

A Study on Factors Enhancing Mobile SNS Friendship Maintenance

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Research Background

Definition of WeChat :

(Chinese: 微信; pinyin: Wēixìn; literally: "micro message")

A mobile text and voice messaging communication service

Developed by Tencent in China ([source:Wikipedia](#))



Available on:

Android, iPhone, BlackBerry,
Windows Phone , Symbian phones.

Number of subscriber:

over a billion created accounts by Dece
650 million active users;
70 million outside of China.



Research Background

Three functions of information sharing via Wechat

✓ **Instant Messaging** : (one 2 one)

timely, accurate,
highly efficient.....

✓ **Public Accounts** : (B 2 one)

B refers to organizations such as companies,
consultant firms, academic institutions.....
information from experts

✓ **Moments** : (one 2 many)

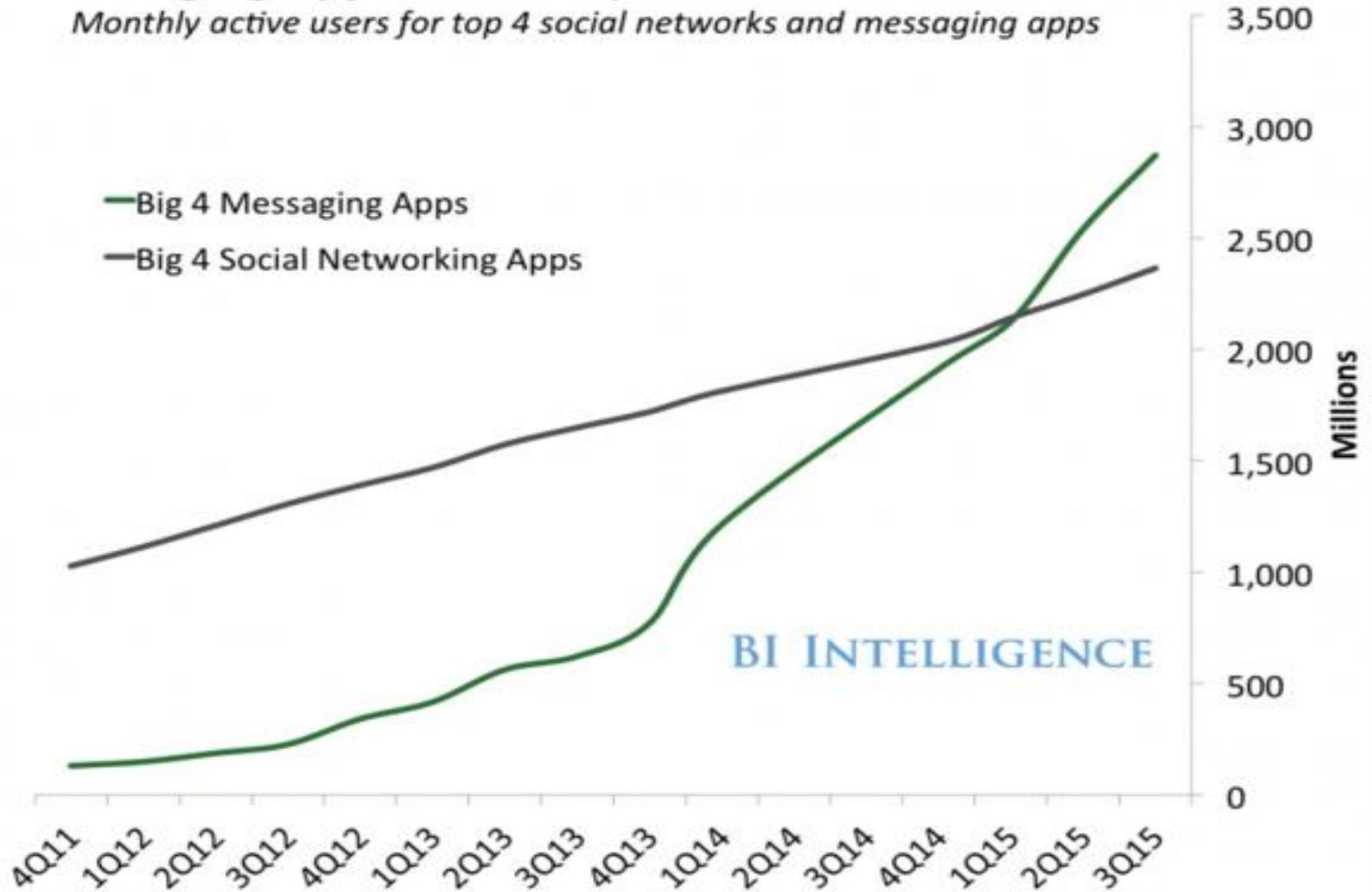
information useful for daily life and for all

Research Background

Messaging Apps Have Surpassed Social Networks

Monthly active users for top 4 social networks and messaging apps

- Big 4 Messaging Apps
- Big 4 Social Networking Apps



Research Background

Reasons to make this research:

1. To look at the changes or characteristics of group chatting via Wechat(mobile SNS)
2. To explore the pattern of friendship maintenance and sociability in future
3. To identify main factors that motivate mobile SNS users to participate in friendship maintenance activities

Literature Review

Constructs used in this research

- ✓ **Social presence**
- ✓ **Nostalgia**
- ✓ **Gratification Opportunity**
- ✓ **Gratification of social connection needs**
- ✓ **Friendship maintenance**

Literature Review

1. Social presence

“The degree of salience of the other person in the interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationships” and operationalize it as **the degree of awareness of the other person** in a communication interaction (**Short, Williams, and Christie , 1976**)

Research has shown that **the more** that college students **feel a sense of “being together”** when chatting with one another through instant messaging, **the more** likely they are to report that instant messaging **gratifies their social needs** (**Hwang & Lombard, 2006**).

Literature Review

2. Nostalgia

Nostalgia represents a longing for the past and a yearning for yesterday (Holbrook, 1993).

Nostalgia is an emotion that is said to be experienced by almost everyone (Boym, 2001).

“A preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favorable affect) towards objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)” (Holbrook, 1993) .

Literature Review

3. Gratification opportunities

[Albarran \(1994\)](#) found significant contributions from gratification-opportunities in determining media choice.

The perceived attributes of a medium relating to time use and expanded choice of content” ([Dimmick and Albarran, 1994](#)),

[Dimmick](#) also pointed out that the gratification opportunities are properties of a medium that amplify or attenuate the opportunities for deriving gratification from the medium.

Literature Review

4. Gratification of social connection needs

U&G theory has been previously applied to several media offerings, such as Short Message Services ([Leung, 2007](#)), virtual communities ([Cheung & Lee, 2009](#)), blogs ([Chung & Kim, 2008](#)), etc.

Five major factors in the use of SNS: relationship maintenance, information seeking, amusement, style, and sociability ([Ku, Chu, and Tseng, 2013](#)).

Students use SNS for maintaining existing relationships, meeting new people, having fun, gaining popularity, passing time, engaging in self-expression or presentation, learning, managing tasks, and participating in student activism ([Hew, 2011](#)).

Research Model and Hypotheses

