detailing how to deal with pests such as aphids and garden slugs.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WORZELGUMMIDGE1
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/STANLEY_SCARECROW
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CRADOCKALLOTMENTS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GARDENMONSTER
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LETTUCEAPHIDS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GARDENSLUGS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GETPLANTING
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BAREFOOT_GARDENS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SODAPOPKLC
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEORGANICGARDENER
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/190480485

Alt.black

One of the most interesting groups (according to our PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB correspondents) to watch out for in 2008 are the Alt.blacks, a group which says it is rebelling against the stereotype of what it means to be black.

Traditionally, British black youth culture has been branded with an urban tag of hip-hop, soul, reggae and R'n'B. Being a black teen meant that you wore a hoodie, trainers and a cap, and your idols were 50 Cent and 2Pac or Missy Elliott and Beyoncé. Alt.black youth, on the other hand, have experienced a comparatively racism-free society (compared to their parents) and are confident of mashing their roots with current white and cross-over culture movements and genres. In effect they are saying: 'This is who I am; I am proud to be black but am proud to be different also', or 'I am a rainbow black, I am not afraid to be different'.

A good example of an Alt.black from within the mainstream is Kele Okereke, lead singer of chart-topping Bloc Party, one of the most recognisable and influential characters in the indie rock music scene

As Charles, an 18-year-old Alt.black from East London, says, 'what makes me different from other black kids is that I'm pretty urban-impaired. I can't MC, I can't dance for shit, I definitely can't pull off the slang and I dress pretty different, but I know that I am just so counter-culture.'

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DESTRUCOBEAM
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEREALHEAT
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RICHARD_SHOYEMI
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NIYI

MySpace 08 Case Studies : 55

Slash/Slash kids, online fanzines, Roller Derby Girls, MySpace magicians and 'me-brand' personalities are among the more creative groups that have used MySpace to give themselves a voice, a platform and a way to make money and their mark on culture

‘Internet stars are the next rock stars.’



Slash/Slash kid : Paul Griffiths

www.myspace.com/soundfxsandoverdramatics

Since March 2007, Paul Griffiths has created a business empire through MySpace that includes a fashion brand, a promotions company and a photography studio. This has propelled him to MySpace celebrity status where ‘teenage girls dream of meeting him while teenage boys want to be him’.

Aged just 20, he receives up to 500 friend requests a day, his Babycakes line has sold 10,000 t-shirts globally, clusters of MySpace imposters claim to be him and he’s employed his best mates and his mum to work on packing, despatching and tracking his Babycakes t-shirt line. Paul is an original member of the Slash/Slash generation.

‘In 2007 I was working in telesales and in my own time I started designing t-shirts. For my first sale I placed an order for 200 t-shirts to be printed and I’d sold all them through my MySpace page before they were back from the printers. That’s how Babycakes was born. Since then I have processed 10,000 orders across the world through my PayPal account, I’ve moved into an office – which I have nearly outgrown – and Babycakes is now stocked in stores in New York, Sydney, Manchester and Belfast,’ he says. ‘I’ve employed three of my best mates and my mum is going to quit her job to work for me.’

Griffiths has also set up Secret Parties Limited, which appears under the name ‘The Club Kids’ on MySpace. ‘We get up to 1,000 friend requests a day but only ever confirm a small number of the coolest MySpacers. If you’re a ‘Club Kid’, you get a special code for discounts on Babycakes clothing and for some club nights in Manchester.’

Griffiths has a substantial 65,000 friends, and tells us he gets up to 500 requests a day and over 1,000 messages. ‘Sometimes my sister has to help go through everything,’ he says. He also tends to get recognised at clubs or gigs but says that his celebrity status was really unintended. ‘I’d rather be known for Babycakes clothing. Quite freakily, I noticed that people were pretending to be me on their MySpace profile – I had to state that I was the real Paul Griffiths and list all the imposters on my blog.’ In many ways the imposters were a good thing, he says, since most of them were promoting Babycakes clothing, ‘but it also feels strange’, he adds.

Lovers of Babycakes often attach wallpapers and images to their MySpace page, ‘while some finish their profile name with ‘cakes’ to show their loyalty. ‘I even have a fan page with over 40,000 friends’.

Griffiths designs all of the t-shirts by hand or with Photoshop or a combination of the two. ‘I am completely self-taught,’ he says. ‘I normally design a new t-shirt a week, and everything the customer sees has been approved by me – I have complete control over the visuals and marketing of the Babycakes brand. I also model the clothes – we did cast proper models recently but it didn’t look right. I prefer the DIY, down-to-earth look.’

For 2008, he plans to launch Babycakes TV. ‘We’re going to install a webcam in our office to allow people to watch the designing and production of the clothes and speak to me and the team,’ he says, concluding that ‘Internet stars are the new rock stars’.

‘Roller Derby is a fast-paced, full-contact and exciting game and is not for the faint hearted.’



Glasgow Roller Derby Girls

www.myspace.com/glasgowrollergirls

Established in February 2007, the Glasgow Roller Derby Girls were brought together thanks to a bulletin post on MySpace and have since connected to a growing community of other leagues and teams across the UK. Now with members of all ages and backgrounds, they are part of a fast-paced all-girl contact sport that is becoming a phenomenon best described as ‘rugby on roller skates’.

Original Roller Derby Girl Scarlet, also known by her skate name Mistress Malicious, explains: ‘We are an all-women flat-track roller derby league based in Glasgow. We were the fourth league to form in the UK in February 2007 and there are now 12 leagues scattered around the country. We are a dedicated, self-taught and self-funded team of 20, aged between 18 and 45, who train twice a week.’

Roller Derby is a fast-paced, full-contact and exciting game and not for the faint-hearted. Although players tend to protect themselves by wearing helmets, knee and elbow pads, wrist guards and mouth guards, bruises and injuries are commonplace and have to be expected. The team’s MySpace profile sums it up: ‘You will get a few knocks and bumps. But take it from us, it’s well worth it!’

According to Mistress Malicious, it all began when ‘Terri Toxic’ posted a bulletin on MySpace asking if anyone was interested in forming a league in Glasgow. ‘I replied and we started from there. MySpace was the reason our league was able to form and develop so easily, even when the sport was only in its embryonic stages in the UK.’

According to the team, its MySpace page is used to spread the word about roller derby and the league across the UK. Regular updates are delivered on team news and training sessions, and the site is likewise used to recruit new players and coaches and to showcase videos of training sessions.

It is, they say, a sport with a punk rock ethic where every roller derby player has a nickname based on their character. ‘Mine is Mistress Malicious and many of our members use their roller derby name on their MySpace profile.’

MySpace has also meant the team can keep in touch with roller girls in the US, where the sport enjoys mainstream success. ‘We have had a number of US pros come over and take part in games and training sessions.’

The team also uses MySpace to see what is going in other leagues. All their top friends are longer established leagues like the Bedford Bandits and the London Roller Derby Girls.

‘We have reached the stage where we can ‘bout’ in public – the first two UK bouts (or matches) were held this year. We feel we will be ready to bout in the New Year and plan to organise our own public bout, as well as compete at others across the UK. MySpace will be central to us doing this.’



MySpace Profile

Location:
Glasgow

URL:
www.myspace.com/glasgowrollergirls

Number of Friends:
911

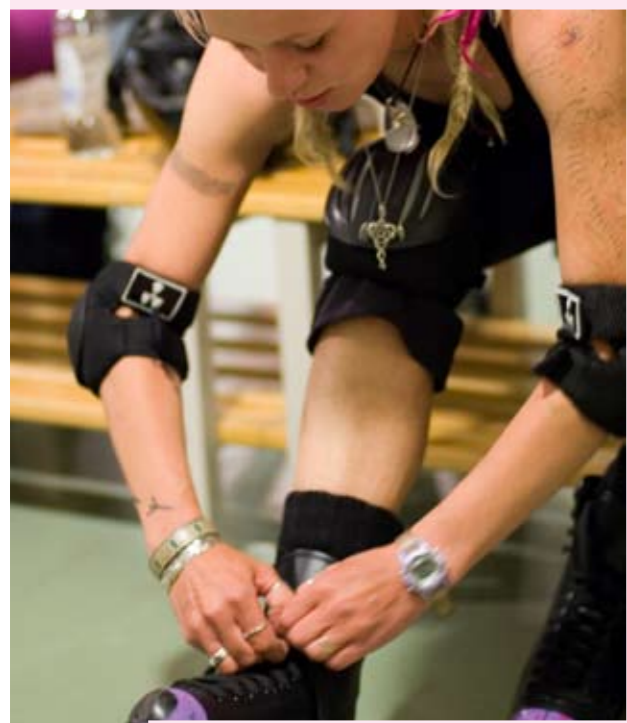
Members Since:
January 2007

In One Word:
Essential

Current Mood:
Energetic

Profile Track:
Lets Do It by Tank Girls Delite

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/irelandrollerderby
www.myspace.com/londonrockinrollers
www.myspace.com/londonrollergirls
www.myspace.com/bedfordbandits
www.myspace.com/svrollergirlz
www.myspace.com/aberdeen_aces
www.myspace.com/centralcityrollergirls
www.myspace.com/leedsderbydolls



‘My USP is how real and down-to-earth I am, so MySpace is obviously a key way to communicate with fans and media alike.’



Liam Walsh

www.myspace.com/walshmagic

Spotted on MySpace TV channel NutsTV, Liam Walsh is well on the way to success as one of the UK's most exciting urban street magicians.

Showcasing his unique magic skills to the beats and styles of the UK hip-hop and grime scene, he is already the face of the 'Del Perro' fashion brand and a regular on both Sky TV and MTV, and is in major talks with other media organisations.

But that's just the beginning. Aged only 18, Liam Walsh is building his own business empire through management and merchandising, helped by the business skills he's still learning at college and, of course, his MySpace profile.

'I've been into magic for about four years,' he says. 'I picked it up really quickly. Some people say that they can't believe how good my skills are considering the amount of time I have been practising.'

Inspired by David Blaine, Walsh tells us he loved his tricks 'but wasn't keen on his style'. So Walsh has adopted his own look and feel that is streetwise English and slightly cocky, with tricks that revolve around reacting to beats, 'where all my shufflings are in time with music'.

At college he studied photography, communication studies, psychology and digital imagery – all of which allowed him to better understand and fine-tune 'my magic and use these skills in my performances'. Now a second year student, he is doing a double A-level business course which he says allows him to develop and hone his marketing techniques and skills.

He also has his own talent agency, called Hustler Management, which he plans to use to export his talents to the US and Europe, and is planning his own range of merchandise which will include a clothing label and personalised decks of cards and DVDs.

His philosophy and business plan are simple. 'I want to be known for being the only magician who doesn't rely on other people and has a strong business mind. Considering I have developed so much in four years, I am encouraged to carry on and become the best.'

MySpace and other social networking sites are, he tells us, a goldmine. 'Many magicians still believe in a b*****t approach where they have to be mysterious and detached from the real world. My USP is how real and down-to-earth I am, so MySpace is obviously a key way to communicate with fans and media alike.'

'MySpace has taught me that anyone can become something if he put himself out there, make the most of the technology available and is not afraid of embracing new media.'

Street Magician with Complete Precautions

Street Magician with Complete Precautions's Latest Blog Entry: Contributor to the Mag...
 20 December '07 - MTV Awards (Join here)
 20 December '07 - Live With us on MTV (Join here)
 20 December '07 - Featured on mtv.com (Join here)
 20 September '07 - Cat Fanciers' Club by TotalMagician (Join here)
 20 September '07 - Ball Game 2007 by TotalMagician (Join here)
 (View All Blog Entries)

View vidz View picz

about.

Liam Walsh, The name of magic is being the UK's top street magician and a huge part of his success is his ability to make his audience feel like they are part of the show. He has been performing for over 10 years and has a huge following. He has been featured on MTV, BBC, and many other TV channels. He has also written a book called 'The Art of Magic' and is currently working on his second book. He is a very talented and creative magician who has made a name for himself in the UK and is now performing in many other countries.

connect with liam walsh

ebo
 YouTube
 facebook
 friendster
 hi5
 galleries
 Nuts tv
 del paro touch magazine
 drop beats not bombs
 ministry of sound
 liza beach party
 cyril & tony base music premiere
 bustled park hotel
 talk pos
 chaos of freaks
 artwork

Street Magician by Liam P
 This is a featured article from MYPAGE.com
 "Liam Walsh, 28 and already being called by the name of 'The UK's top street magician', is a name that is well known to many. He has been performing for over 10 years and has a huge following. He has been featured on MTV, BBC, and many other TV channels. He has also written a book called 'The Art of Magic' and is currently working on his second book. He is a very talented and creative magician who has made a name for himself in the UK and is now performing in many other countries."

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MySpace Profile

Age: 18

Location: Brighton

URL: www.myspace.com/walshmagic

Number of Friends: 28,536

Members Since: Few years

In One Word: Goldmine ;)

Profile Track: It's my song by Leon P, he wrote and dedicated a track for me!

Log in: Everyday

Access Point: Home, college, phone, mates' houses, anywhere

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/walshmanagement
www.myspace.com/mark_077
www.myspace.com/sussone
www.myspace.com/keeleyp
www.myspace.com/leonphillips
www.myspace.com/sophblondie
www.myspace.com/leslash
www.myspace.com/nutstv



‘The talent we use comes from all around the world thanks to the global reach of MySpace. There’s no point in being a British publication and sticking to British contributors.’



MySpace publishing : Fever Zine

www.myspace.com/feverzine

The global reach of MySpace means that Fever Zine, despite its size and lo-fi style, has a universal appeal and readership as well as a global network of contributors in the form of writers, illustrators and photographers. Editor Alex Zamora describes Fever Zine as ‘an A5 printed quarterly black and white, lo-fi mixture of music, art, fashion, zine culture and other random bits’.

‘I’ve always been geared towards creativity and new talent,’ says Zamora. ‘Fever is the perfect place for me to cover and collaborate with this new talent and MySpace is the perfect place to find it.’

Zamora says he doesn’t believe in cliques and likes to explore different groups both on the web and in real life. Some of the most fascinating work is ‘lo-fi’ and ‘undiscovered’, he says. Like Fever, this work isn’t highly polished or done to incredibly high production values, but the talent shines through nevertheless, he says. His MySpace page reflects the lo-fi attitude his magazine embraces. It contains an animated GIF of issue 2’s contents and a slide show for each issue and is constantly added to and updated.

‘Other MySpace users love what we do. We’re constantly bombarded with requests to collaborate or to feature people’s work. I think we’re a lot more approachable on MySpace. A big fancy Flash-driven website can sometimes be seen as intimidating; people view us as more down-to-earth. We’d rather have Fever’s main hub on the MySpace network than isolated on its own.’

The ability to appear global but act with a very local, very lo-fi and cut-and-paste ethic is, he says, the path to success for many fanzines on the web. But so too is the power of being able to connect with so many people in an intimate, informal and easy manner. ‘The talent we use comes from all around the world thanks to the global reach of MySpace. There’s no point in being a British publication and sticking to British contributors. It’d be like watching the internet in black and white. We’re small compared to 90% of magazines out there, but we’re global and we’re accessible and approachable.’

‘People love interacting with us. We get blog comments, bulletin replies, photo comments and image and text comments. Some do it to get our attention, but most of the time they do it out of curiosity. We always reply to people and make sure they know exactly what we are (a zine rather than a magazine). We make sure people are aware of that and 99% of the time that’s the attraction.’

‘Thanks to MySpace we were spotted by Grafik Magazine who covered us in November 2007’s issue. They said ‘anyone worth their salt on MySpace was into Fever.’ Now that’s praise indeed.’

FEVER ZINE

ISSUE 2 OUT NOW

FEVER ZINE IS HARD AT WORK ON ISSUE 3!

FEVER ZINE's Latest Blog Entry (Subscribe to this blog)

NEWS OF MUSIC, ART, ARTICLES ON FEVER (view more)

FEVER PRODUCTION BLOG ONLY FOR FEVER (view more)

FEVER ORDER ISSUE 3 (view more)

FEVER IN GAYBY MAGAZINE (view more)

ISSUE 2 | FEVER BOOKS IN LONDON + PRINCETON (view more)

(View All Blog Entries)

2. FEVER ZINE'S INSIDE

ABOUT US

PRINTED QUARTERLY IN ALL BLACK + WHITE, FEVER IS A LIT PEPERAGE OF MUSIC, ART, FASHION, ZINE CULTURE AND OTHER RANDOM BITS.

THANKS TO THE GLOBAL REACH OF PROPRIO OUR WRITERS, ILLUSTRATORS + PHOTOGRAPHERS COME FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

WE'RE IN CONTACT WITH A LOT OF PEOPLE IN A SMALL, REAL WORLD, BUT WE'RE ALWAYS HUNTING FOR NEW STORIES, NEW READERS AND MORE CONTRIBUTORS. IF YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED JUST SEND US A MESSAGE!

CONTENTS

ISSUE 2 (24 PAGES)

- A look inside the '90s B. King
- An interview with an artist who's a writer from Montreal
- New photography, illustration, writing + graphic design
- How long gets tough on CBS, Warner and The Rolling
- We go back to the future
- The rise and fall of street style blogs
- LONDON'S MOST IMPORTANT ARTISTS
- Another digital artist in Paris | Steve Schmitt | Timothy McManis

AND MORE

TO BUY A COPY OF ISSUE 3 CLICK HERE.

ISSUE 3 (24 PAGES)

- David Byrne Colouring Our Imagination with a Blue Pen
- The struggle of singer DJ Cole, Amy Clark &
- Photography by Melissa Mead and Craig Clouting
- Children artist Robert's Wu reimagines
- New artists alternative to pop
- Illustrations by Matty Wright and Scott Blomster
- Unpopular's 'Good' that DJ's De Paul on how it all began
- James Double's music scene on the inside with young love
- AN ARTIST'S GUIDE TO PARIS | KIM SHAM | TIMOTHY MCMANIS and lots of other stuff!

FEVER ZINE'S CONTRIBUTORS

ANDY COUNCIL ILLUSTRATOR

GRAND COVING PHOTOGRAPHER

HR BRAD ILLUSTRATOR

METRO-URB ILLUSTRATOR

NET FASHION PHOTOGRAPHER

SEANA KEDDINGER WRITER

PAULA ROYEN PHOTOGRAPHER

WILSON KUYPER ILLUSTRATOR

BARBARA LEE WRITER

FRANK MCKENNA WRITER

TEJ MURRAY WRITER

MARTIN KUPPER ILLUSTRATOR

PETE SMILEY WRITER

CHUCK TAYLOR WRITER

ARLON WALKER ILLUSTRATOR

BRUCE WATSON WRITER

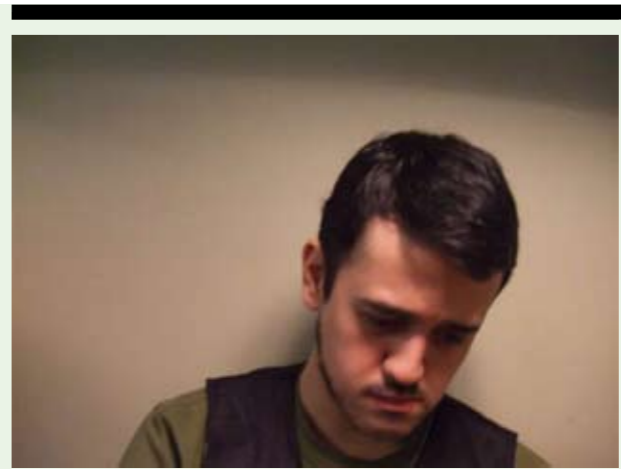
ANTHONY WOODMAN ILLUSTRATOR

FEVER ZINE'S Details

Genre: Zine

Body type: Girl

Build: Slim



FEVER

MySpace Profile

URL:
www.myspace.com/feverzine

Number of Friends:
Just over 5,000, they're all vetted too

Members Since:
November 2006

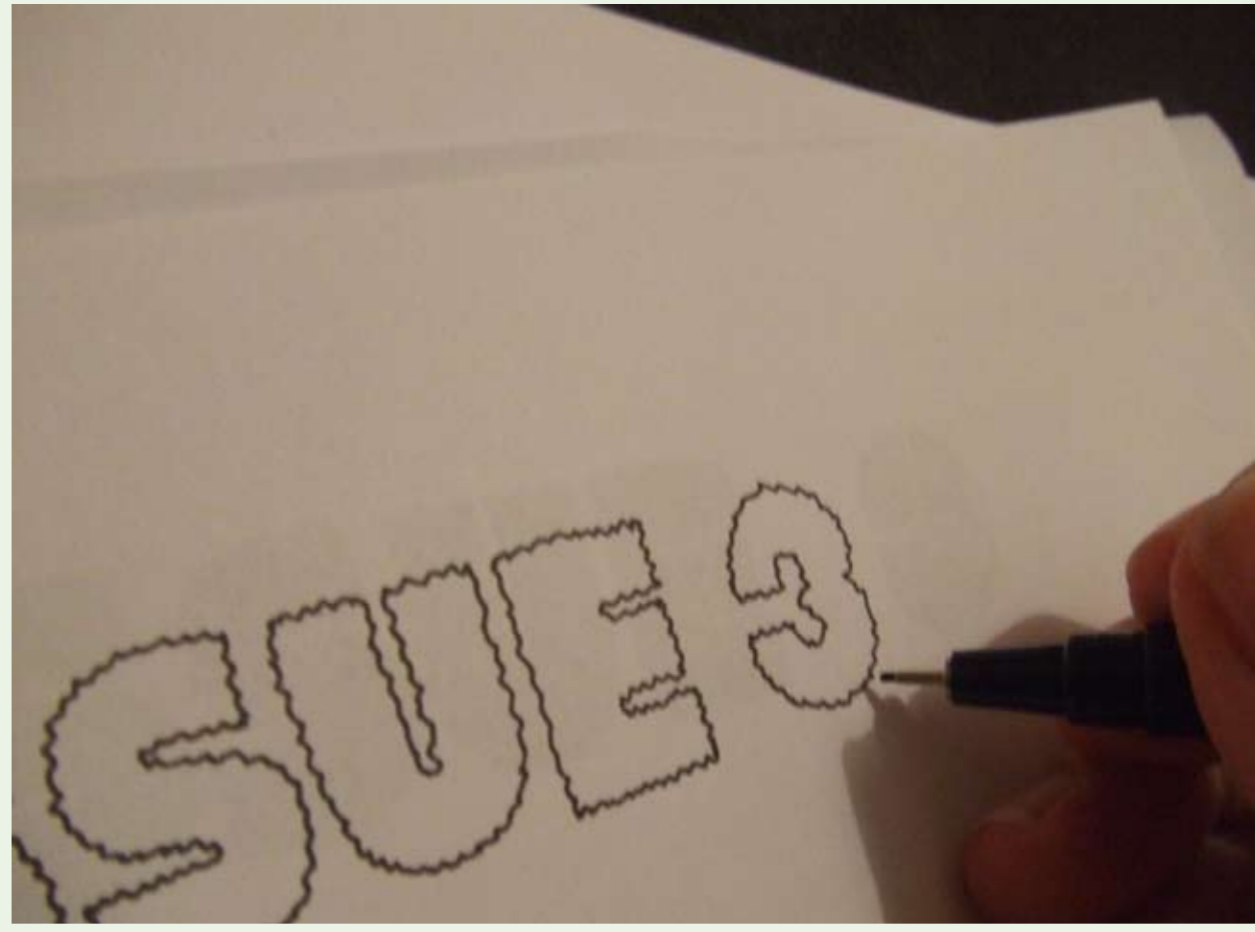
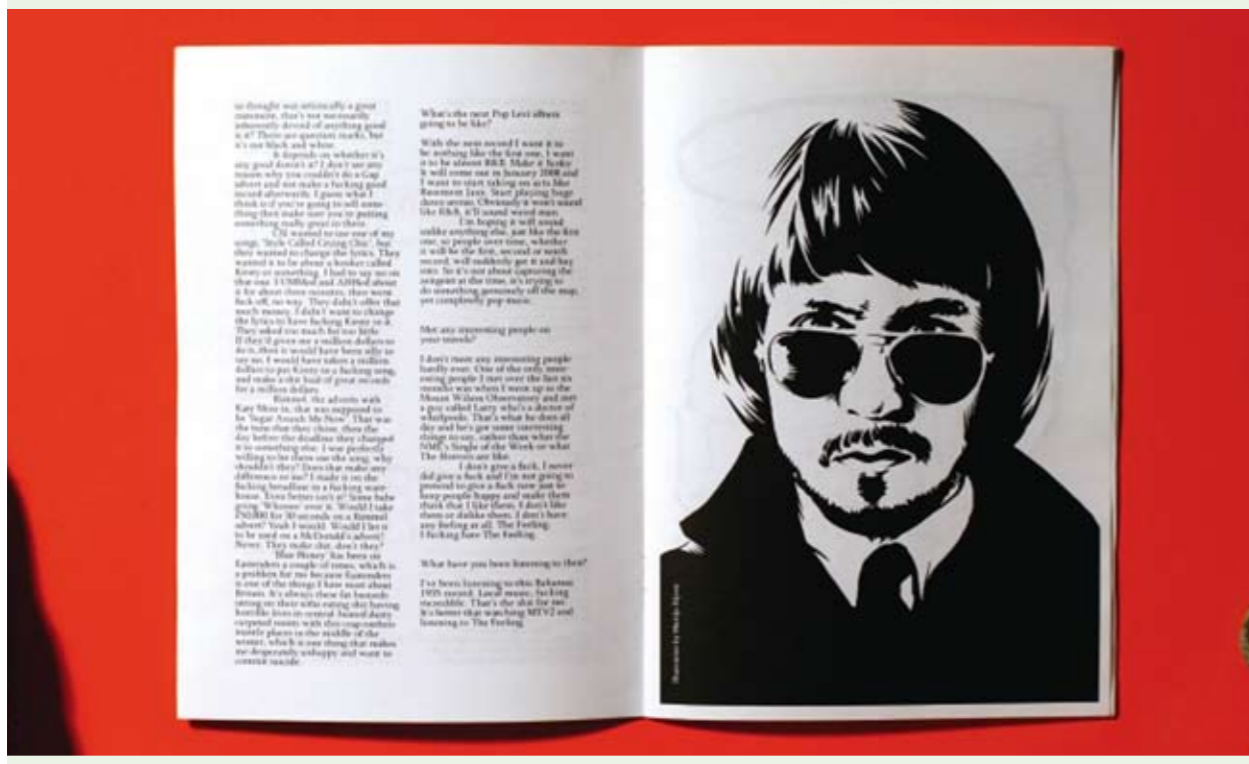
Current Mood:
Happy

Profile Track:
Sugar Assault Me Now by Pop Levi

Log in:
About six times a day

Access Point:
Home, work & internet café

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/boltgraphics
www.myspace.com/dumpme
www.myspace.com/ihgtw
www.myspace.com/suckart
www.myspace.com/hardlyeverontheground
www.myspace.com/icamusic
www.myspace.com/likandneon
www.myspace.com/microzine



‘What makes us different from other dance acts is that we have championed our own sound using a combination of circuit-bent toys, 8-bit samples and high-speed dance, which we have satirically called Toystep.’



Party Shank

www.myspace.com/partyshank

The pioneers of Toystep, Partyshank have generated an international MySpace fan base and have turned down offers from a number of record labels in favour of going it alone.

They sell their EP and t-shirts on their MySpace page and their 2008 MySpace calendar of gigs reads like a world tour as the duo move from Tunbridge Wells to Venice before attacking the US.

‘We are more of a musical project than a ‘duo’, our music style often falls under the umbrella of dance, they tell us. But what makes us different from other dance acts is that we have championed our own sound using a combination of circuit-bent toys, 8-bit samples and high-speed dance, which we have satirically called Toystep.’

To create their unique sound, they use toys that have been mass-produced for next-to-nothing from plastic moulded parts. ‘The reaction to our music has been great. We are both a little insane so the music we’ve created is pretty understandable,’ they say. ‘But somehow other people from all over the world have also enjoyed it and want us to share it with them.’

MySpace is, they say, the simplest, fastest and cheapest way of communicating their work to a seemingly limitless amount of people. ‘The fact that promoters from all around the world can hear our music and contact us has resulted in us playing gigs in countries we’ve never even been to before, let alone dreamt of playing in.’

In terms of collecting friends, they say they do not accept bands unless they receive personal messages from them, are actually friends with them, or like them a lot. ‘This gives us a more accurate representation of our fan base.’

‘Recently, we ran a competition on MySpace to find a band to play with us at our next event. We were able to make the decision without even leaving the house’.

Their proudest MySpace moment came when they were messaged by dance act ‘Justice’ (www.myspace.com/etjusticepourtous). ‘They told us they were opening every set they played with our electro track ‘Penis Vs. Vagina’. We were then sent a YouTube video of them playing it to 10,000 people.’



PARTYSHANK CHRISTMAS PARTY 22ND DECEMBER

FRANKMUSIK DJ just added!

Click the cover to order the Gary EP

1. Gary
2. Gary Remix
3. Steve
4. My heart steels for you but more importantly my shin is fractured

Click the cover to order the Penis Vs. Vagina T

- A. Penis Vs. Vagina
- AA. Seton

PARTYSHANK CHRISTMAS PARTY THIS SATURDAY 22ND!!!

BR+TUBE! NEWX/NEWX GATE

ANYTHING CANT HAPPEN BOYS CLUB

NEW X INN 2PM 323 NEW CROSS ROAD NEWCROSS LONDON!

WIZARDS £3

FREE GIFT TO FIRST LOT IN!

XMAS 22 GIG DEC

FRANKMUSIK DJ just added!

Click the cover to order the Gary EP

1. Gary
2. Gary Remix
3. Steve
4. My heart steels for you but more importantly my shin is fractured

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FREE GIFT TO FIRST LOT IN!

XMAS 22 GIG DEC



PARTYSHANK

← BANDS →

THE WALK OF SHANK

I HAUNT WIZARDS £3

↓ DJ'S ↓

NEW X INN 2PM

ANYTHING CANT HAPPEN BOYS CLUB

323 NEW CROSS ROAD NEWCROSS LONDON!

BR+TUBE! NEWX/NEWX GATE

BUS → 45, 453, 436, 177, 171, 36, 21, 136, 225, 321, 453

XMAS 22 GIG DEC

FREE GIFT TO FIRST LOT IN!

MySpace Profile

URL:
www.myspace.com/partyshank

Number of Friends:
 14,093

Members Since:
 23/11/2006

In One Word:
 Communication

Current Mood:
 Playful

Profile Track:
 Gary by Partyshank

Log in:
 Daily

Access Point:
 The studio or home

Top Friends:

- www.myspace.com/partyshankremixes
- www.myspace.com/iwillshankyouforapenny
- www.myspace.com/partysausagemusic
- www.myspace.com/frankmusik
- www.myspace.com/art_war
- www.myspace.com/holdfastdjs
- www.myspace.com/tapedeckdjs
- www.myspace.com/boomthecat



‘MySpace’s uniqueness has pushed my creative boundaries. It breaks conformity of expression by simply allowing for showmanship in the virtual realm. ‘Have you checked my MySpace page’ is an expression that helps put you out there.’



MagicPass

www.myspace.com/magicpass

With MySpace as the backbone of the project, MagicPass hopes to harness the international network of established urban music artists and producers and create a chain of music for charity. Founded by long-time folk-hip-hop music producer Nico Rayner, from Warrington, MagicPass aims to raise money for Oxfam through a musical chain of what Nick calls ‘one beat, one track, one word, one rap’.

‘I have been involved in the music industry since the age of 16,’ says Rayner. ‘From VJing at club nights I have moved on to produce music, run club nights and DJ. My musical skills run from drum-and-bass to tango and hip-hop.’

Now 27, he’s always looking for something ‘that hasn’t been done before’, which is how and why he came up with the idea of MagicPass.

‘For MagicPass, I will send an Akai MPC4000 digital recording device to a global chain of music producers invited and connected through MySpace. Each producer or artist in the chain will be required to leave a beat or a track or a rap on the device before passing it on.’

When the un-composed MPC4000 device returns home, his challenge will be to compose the music into a fresh and exciting compilation – after which the final piece will be available to buy to raise money for the charity Oxfam.

‘Essentially, I wanted to challenge the boundaries of communication through music. Thanks to MySpace, MagicPass shows how we can work together without the constraints of location. With different locations and musical influences at the heart of the project, the results will push both creative and cultural boundaries.’

MySpace is, he says, an extension of ‘my portrayal of identity’, giving him a free platform on which to develop friendships, professional work and ideas like MagicPass. ‘MySpace’s uniqueness has pushed my creative boundaries. It breaks conformity of expression by simply allowing for showmanship in the virtual realm. ‘Have you checked my MySpace page’ is an expression that helps put you out there.’



magicpass



magicpass's Friend Space
magicpass has 48 friends.

Catskills Records	Madlib	BigBoomProject	Mark Ronson
saul williams	Kaimbr	Ty	Questlove
Freddie Cruger aka Red Astaire	Diesler	Benjamin Zephaniah	will.i.am
Stephen Marley	Cvt Chemist	Wayne Loze	Coldcut
DJ VADIM - new cd out now!	DJ Shadow	Damon Albarn	The Hook Up

MySpace Profile

URL:
www.myspace.com/magicpass

Number of Friends:
44

Members Since:
04/11/2007

In One Word:
Communication!

Current Mood:
Grateful

Profile Track:
Currently under construction

Log in:
Daily

Access Point:
Home

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/catskillsrecords
www.myspace.com/madlib
www.myspace.com/markronson
www.myspace.com/saulwilliams
www.myspace.com/kaimbr
www.myspace.com/tyandupwards
www.myspace.com/questlove
www.myspace.com/redastaire



“People now stop me on the streets and ask ‘are you that guy... and so on?’”



Richard Shoyemi

www.myspace.com/richard_shoyemi

Richard Shoyemi has become an exciting young name in the world of fashion, working between London, Paris and New York on magazines like *Noir*, *Italian Vogue*, *WAD* and *Japanese Vogue*. Not content with simply being behind the camera, his MySpace profile has become pivotal to his growing celebrity status as a brand in his own right.

‘I have been working for three years as a fashion stylist and in the future I would like my own artist management, media house, a high-end fashion brand and my own airline,’ says Shoyemi. ‘I believe you can achieve anything in this world if you just believe.’

At 17, he was the winner of London’s Young Fashion Designer Awards 04/05. Now aged 20, he has worked on a number of high-end fashion shoots, as well as with music artists like Shystie, Lisa Mafia and Booty Love.

Meeting people, MySpace and listening to music are, he says, the real influences on his work and have given him a unique fashion and styling mindset. ‘I’m currently hooked on asymmetrical lines matched with a love of gritty, dark, underground music. The scenery is also key – I want to be able to argue concepts and colours and put rebellious energy into a shoot.’

For him, MySpace is about personal exposure and he uses his page and profile, he says, ‘less for developing and networking my creative work and more for exposing and growing Richard Shoyemi the brand’.

‘People now stop me in the street and ask ‘are you that guy... and so on?’ I also get given lots of free stuff from high-end designers for me to wear in an endorsement of their brand, design or label. They are essentially buying into me as a person as well as a talent, which all comes from my celebrity status on MySpace.’

Shoyemi also uses his MySpace blog to show a different side of him. Here he publishes poems and expresses his feelings. The site, he says, is also a great place to receive positive feedback about his work from fans. One recent message said ‘I saw you on MTV and was like ‘hey, he’s great!’... you make me want to be a fashion stylist’.

‘Such comments are very rewarding, so I accept anyone to be my friend. I feel in order to expand as a brand it’s important to reach out to all; everyone who expresses interest in me is important in my eyes.’



MySpace Profile

Location:
London

URL:
www.myspace.com/richard_shoyemi

Number of Friends:
2,010

Members Since:
December 05

In One Word:
Freedom

Current Mood:
Excited

Profile Track:
No One by Alicia Keys

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/spittingvicar
www.myspace.com/jdragsregular
www.myspace.com/danielbrownstreet
www.myspace.com/mighty_mo_vidz
www.myspace.com/chantellefddy
www.myspace.com/hattiecollins
www.myspace.com/dopestfella
www.myspace.com/princessereta



‘We have a unique gritty style. When we make a video we tailor this style to the band and the image they want to portray with their music.’



H&H Productions

www.myspace.com/musicvideosuk

Video production duo H&H have been using MySpace in a ‘talent swap’ to build their portfolio of video work. Choosing their favourite local band they then create a music video for them, free-of-charge.

Alternative music label Ninja Tune have earmarked them as a music video production company to look out for in the future. After one look at their work on MySpace, Ninja’s general manager Simon Skevington tipped them as future Ninja Tune music video makers.

‘We started H&H Productions as a music video company in November 2006,’ says Jon Hurdall, one half of the team. ‘We’d always dreamed of making music videos professionally, both of us having backgrounds in commercial media channels and film editing. We created our first video for a competition and published it on MySpace.’

Since then, the duo has been building a portfolio of work by sourcing local bands on MySpace and making music videos for them for free. These include Viva High Rollers (www.myspace.com/thevivaighrollers) and Darlings of the Split Screens (www.myspace.com/darlingsofthesplitscreen).

‘We have a unique gritty style. When we make a video we tailor this style to the band and the image they want to portray with their music.’

For them, making a video is like being on a creative rollercoaster. ‘Ideas develop and alter constantly and you have to listen to the track hundreds of times to really gauge what you need to shoot and where.’

‘MySpace is such an easy way to publish our videos online and it immediately gave us scope to show them to everyone we know and the whole MySpace community. Every time we create a new video we add it to our profile because it’s easy to do and there seems to be a better compression/quality ratio. We even link our videos from MySpace TV as our main host to our own company website, www.HandH.tv.’

Like a growing number of social networking members, they are increasingly careful about the friends they choose. ‘We like to look at our friends and actually know who they are. Our top friends are our favourite bands or bands we have done videos for. It’s a great way to keep in contact with past clients and also to snoop on what they are up to!’

‘It is a really exciting time for H&H Productions, we are pushing forward and nearing our ultimate goal of making professional videos. With a little help from MySpace, hopefully it won’t be too far away!’



MySpace profile

Location:
Sheffield

URL:
www.myspace.com/musicvideosuk

Number of Friends:
30 (we're pretty picky)

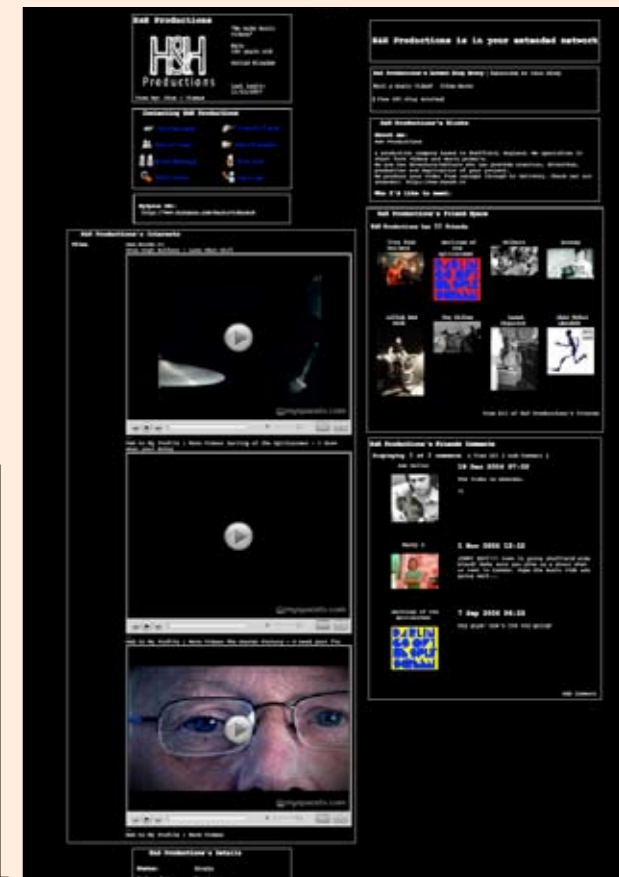
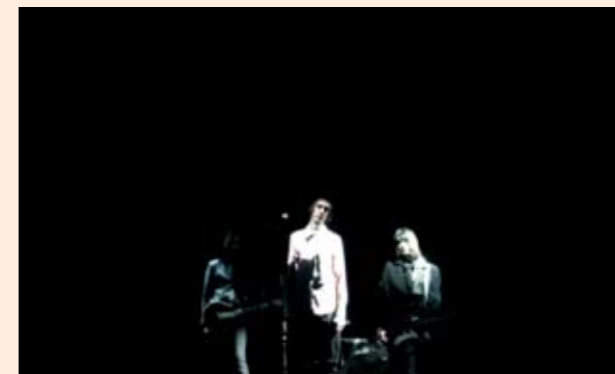
Members Since:
October 2006

In One Word:
Exposure

Current Mood:
Excited

Profile Track:
N/A

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/thevivahighrollers
www.myspace.com/darlingsofthesplitscreen
www.myspace.com/milburnmusic
www.myspace.com/stoneystuff
www.myspace.com/littlemantatemusic
www.myspace.com/therifles
www.myspace.com/hazelfigurine
www.myspace.com/deadworldleaders



‘MySpace has given us a chance to show people worldwide a scene that is really growing and allows us to speak to urban bikers and stunters around the world.’



DJ Supreme from Supreme Riders

www.myspace.com/supremeriders

Supreme Riders are at the helm of a tribe of urban bikers who are growing worldwide with a little help from MySpace. Leading the urban pack of ‘modded’ super bike fans is DJ Supreme, who set up Supreme Riders and the Urban Bike Festival to fuse his passion for urban music with a love of fast motorbikes.

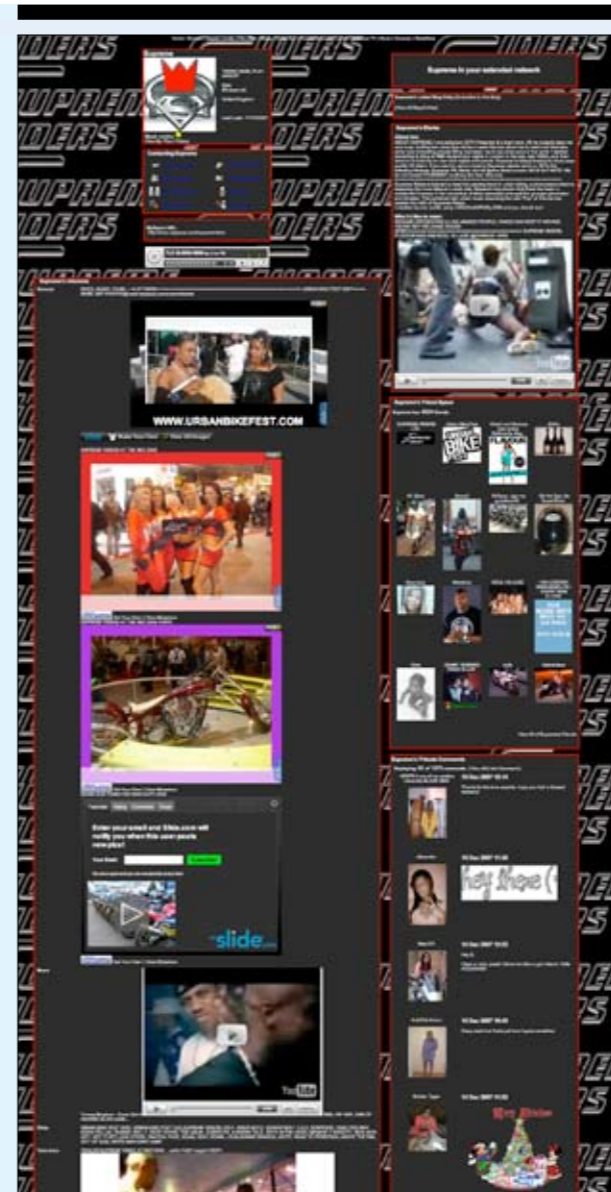
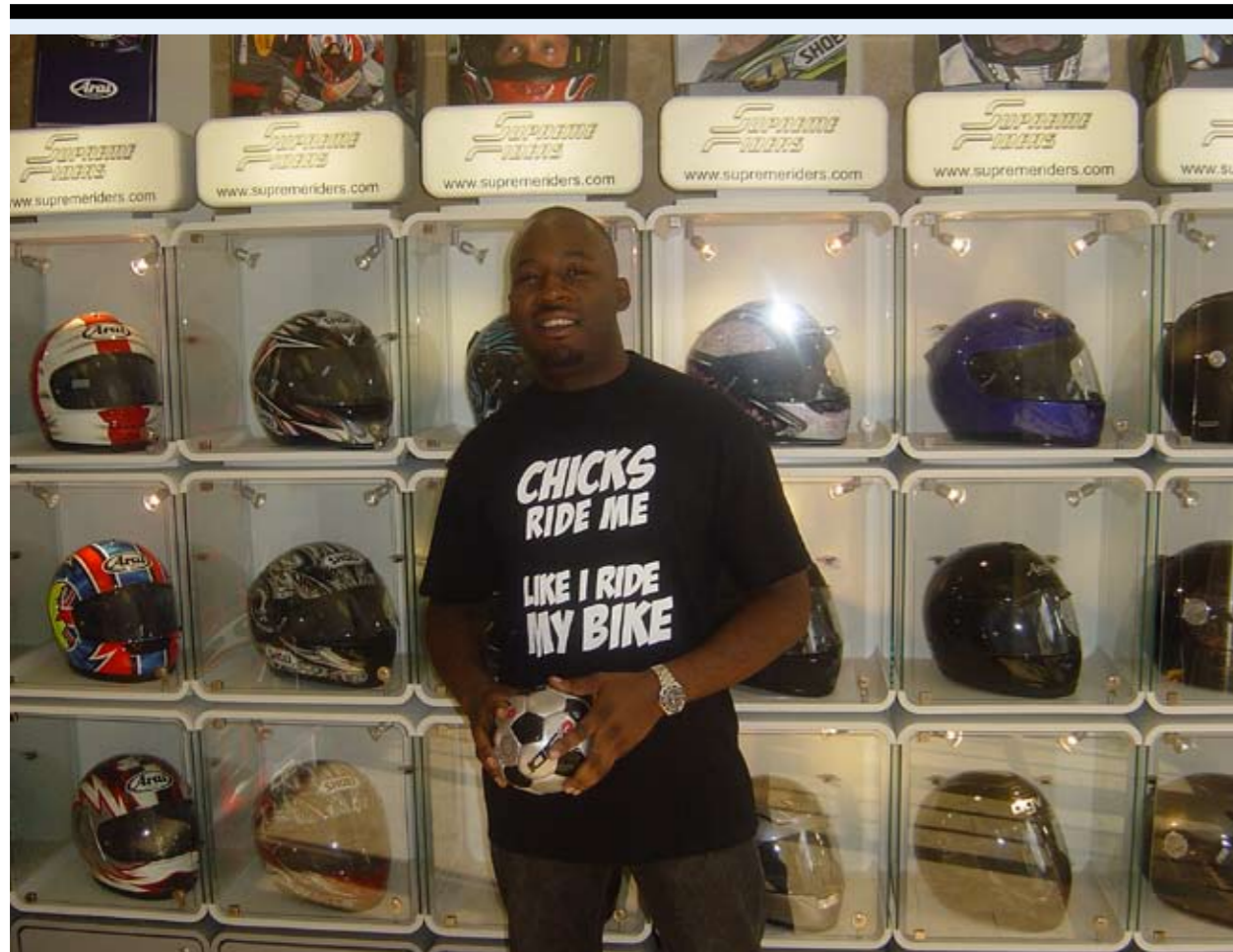
‘I am a club and radio DJ and TV presenter, which keeps me busy as I host two primetime shows every week,’ says DJ Supreme. ‘I have been lucky to DJ all around the world since the late 90s, mainly playing R’n’B, hip-hop and garage and running different club nights. I then wanted to fuse my interest in music and urban culture with my love for fast bikes. So I set up Supreme Riders Limited.’

Supreme Riders Limited is a bike garage that specialises in the servicing, maintenance and repair of Suzuki and Yamaha sport bikes. ‘We tailored Supreme Riders to meet the growing trend in urban biking, a phenomenon that has been sweeping the inner cities in recent years. Research has shown that there has been a substantial increase in the ownership of bikes among women and the younger generation. We customise bikes – almost like ‘Pimp my Ride’ – and look at the engine, the finish and the airbrushing. Since our domination of the urban bike scene, we’ve started new trends and influenced manufacturers. In 2006, Yamaha started doing a jet black R1 bike, simply because of the popularity of jet black bikes in the urban bike scene.’

‘We also arrange the Urban Bike Festival. This gets the community together to compare bikes, do stunts and listen to and dance to urban music. We have videos on MySpace of the event and communicate movements in the festival to the community.’

‘MySpace has given us a chance to show people worldwide a scene that is really growing and allows us to speak to urban bikers and stunters around the world. It has also helped inspire me as people log on to my page, tell me positive things about what I am doing and, in some cases, try to help out where they can.’

MySpace has also helped spread the word about urban biking. ‘I have heard of other urban bike scenes popping up around the world,’ says DJ Supreme. ‘It’s also helping to pull the bike scene together – back in 2003, when I went to a bike festival there were very few black people. Thanks to the growing scene and our ability to communicate on MySpace, bike festivals are now full of families, fathers and kids of all races, just enjoying the scene.’



MySpace Profile

URL:
www.myspace.com/supreme riders

Number of Friends:
 4,944

Members Since:
 2006

In One Word:
 Networking

Current Mood:
 Creative

Profile Track:
 'TLC' by Sleigh Ride

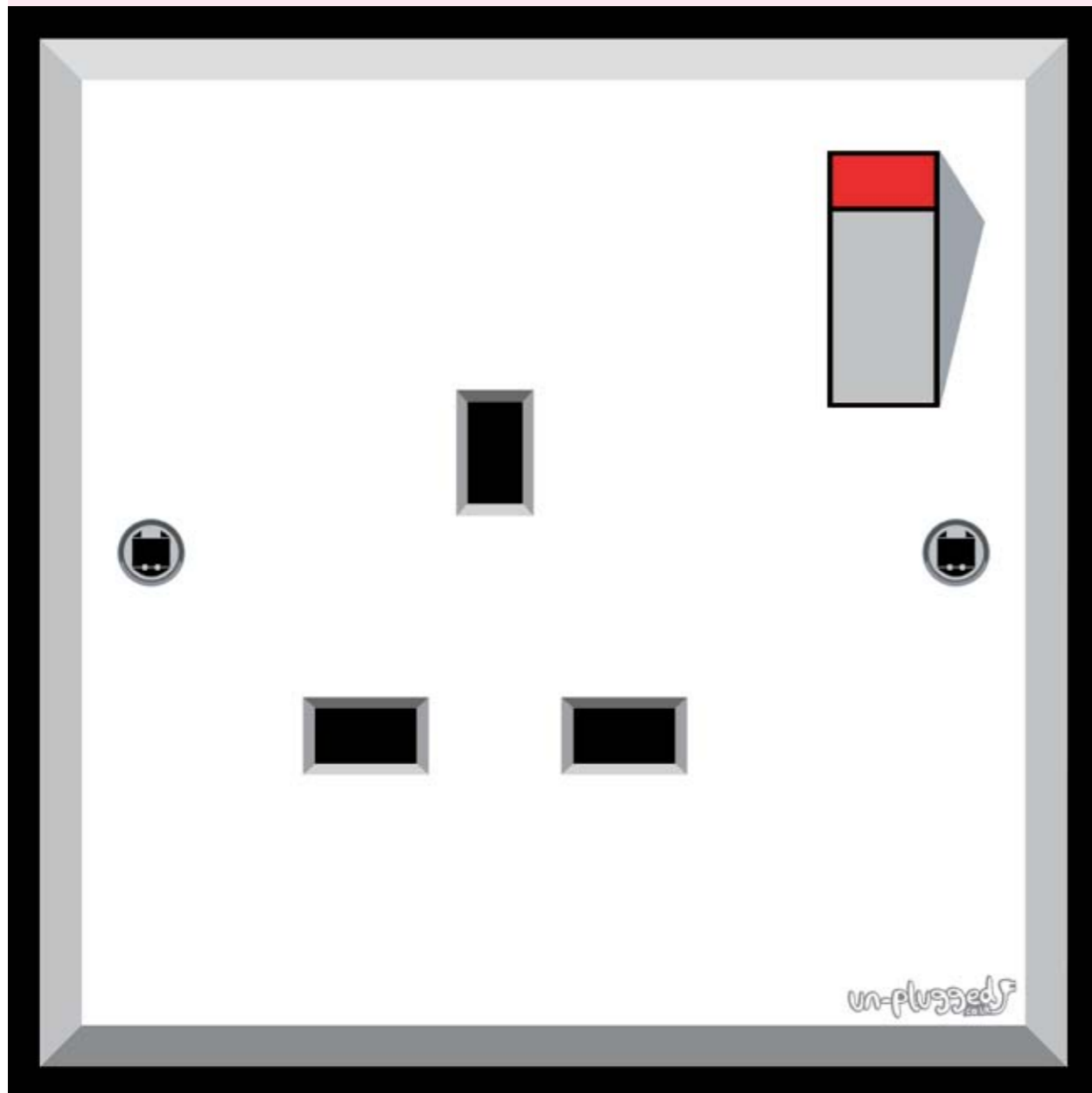
Log in:
 Daily

Access Point:
 At the Supreme Riders bike shop

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/supreme riders ltd
www.myspace.com/urban bike fest
www.myspace.com/flavour magazine
www.myspace.com/rider kid
www.myspace.com/ayeshawelsh princess
www.myspace.com/mista40
www.myspace.com/fling foot
www.myspace.com/it



‘We wanted to promote free power via a vast alternative network of non-electricity by re-appropriating the classic design of a very familiar everyday object – the mains plug socket.’



UnPlugged

www.myspace.com/unpluggedsockets

The anonymous Plug-Socket-Guys have created a network of ‘Socketeers’ through MySpace for their UnPlugged guerrilla sticker campaign for free power. Their army of followers appeal for stickers and share images of their efforts through the UnPlugged MySpace profile. The Plug-Socket-Guys now simply fund and create the stickers and leave the fun part to the Socketeers. It’s no surprise, then, that UnPlugged has gone worldwide.

‘It started back in 2002, we had this shocking idea for a street-based guerrilla sticker campaign called UnPlugged,’ the Plug-Socket-Guys say. ‘The concept was clear – we wanted to promote free power via a vast alternative network of non-electricity by re-appropriating the classic design of a very familiar everyday object – the mains plug socket. We wanted to free it from its architectural shackles; no longer would power be confined just to interior walls.’

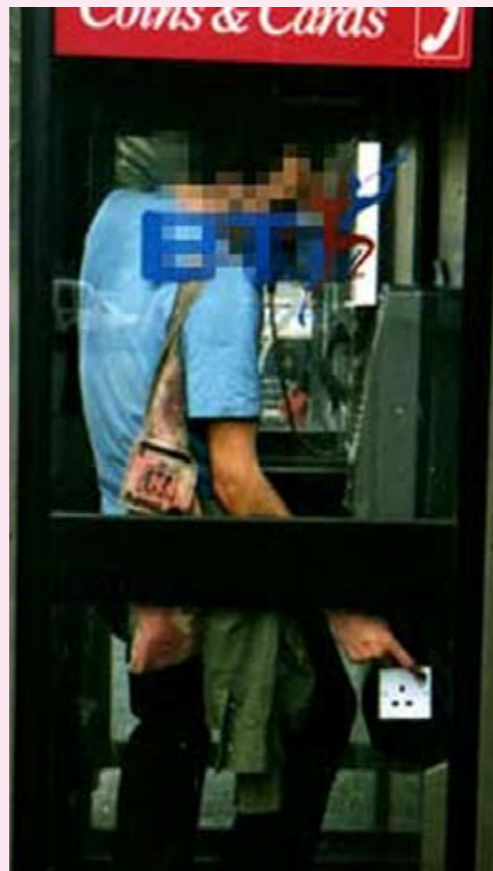
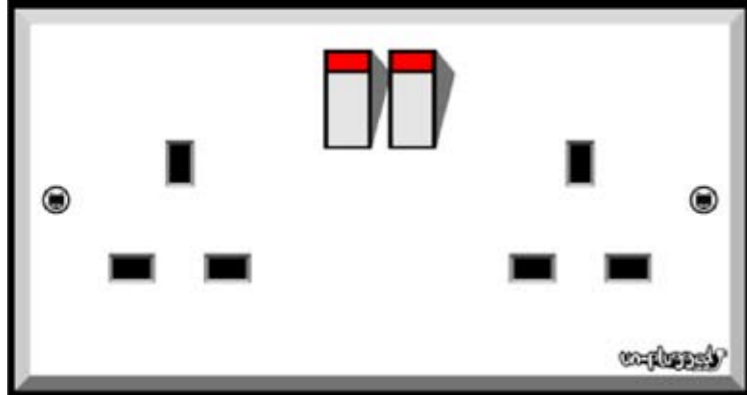
‘Since then we’ve had reports that the plug sockets have been spotted on works of art, up mountains, on the back of moving vehicles and even floating down rivers. The public’s reaction to the campaign to date has been one of both confusion and amusement – as we intended.’

‘MySpace has played its part in creating a secret group that we call the Socketeers. There are hundreds of them who distribute and ‘connect’ the sockets worldwide. Our MySpace page has become a central point of contact and a place for us to recruit new Socketeers, as well as receiving images of new plug placements. In fact, we rarely do the sticking ourselves; we just fund the production of the stickers and distribute them to our network of Socketeers, who gladly do the rest.’

The campaign has also gone international, with European, Australian and American versions being added to the original UK designs that are available in single, double, standard, mini and oversize versions.

‘Little did we know, 30,000 socket stickers later, that the project would be so popular. MySpace is another platform for UnPlugged world domination. We’re currently approaching the end of stage one, the first 10 years, and we’re working on stage two and stage three, which will be revealed in 2012.’

‘Perhaps one day, the constant threats of power cuts, imminent energy shortages and the subsequent global meltdown will be just another strange historical anomaly... from an electric era that was superseded by a more refined energy source. Until then, the Socketeers will continue to spread their network into ever more bizarre places.’



phase 1
un-plugged.co.uk
"a live art project"



MySpace Profile

URL:
www.myspace.com/unpluggedsockets

Number of Friends:
292

Members Since:
June 2006

In One Word:
Power

Current Mood:
Shocked

Profile Track:
Get Yourself Arrested by Gomez

Log in:
Daily

Access Point:
Café

Top Friends:
www.myspace.com/superradtoys
www.myspace.com/cromatic
www.myspace.com/juxtapoz
www.myspace.com/jled77
www.myspace.com/destrons
www.myspace.com/gomez
www.myspace.com/mizzrhi
www.myspace.com/kitten_von_mew



‘Naturally we have a joint MySpace page, it seemed an obvious thing for us to do. MySpace is ego-driven, so we can flaunt ourselves.’



Double Dressers : Antonya Allen and Amy Harrison

www.myspace.com/amyantonya

Antonya and Amy are friends with a difference. Apart from being permanently joined at the hip and part of a thriving global tribe of Double Dressers, where dressing in tandem has become the norm, they are now creating and presenting mini web documentaries for Bite, Channel 4's Internet-only show. The pair even shares a joint MySpace page.

‘When we met, we were as good as dressed alike,’ explains Amy. ‘On the first day of university, late, fraught and exhausted, I saw a girl with a furry hood looking at me. I was wearing the same thing, and it simply went from there. Rather than be freaked out, we decided to embrace it, and after a couple of years it just became natural. You could say double dressing was the foundation of our friendship, and we probably couldn't stop even if we wanted to.’

‘The similarities are not as contrived or as freaky as dressing exactly the same all the time. We might emerge separately from our homes accidentally colour-coordinated, or buy the same item in a slightly different colour or cut. Dressing alike is eccentric in its own way, but we have influenced each other's styles and this makes us much more likely to push boundaries with our individual wardrobes. We straddle the line between classic and edgy. Neither of us pay close attention to generic fashion; instead we dress in what we think suits us. This means the only person you dress remotely like is your best friend.’

‘We mainly use our MySpace to connect to our friends. Naturally we have a joint MySpace page, it seemed an obvious thing for us to do. MySpace is ego-driven, so we can flaunt our joint ego. Now we work together creating short films for Bite, Channel 4's Internet-only show, and we also share our joint work with our friends by posting the videos on our MySpace page.’



Amy & Antonya

MySpace Profile

Location: London

URL: www.myspace.com/amyantonya

Number of Friends: 128

Members Since: Three years

In One Word: Voyeurism

Current Mood: Strangely optimistic

Top Friends:

- www.myspace.com/jessicarulesok
- www.myspace.com/goldielocksmusic
- www.myspace.com/alicereintals
- www.myspace.com/smacheadsim
- www.myspace.com/rupestrussell
- www.myspace.com/bunnykiller
- www.myspace.com/mia
- www.myspace.com/comafi



The Index : 101

The Index is our list of names, pages, people, groups, words, terms and movements to look for on MySpace in 2008 and beyond

The People Index

Ten MySpace stars for 2008

1 : Paul Griffiths
fashion entrepreneur and MySpace celebrity
(See case study page 56)

Paul is the owner of the Babycakes fashion brand and a serial MySpacer who has built worldwide celebrity status amongst adoring fans. An original Slash/Slash kid.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXSANDOVERDRAMATICS

2 : Antonya Allen and Amy Harrison
television presenters
(See case study page 96)

Emerging from university as long-time double dressers, they are currently working for Channel 4 making and presenting street style documentaries.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AMYANTONYA

3 : Skippy Lirix
music journalist, producer and DJ

Lirix is an emerging music journalist making his name previewing, reviewing and breaking stories about grime and the urban music scene. He is already being tipped by music journalists as a talent to look out for in the future.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SKIPPYLIRIX

4 : Liam Walsh
urban street magician
(See case study page 72)

A self-taught street magician who fuses urban culture and music into his unique style of David Blaine-inspired magic, he is currently starring on MySpaceTV's Nuts TV and is talking to major media channels about future TV work.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WALSHMAGIC

5 : Esau Mwamwaya, musician

Malawi-born Esau's MySpace page describes him as Malawi's version of Phil Collins. Currently he's working with London DJ duo Radioclit (www.myspace.com/radioclit) on an album that is set for release in 2008.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ESAUMWAMWAYA

6 : Samia Malik, fashion designer

Samia is an independent designer, designing, recycling, deconstructing and reconstructing garments sold at independent shops in London and through Big Cartel.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IHTGW

7 : Kesh
fashion designer, DJ, music artist

Twenty-year-old Kesh is a London-based fashion designer who has celebrities such as Kanye West wearing her t-shirts. Made famous through SuperSuper magazine, she is also one half of pop duo The Coconut Twins, as well as being a DJ.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THAT_GIRL_KESSHIA

8 : Samantha Toro Paz and Sophie Christian
otherwise known as Hoyfashion
photobloggers

As young fashion bloggers, the Liverpool duo document the street styles in their favourite cities around the UK.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HOYFASHION

9 : Richard Shoyemi
stylist
(See case study page 80)

A former young designer of the year, Richard has achieved virtual brand status through his unique styling work, and all at just 20 years of age.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RICHARD_SHOYEMI

10 : Partyshank
producers and DJs
(See case study page 64)

Pioneers of Toystep, this duo have gained a massive MySpace following and turned down a number of high-profile record labels in order to go it alone. Watch out for them in a club near you.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PARTYSHANK

Tribes and Groups

1 : Slash/Slash Kids

Slash/Slash Kids are creative multi-skillers and 'culturpreneurs' who define the DIA (Do-It-All) mindset. They don't just design clothes but style, DJ, present and act and have no qualms about self-promotion and putting their image 'out there'.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THAT_GIRL_KESSHIA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUNDFXSANDOVERDRAMATICS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JLUCASARTS

2 : Double Dressers

What used to be every girl/boy's nightmare – accidentally wearing the same outfit as a peer – has become a contrived style statement known as 'twinning' or 'double dressing'.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/AMYANTONYA
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RODNIKHO
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/2BROKENHEARTS

3 : Mindies

These under-18 indie fans are as earnest, dedicated and passionate as their elder indie counterparts, if not more so, about their music of choice. Free from the distractions of sex, drugs and alcohol (well, officially anyway) the scene focuses purely on the music.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/EMOBUSTER
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LUCOZADES_TOP_GROUPE
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JAMMYTODGER

4 : Urban Bikers

Urban Bikers are racially mixed, inner-city bikers who mix their love of urban street culture with a passion for motorbikes.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RIDERKID
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/83862025
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SOUTHSIDEDOLLAR

5 : Superheros Anonymous

Superheroes Anonymous are individuals who give themselves superhero aliases and the costume to match in a bid to become citizen do-gooders, crime fighters or public activists.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ZEITGEIST_99
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RLSH_BLACKARROW
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CAPTAIN_CHAMPION

6 : Mad Hatters

Mad Hatters are local teen communities based around the old-fashioned fun of throwing a tea party with close friends. Nostalgic, young, fogyish and cheerfully middle-class, this group is also about resisting youth stereotypes and dissociating from virtual socialising.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEACAKETUESDAY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEAMHENRY
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KATIEANTSEY

7 : Green Gauges

For the Green Gauges, tribe gardening is not just a relaxation activity, it's a way of life, a political statement and a means of making a stand against an increasingly desk-bound, concrete-heavy, manufacturer-dependent (as opposed to agriculture baases), 9am-9pm society. They revel in teaching and sharing their gardening knowledge with novice and wannabe gardeners, particularly when it comes to growing vegetables, fruit and herbs.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BAREFOOT_GARDENS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SODAPOPKLC
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEORGANICGARDENER

The Music Index

Artists, DJ's, bands and producers

8 : Alt.black

Alt.blacks are rebelling against the stereotype of what it means to be black. Alt.black youth have experienced a comparatively racism-free society (compared to their parents) all of their lives and are confident enough to mix their roots with current influences.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DESTRUTCUBEAM
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEREALHEAT
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RICHARD_SHOYEMI

9 : SuperSuper Kids

A generation of teens and twenty-somethings, riding on the wave of mash-up culture, partying, dancing and dressing day-glow colours. Known also as Nu ravers.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NIYI
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IDOLBEATS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEREALHEAT

10 : Urban Dandies

Young purveyors of all things gentlemanly, these young men are finely tailored followers of dapper fashion and lovers of six-inch records, gin and poetry.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEREALHOTFUSS
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LOMTICKSOFTOAST
WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IM_BLOOD

1 : Partyshank

(see case study on page 64)

Pioneers of Toystep, this duo have gained a massive MySpace following and turned down a number of high profile record labels in order to go it alone. Watch out for them in a club near you.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PARTYSHANK

2 : Peggy Sue and the Pirates

This Brighton-based rockabilly and blues act are following in the footsteps of friend Kate Nash with a sell-out back-to-back tour of the UK in December.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PEGGYSUEANDTHEPIRATES

3 : Riuvn

A Liverpool-based hip-hop lyricist who makes rhymes about life in the city. He enjoys local fame with his tunes already 'bluetoothed' as ring tones. He's made a name for himself on MySpace with his mix of comedy and urban music.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RIUVN2

4 : Naz T Da Younger

This East London grime sensation is just 13 and is enjoying success on MySpace and Channel U with work he writes and records himself.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NASTYKIDDOS

5 : Tape Deck

This DJ and production duo are known for their unique mashed-up style of indie, garage and electronica. They have already produced the cover CD for one 2007 issue of Super Super magazine, as well as a plethora of remixes for artists including The Klaxons and Kate Nash.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TAPEDECKDJS

6 : Conan and the Mockisans

This psychedelic pop act have enjoyed great media coverage in 2007 with their unique and crazy live performances that take psychedelic to a new level - costume changes and all.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CONNANANDTHEMOCKASINS

7: Ebony Bones

Recognisable for her style as much as her music, Ebony Bones describes her style as thrash Korean pop, and her MySpace page reads like a press book for a star already years into her successful music career.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/EBONYBONES

8 : Joe Lean and the Jing and the Jang Jong

A pop indie act that many say is heading for commercial success in 2008. They embarked on a tour of the UK at the end of 2007, and their 2008 dates will include performing at the NME awards.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JOELEANANDTHEJINGJANGJONG

9 : Dead Disco

Leeds-based all-girl band Dead Disco have been signed by label-of-the-moment, 679, where they have been working with producer Greg Kurstin, who has previously worked with Lily Allen and Gwen Stefani, among others.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DEADDISCOHQ

10 : Make Me a Model

This indie folk pop act from Glasgow have been supporting Malcom Middleton and selling six-inch records by the truckload via their MySpace page.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MAKEMODEL

Current and emerging genres in music

1 : Toystep

Sounds made from recycled plastic toys, game consoles and children's Casio keyboards, digitally infused with techno and jungle basslines.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PARTYSHANK

2 : Bassline House / 4x4 / Niche

A blend of garage-infused house music with big hip-hop and grime-style basslines.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UPFROMBELOW

3 : Powerpop

A scene that has re-established itself on MySpace as a fusion of rave, garage, hip-hop and rock, creating a sound that has moved from underground clubs to the charts.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MANLIKEME

4 : Breakcore

A digitally created musical genre based on hardcore, drum'n'bass, breaks and techno and spread on MySpace by a current of sounds, DJs and producers.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SABREPULSE

5 : Tape Music

The new chill-out sound, moving from ambient to acoustic psychedelic.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SABREPULSE

6 : Grindie

A blend of grime and indie, guitar-driven with down-tempo basslines and indie urban crossover lyrics. Commonly formed through collaborations between urban artists and indie scensters.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/STATIKMUSIC

7 : Bashment

Originally know for its links to dancehall, bashment is now being used by urban artists to describe their fusion of grime, hip-hop, reggae and world music.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RAWMUSICUK

8 : Acousmatic

Acoustic sounds produced and fused through electronica.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TEENAGERBAND

9 : Children

Music made for a playful mind, similar to Powerpop and Toystep.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YOUREDEADKIDS

10 : IDM

Intelligent dance music, a sound so sophisticated that it is hard to dance to.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BLACKDOGFANS

Club and gig nights

1 : YourSpace at Dust Bar, Shoreditch, London

The promoters open-source all the bands, DJs and acts on MySpace for their weekly Wednesday night gig. The best acts get invited back for a paid event.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/YOURSPACEDUST

2 : Club Motherfucker at Barden's Boudoir, Dalston, London

A monthly East End indie electronica shindig.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CLUBMOTHERFUCKER

3 : Beats of Rage at The Venue, Preston

A club pioneering the Northern Toystep and Powerpop scene, which describes itself as 'filthy electro meets mangled guitars to create rock'n'robot roll'.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BEATSOFRAGE

4 : Adult Books at Le Bateaux, Liverpool

The leaders of the Scouse indie scene, hosted by the legendary indie club haunt, Le Bateaux.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ADULTBOOKS

5 : Bradford Bassline at Dreams, Bradford

The northern leaders of the bassline and 4x4 phenomenon.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SLAPNTICKLETEAM

6 : Vitalic, London, Italy and Ibiza

A house and techno night leading the London-to-Ibiza scene with a cosmopolitan crowd.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WEAREVITALIK

7 : Underage Club, London and touring

Described as the 'coolest school disco ever', Underage Club profiles some of the leading young indie bands and DJs for the younger movers and shakers.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNDERAGE_CLUB

8 : Fwd at Plastic People, East London

An established London dubstep night that continues to rule the capital's urban dance music scene.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ILOVEFWD

9 : Lake of Stars, Malawi (Africa), Liverpool, touring

This Malawi music festival is run for charity by Chibuku Shake Shake promoter Will Jameson. When the festival is not on, it tours as a club night around the UK.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LAKEOFSTARS

10 : Kaput at The Admiral, Glasgow

A rock'n'roll dance basement party held on the first Saturday of every month at The Admiral.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KAPUTCLUB

The Visual Index

Illustrators, artists, video makers and designers

1: Kate Morros

Graphic designer, illustrator and photographer Kate Morros is releasing her own t-shirt line at Topshop as well as enjoying well-earned press in Creative Review, Dazed and Confused and Nylon for her unique Nu rave style of graphics.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KATEMORROS

2 : Rod Hunt

Illustrator Rod Hunt draws on humour, retro graphics and contemporary culture in his work. He is also art director for the deputy chairman of the Association of Illustrators.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RODHUNT

3 : Tear

Balancing the experimental and the corporate, Tear mainly focus on motion graphics and animation, but also dabble in live action video, print, brand identity and sound. In 2007, they produced a music video for musician Ebony Bones.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TE_AR

4 : vj1000errors

Otherwise known as Olly, vj1000errors makes music, VJs, creates 3D animation, music videos, and 2D art. Performing live, he uses a mash up of his own 3D animation and 2D Flash animation, video sampling and scratching clips from films and TV shows, as well as manipulating and mixing live inputs from camcorders.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VJ1000ERRORS

5 : TillYouVomit

Audiovisual artists who create unique environments through visual installations. Some, like their MySpace page, may make you feel sick.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TILYOUVOMIT

6 : Enter the Tree House

Enter the Tree House are a creative threesome who collaborate to work on film, illustration and animation. Focusing on music videos, advertising and illustrative projects, they have recently signed deals to produce music videos for a couple of US bands.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ENTERTHETREEHOUSE

7 : Hold Fast Design

Hold Fast have created the graphic identity for Partyshank, and are equally at home designing t-shirts or tattoos.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HOLDFASTDESIGN

8 : H&H

Video production duo H&H have been using MySpace in a 'talent swap' to build their portfolio of video work. So impressive is their work that Simon Skevington, general manager of Ninja Tune, has already tipped them as future video makers for the company.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MUSICVIDEOSUK

9 : Nick Straniero

Italian artist Nick uses film, paint and photography in his work which he profiles on his MySpace page in a Flash-style gallery.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NICKOSTRANIERO

10 : Sarah J Tingle

This Aberdeen-born creative all-rounder writes music and makes handmade poetry books, works on her own art projects, manages a design agency and runs a gallery and art collective called Project Slogan.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SARAHJTINGLE

Galleries, collectives, exhibitions and creative communities

1 : Children of Wow Wow

A London-based art, music and performance collective.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHILDRENOFWOWWOW

2 : UnPlugged

The anonymous Plug-Socket-Guys have created a network of 'Socketeers' through MySpace for their UnPlugged guerrilla sticker campaign for free power.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/UNPLUGGEDSOCKETS

3 : Guerrilla Zoo

A collective army of underground artists un-caged and exhibited to the public.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GUERRILLAZOO

4 : The Big Fuss Art Collective

The Big Fuss Art Directory scan MySpace from their Cardiff base to offer support and help further the career of artists.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEBIGFUSSARTSDIRECTORY

5 : Project Slogan

Project Slogan is an initiative that seeks to support contemporary artists of all disciplines by promoting them through exhibitions, projects, collaborations and innovative marketing.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PROJECTSLOGAN

6 : Designer Forum

The Designer Forum is a UK-wide support network for the fashion and textiles industry, actively supporting many of Britain's leading designer and brand labels, high street retailers, manufacturers and academia.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DESIGNERFORUM

7 : Leeds Craft Mafia

A group of crafty ladies who are dedicated to spreading the word of the crafting revolution and DIY ethos across Leeds.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LEEDSCRAFTMAFIA

8 : Hackney Knitting Club

A group that shamelessly promotes the fine art of knitting.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/HACKNEYKNITTINGCLUB

9 : Optronica

The brain-child of audiovisual artists/producers Addictive TV and new-media curators Cinefeel, Optronica is a London-based visual music festival organised in collaboration with the British Film Institute.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/OPTRONICA

10 : The Toilet Gallery

A visual communication gallery housed in a toilet, this art, performance and new media gallery was opened in 2003 by British artists Gilbert and George.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TOILETGALLERY

1 : Babycakes Clothing

One of the fastest-growing t-shirt lines on MySpace and the brainchild of MySpace celebrity Paul Griffiths (see case study on page 56).

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BABYCAKESCLOTHING

2 : Samia Malik

Samia is an independent designer, who designs, recycles, deconstructs and reconstructs garments sold at independent shops in London and through Big Cartel.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/IHTGW

3 : Lightning Jim Clothing

A monochrome 'punk' ethic t-shirt line featuring mysterious designs and illustrations of people and patterns.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LIGHTNINGJIMCLOTHING

4 : Red Mutha

Camden Nu rave independent brand that looks larger than life.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/REDMUTHA

5 : Bags and Buttons

A simple accessories brand selling, funnily enough, bags and buttons.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BAGSANDBUTTONS

6 : White Lines of Biro

Space Invader-style graphics feature on a selection of brightly coloured graphic t-shirts and hoodies.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WHITELINESOFBIRO

7 : Chapter77

An independent t-shirt brand stocked by a range of London independent stores and Big Cartel.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/CHAPTER_77

8 : Smut Clothing

A fashion brand that describes itself as 'fashion meets porn'.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/SMUTCLOTHING

9 : Glamour Industries

The fashion brand of James Glamour of powerpop act Glamour Soundsystem, supporting his unique 'party monster' image.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/GLAMOURINDUSTRIES

10 : Kate Morros

Graphic designer, illustrator and photographer Kate Morros is releasing her own t-shirt line at Topshop as well as enjoying well-earned press in Creative Review, Dazed and Confused and Nylon for her unique Nu rave style of graphics.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/KATEMORROS

The Media Index

Zines and magazines

1 : Fever Zine

A truly international 'lo fi' zine, with sales and contributors worldwide.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FEVERZINE

2 : Super Super Magazine

Youth culture and fashion magazine of the moment. Even the pages look like a MySpace page.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THESUPERSUPER

3 : Pixzine

London music zine that folds out to become a poster.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEPIXZINE

4 : Beard Magazine

Winner of EMAP's best fanzine award, this Glasgow-based publication covers underground indie, punk, folk, metal, noise, electronica, avant-garde and pop.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BEARDMAG

5 : Future Fantastek

This zine is full of everything that's wrong with modern living, modern people and going to work. It's a mixture of hand-drawn typographic slogans and advice with curious advertisements thrown in for good measure.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/FUTUREFANTASTEK

6 : Little White Lies Magazine

Eschewing hype, gossip and meaningless celebrity, LWLies is a magazine for the more discerning movie lovers who understand that cinema is about broadening their horizons.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/LITTLEWHITELIESMAGAZINE

7 : Bumsick Zines

Bumsick describes itself as an 'anarcho-punk/crust/thrash zine' out of Liverpool.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BUMSICKZINE

8 : Vop Box

The Vop Box zine features stories drawn and written by resident illustrators and special guests.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/VOPBOX

9 : Wear the Trousers Magazine

A not-for-profit online magazine that takes a resolutely Anglocentric look at the world of women in music.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/WEARSTHETROUSERS

10 : Talenteers Zine

Another not-for-profit zine set up to link creative people with new audiences. This is achieved through gathering articles, essays and writings, stories, drawings, paintings, music, poetry, spoken word, films, instructions, concepts, trailers, theories, posters and badges which are then distributed to interested parties.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TALENTEERS

1 : Tim and Barry TV

Tim and Barry are a photographic duo who have turned their hands to TV. They specialise in short, sharp video clips, many of them exclusive performances, of musicians from underground music scenes, specialising in grime, UK hip-hop and dancehall.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/TIMANDBARRYTV

2 : Dubplate Drama

Dubplate Drama is the first interactive soap opera where fans can choose the outcome of the following week's episode.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DUBPLATEDRAMA2

3 : Big Picture TV

Big Picture TV is a free video channel that streams short videos from leading thinkers on issues relating to the state of the planet. The solution-oriented content is broadly accessible, informational and inspiring.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BIGPICTURETV

4 : Pat Condell

Writer and stand-up comedian Pat Condell takes a comedic look at religion and society in the world today via his MySpace TV show, God Bless Atheism.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/PATCONDELL

5 : Ash TV

Ash TV is run by two music video makers, showcasing their talents through MySpace TV.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ASHTV

6 : One World TV

One World TV is a channel dedicated to showing documentaries and videos on human rights, sustainable development and environmental issues.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/ONEWORLDTV

7 : Andy Neo Brigs

Andy Briggs, a 19-year-old from Stoke-on-Trent, claims to be the UK's answer to Jackass TV, uploading a plethora of new stunts and clips onto MySpace TV.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/BRIGGZY11

8 : My Green TV

The world's first broadband TV channel dedicated entirely to environmental films. Formed in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme in early 2006, My Green TV shows content from Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, WWF, IFAW and many others. In total there are now over 300 films on the site.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/MYGREENTV

9 : David Firth

David Firth showcases his talent for quirky movie making on MySpace TV.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/DAVIDFIRTH

10 : New Born Films

Makers of short films, the most recent of which was about a transvestite.

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/NEWBORNFILMS

Conclusions :

Where people, content and culture collide : 113

How and why social networks have changed the way we work, play and create

Conclusions:

Where people, content and culture collide

Social networks, as we stated at the beginning of this report, have quickly become highly empowering and highly powerful media hubs. And increasingly, they are becoming the first stop shop of a generation of users who are rewriting the rules of social and cultural activity.

Established originally to make contact with friends, family and colleagues more convenient and manageable, social networks have evolved into highly articulate, heavily visual, extremely collaborative and creative hubs, which have become for many a vibrant and engaging way to keep up to date with, and comment upon, changes in the wider cultural scene.

If one generation still turns on the TV to determine what's new or next in the world, then the MySpace generation, with its 'good to go' upload culture, as one of our correspondents put it, is increasingly keen to tune into a more user-generated content world of news, views and collaborative tags and comments.

New Media Markets

But for a growing number of teens and twenty-somethings like the Netpreneurs, Connectors, Scene Breakers and Collaborators that we have identified in this report, social networks have become much more than a network for pacing, measuring and commenting on changing events. They have become 'culturpreneurial' platforms that are increasingly being used to manufacture, market, distribute and retail brands, products and services created by a new generation of 'canny, can do' individuals and groups.

This is the Internet economy in its maturing stage, one where the user is also the creator, buyer, seller, retailer, distributor and ever-critical and passionate consumer. A blurred world where the traditions of the market have collapsed and been superseded by the new traditions of the networked economy and the networked entrepreneurs, or 'netpreneurs' as we named the men and women, knowingly or not, who are driving these changes forward.

Fractional Futures

This is a world, then, with thousands of small businesses and thousands of culturpreneurs running fractional and future-faced businesses that are already providing us with the London School of Economics case studies of tomorrow – a world that calls on the power of collaborative endeavour to work towards a greater good.

This may be creating a t-shirt, or setting up a band, or a one-man magical enterprise, as we have seen, or perhaps a fanzine or a new film by a young, hitherto unknown Nigerian film maker.

But in all instances, it is about the power of the many being harnessed to create products or experiences in which they themselves have a vested interest and thus more reason to buy, talk about or promote to others. It is a unique business proposition, we believe, and a virtuous circle in its own right, involving the end user in all parts of the value chain.

But as our PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB (the online virtual hide set up to capture the growing number of tribes, trends and activities developing within MySpace) indicates, this isn't just a journey towards making money. It is mass experiment in collaborative creativity and cross-cultural pleasure and enjoyment, where the end goal is a currency of a different, and some would argue, far more vibrant sort.

Visited 15,000 times and accruing over 1,400 friends in its short time online, PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB revealed that social networking is entirely about playing, experimenting and redefining our understanding of creativity.

Concept Culture

Thus, it could be argued that we are witnessing the birth of the 'Concept Age', as the writer Daniel H Pink calls this shift in consumer and corporate attitudes. This is an age where the 'right brain' approach to problem-solving and creating opportunities – the lateral, intuitive, discursive and collaborative approach – will become the norm, as 'left brain' thinking (linear, didactic, dictatorial and male-orientated) becomes less acceptable and workable for a generation weaned on the new etiquette of networked culture.

If anything, then, this report, offers us a small but significant and revealing snapshot of the shape of things to come – in business, in pleasure, in culture and in how we collaborate at the personal level.

And for that reason alone, social networks deserve to be studied more seriously and readily by anthropologists keen to understand how our sense of community has shifted from the real to the virtual and, in the process, back to the real again, unusual groups' but in a way that empowers the many, as we have seen, as well as the few.

Ongoing Culture Search

The collaboration between the Future Laboratory's research team and the members of the MySpace community involved our researchers working in shifts that allowed them to be logged on for 12 hours a day, seven days a week. This permitted them to keep on top of all the emerging trends, tribes, behaviours and mindsets that are being formed through the use of various connective platforms on MySpace – bulletin boards, messages, blogs, comments, forums and status updates.

Creative Lab's call for contact with the next generation of MySpace stars was a great opportunity for many of them to give a boost to their personal PR campaigns. One of our case study candidates Paul Griffiths approached the research team to tell them about who he was and why he should be included in the report. Social Niceworker Nick Rayner, aka MagicPass, also approached the research team to tell all about his charitable creative music campaign. These were just part of the many messages that were received from authoritative MySpace voices.

The page also became a place for MySpacers to post information about their favourite emerging trends and people, data which helped us define the MySpace Index in this report. The PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB page on MySpace now contains images, videos and links and will be continued to be updated as PROJECT : CREATIVE LAB remains open to capture the new people, content and culture for 08 and beyond.