

# Self-Presentation on On-line Communication Platforms

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# Research question and objectives

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- ▶ What is the use given to contents (text, images and video) on on-line self-presentations? [Impact of gender and age]
- ▶ Objectives:
  - To analyse users' behavior on Facebook considering their self-description using text ("About Me"), "Photos" and wall publications ("Status" and "Link");
  - To understand the impact of gender and age on self-presentation on Facebook;
  - To analyse the frequency of contents (Status, Links, Photos and Videos) publication on Facebook profiles;
  - To determine the publication method preferred (Facebook Video or external links to other video publication platforms);
  - To determine the theme of published videos.

# On-line self-presentation

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- ▶ “The impact of Internet in social relationships has been at the centre of academic debates since the early days of Internet difusion”. (Gennaro & Dutton, 2007)
- ▶ On-line self-presentation evolution:
- ▶ Personal sites
- ▶ MUDs
- ▶ On-line dating sites
- ▶ On-line social networks

# Social Networks Sites

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- ▶ One of the most popular services of Web 2.0.
- ▶ SNS → Social Media → encourages contributions and feedback from interested users. It blurs the line between media and audience (Mayfield, 2007).
- ▶ This type of CMC allows the use of different types of contents (text, photos, video, etc) and the maintenance of a friends' network.

# On-line self-presentation

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- ▶ On-line social networks have brought a new form of self-presentation:
- ▶ Blurring between front-stage and back-stage → “glass bedroom” (Pearson, 2009);
- ▶ More difficulties to create false profiles → anchor relationships (Zhao et al., 2008);
- ▶ Increase the number of weak ties (Pearson, 2009);
- ▶ Facebook identities have real consequences for individuals’ lives (Zhao et al., 2008);
- ▶ Facebook promotes a culture of group identity (Strano, 2008).

# Empirical Study

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## 1) On-line questionnaire (28<sup>th</sup> February – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2011):

- ▶ The questionnaire aimed to collect information about:
- ▶ Users' personal data;
- ▶ Internet use;
- ▶ Facebook use;
- ▶ Experience of video publication on Facebook.

## 2) Observation:

- ▶ Direct observation of 20 Facebook profiles (all the activity registered in the wall);
- ▶ 15 consecutive days (19<sup>th</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011);
- ▶ Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected data.

# Questionnaire respondents / Observation participants

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Age	10 Male	10 Female
18 – 23	2	2
24 – 29	2	2
30 – 35	2	2
36 – 41	2	2
> 41	2	2



# Questionnaire respondents/Observation participants

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## ▶ **Education:**

- ▶ 11 High school or <
- ▶ 7 Degree
- ▶ 2 Post-graduation

## ▶ **Occupation:**

- ▶ 5 Students
- ▶ 4 Teachers
- ▶ 2 Workers on Public Services
- ▶ 9 Others

## ▶ **Activity on Facebook**

- ▶ 3 < 1 year
- ▶ 17 [1-4 years]

## ▶ **Weekly access (Facebook)**

- ▶ 3 < 3 times/week
- ▶ 3 [5-7 times/week]
- ▶ 14 > 7 times/week

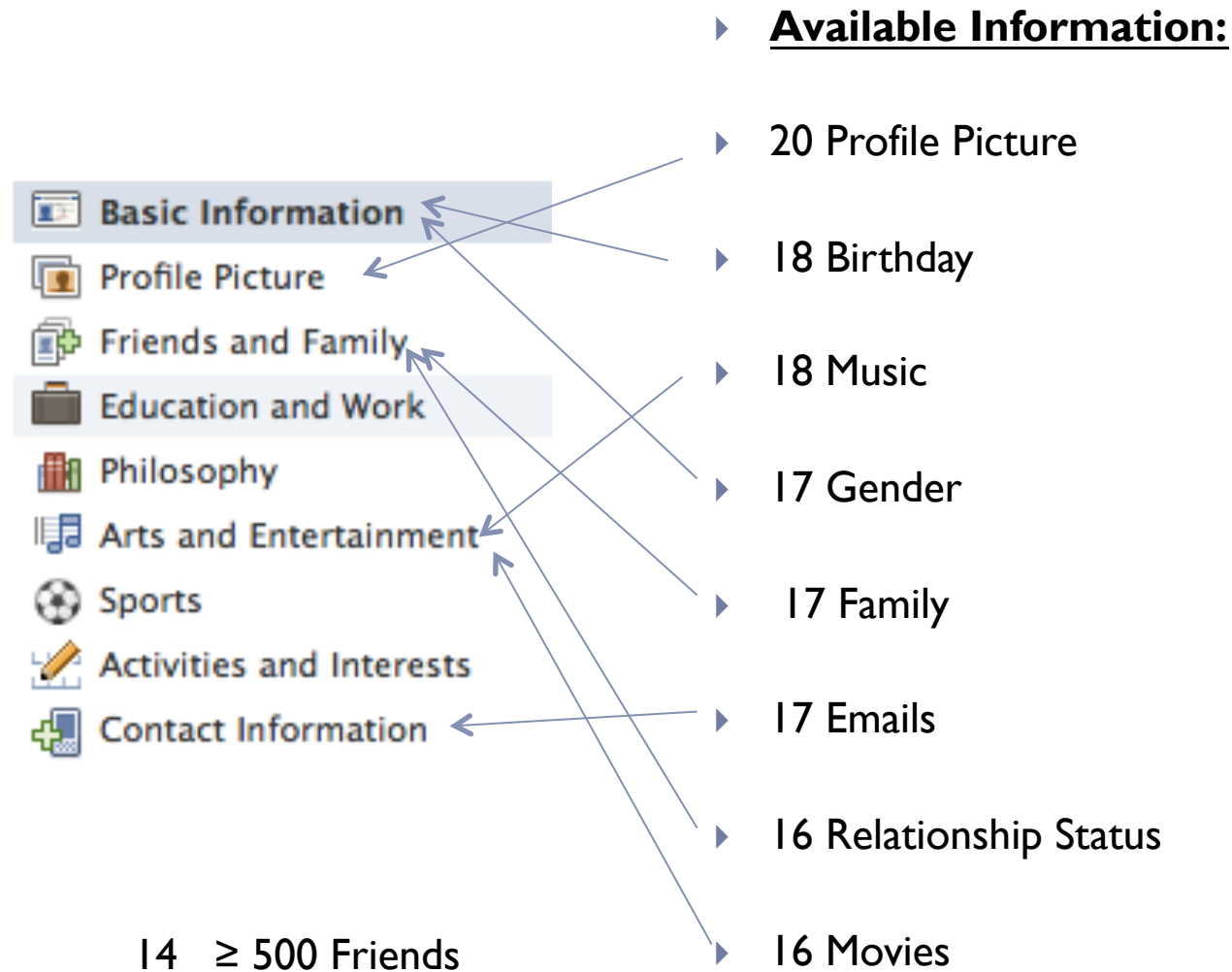
## ▶ **Video publication on Facebook:**

- ▶ 16 Yes

## ▶ **Video publication method on Facebook**

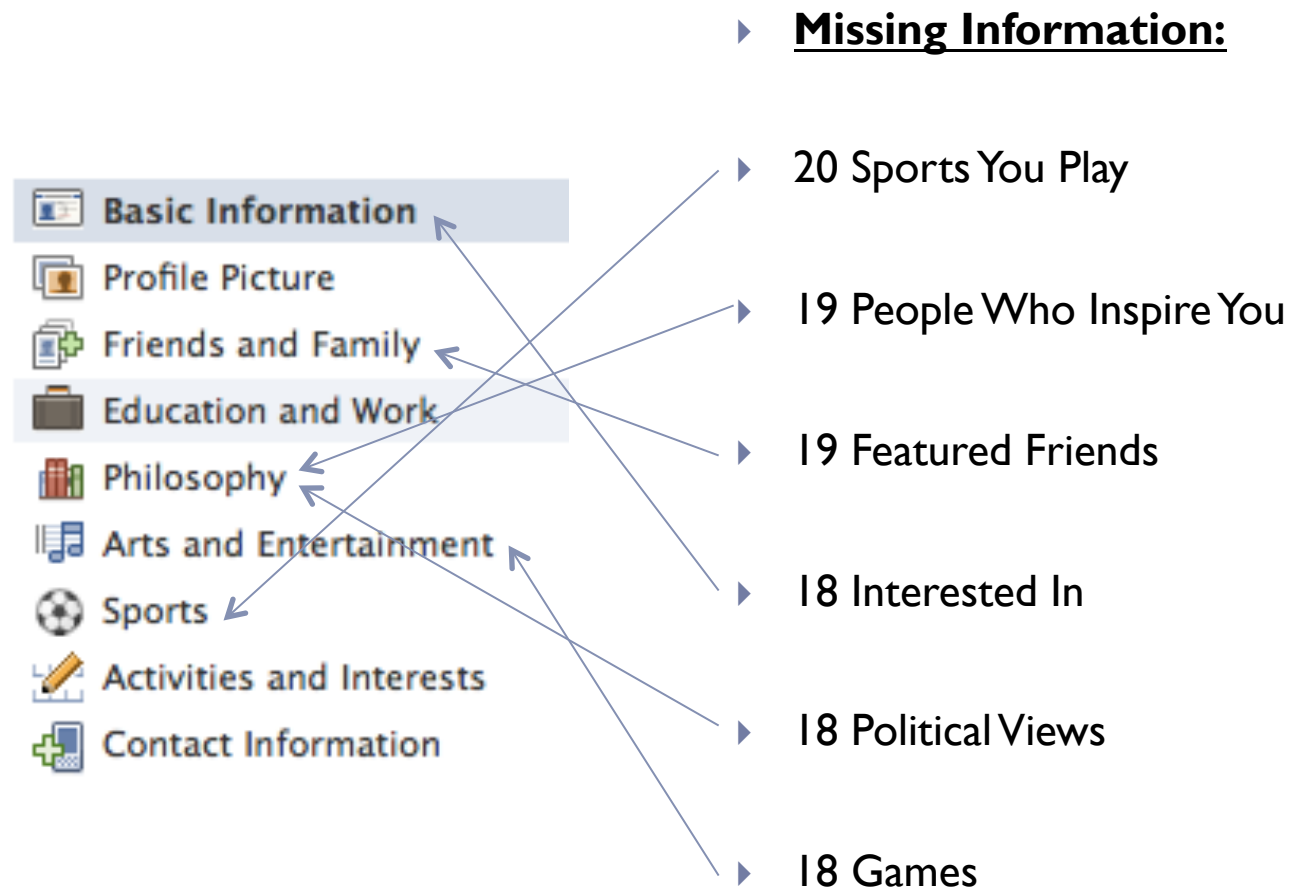
- ▶ 15 YouTube
- ▶ 1 Facebook Video
- ▶ 4 Without answer

# Results – Profile Information



# Results – Profile Information

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# Results – Profile Information

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## Gender differences:

### ▶ **Female:**

- ▶ Birthday usually without year
- ▶ Use more adjectives in their self-description, more directed and more succinct sentences (About Me)
- ▶ Frequently use descriptions of their way of life (About Me)
- ▶ More changes in profile picture (12 changes during the 15 days)
- ▶ More emphasis on body and sensuality
- ▶ Highlight family members in their profiles
- ▶ More favorite quotations

### ▶ **Male:**

- ▶ Longer textual self-descriptions (About Me)
- ▶ Close-up in profile pictures
- ▶ More favorite teams and athletes
- ▶ More emphasis on activities and interests
- ▶ Less changes in profile picture (4 changes during the 15 days)

# Results – Profile Information

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## Age differences:

### ▶ **18 - 23:**

- ▶ Individual profile pictures without a context → emphasis on body and sensuality
- ▶ More music, books and favorite teams
- ▶ More activities and interests
- ▶ Frequently use descriptions of their way of life (About Me)

### ▶ **24 – 29:**

- ▶ More profile pictures having fun with friends

### ▶ **30 – 41:**

- ▶ More movies
- ▶ Write about their birthday's place and/or about the place where they live

### ▶ **> 41 years:**

- ▶ Birthday usually without year
- ▶ Individual profile pictures within a context (landscape, exhibitions, etc)
- ▶ More changes in profile picture (8 changes during the 15 days)

# Results – Profile Information

## Profile Photos Examples:



**Body and sensuality**



**Group identity:  
family and friends**



**Individual profile photos  
with context**



**Close-up**

# Results – Photos Information (Albums)

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Total number of albums analysed: 109

Top 5 Categories (Albums)	
Categories	Publications (N)
Places	18
Parties	17
Applications Use	11
Seasons/Years	9
Holidays	8

# Results – Photos Information (Albums)

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## Gender differences:

- ▶ **Female:**
  - ▶ Organize their photos according to visual contents (family, friends and pets)
- ▶ **Male:**
  - ▶ Create more albums than women

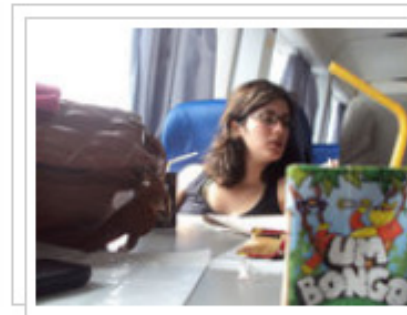


**Work & Pleasure**  
19 fotos



**Verão 2010**  
57 fotos

→ Summer 2010



**Central Trip 2010**  
66 fotos



# Results – Photos Information (Albums)

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## Age differences:

### ▶ **18 - 23:**

- ▶ More albums with individual pictures without context

### ▶ **24 – 29:**

- ▶ More albums showing daily activities and going out with friends

### ▶ **> 41 years:**

- ▶ Less album creation

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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Share:  Status  Photo  Link  Video  Question

What's on your mind?

Content	Publications (N)
Photos (Albums and Wall)	104
Videos	89
Status	74
Links	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Albums Photos:

Total number of albums photos analysed: 61

Top 2 Categories (Albums Photos)	
Categories	Publications (N)
Selling Products	22
Locals	12

## Wall Photos:

Total number of wall photos analysed: 43

Top 2 Categories (Wall Photos)	
Categories	Publications (N)
Images with phrases or citations	7
Pets	5
Food	5

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Youtube Videos:

Total number of Youtube videos analysed: 89

Categories	Publications (N)
Music	80
Humor	3
Curiosities	3
Tributes	2
Pets	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Facebook Video (before observation) vs. Youtube:

Facebook Video		Youtube	
Humor	5	Music	80
Curiosities	5	Humor	3
Events	3	Curiosities	3
Music	3	Tributes	2
Environment and Ecology	1	Pets	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Status:

Total number of status analysed: 74

Top 3 Categories (Status)	
Categories	Publications (N)
Sentences and thoughts	26
Everyday	15
Sports	11

## Links:

Total number of links analysed: 33

Top 2 Categories (Wall Photos)	
Categories	Publications (N)
News	17
Sites	5
Events Promotion	5

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Gender differences:

### ▶ **Female:**

- ▶ More status (sentences, citations, thoughts and everyday)
- ▶ More albuns and wall photos (66 publications in 15 days ) → group identity (family)

### ▶ **Male:**

- ▶ Albuns photos → group identity (friends)
- ▶ More contents related with location, holidays and nature
- ▶ More links (news about economy)
- ▶ More videos (Facebook Video and Youtube)
- ▶ Only users that publish wall photos about sports

# Results – Publications in the Wall (during observation period – 15 days)

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## Age differences:

### ▶ **18 - 23:**

- ▶ More status related with night out

### ▶ **> 41 years:**

- ▶ More status, links, photos and videos  
→ The most active on the social network
- ▶ More albums photos related with selling products



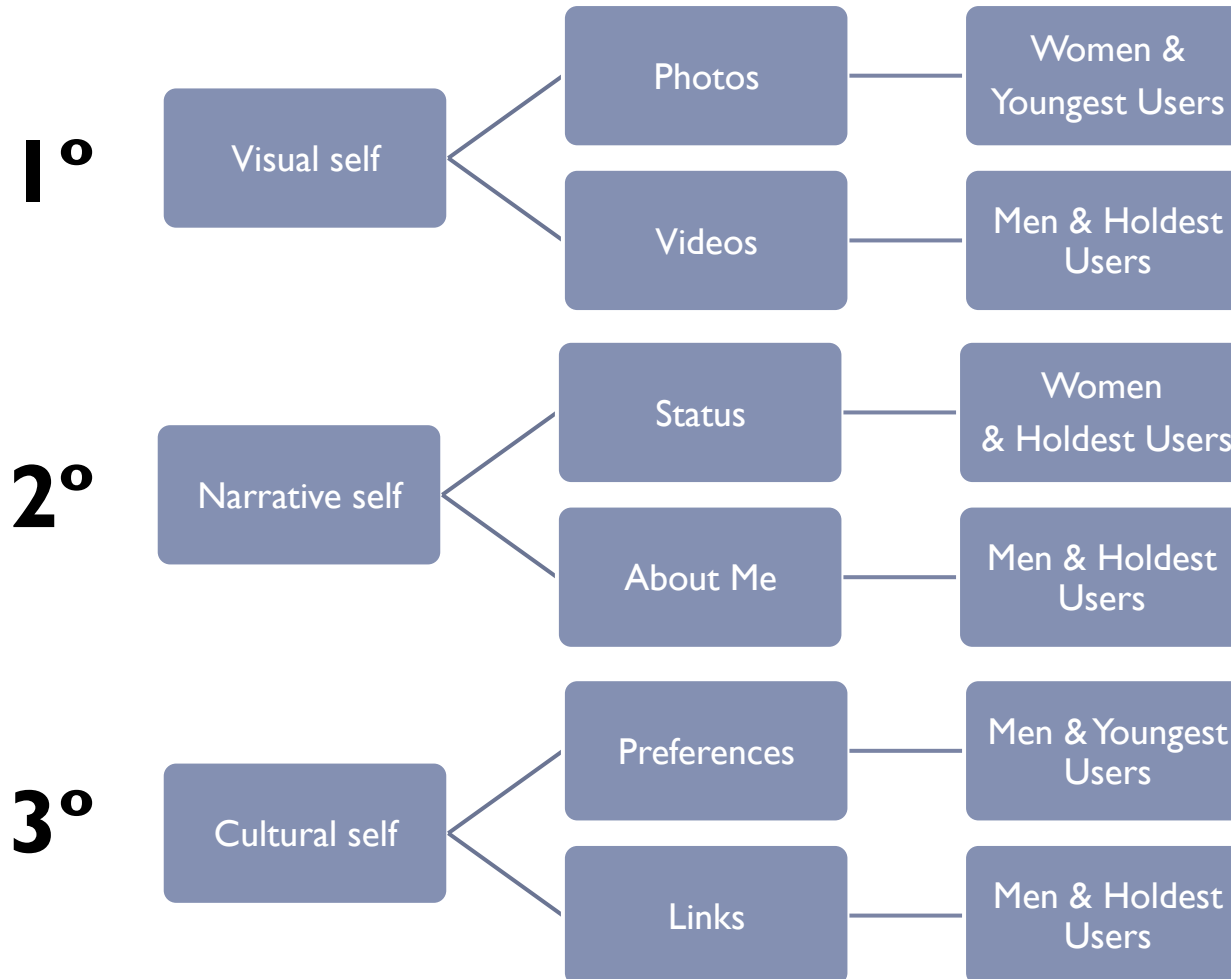
# Conclusions

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- ▶ Zhao et. al. (2008) – Three modes of identity construction:
  - ▶ “Visual self” - large numbers of photographs;
  - ▶ “Cultural self” - cultural preferences (“Arts and Entertainment”);
  - ▶ “Narrative self” – “About Me”.
- ▶ In this paper we propose the inclusion of Videos in the first mode (“Visual self”), Links in the second mode (“Cultural self”) and Status in the third mode (“Narrative self”).

# Conclusions

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# Conclusions

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- ▶ Women and young users are more concerned with their on-line popularity.
- ▶ In Facebook there is a trend to create a group identity, mostly with family and friends. Women stand out in this topic.
- ▶ However, users prefer to be alone in profile photos (individual promotion).
- ▶ Youtube → Videos produced by other users.
- ▶ Facebook Video → Videos produced by the profile owner.
- ▶ This online social network is therefore an extension of real life (Turkle, 1997) and the real personality of the users (Back et al., 2010), where it is possible to observe also a strong influence of socially accepted norms (Zhao et al., 2008).

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