



Introduction

Networked communication refers to the exchange of information between individuals through digital networks such as the Internet. It includes email, messaging systems, social media platforms, and web-based interactions. This form of communication has revolutionized how people connect, share information, and collaborate across geographical boundaries.

With the rapid development of technology, networked communication has become a fundamental part of daily life. However, it also introduces several ethical challenges related to privacy, security, and responsible use. Understanding these challenges is essential for anyone who participates in digital communication environments.

2. Types of Networked Communication

Networked communication can take several forms, each with its own characteristics, advantages, and potential ethical considerations. Understanding these different types helps users navigate the digital landscape more effectively and responsibly.

2.1 Email Communication

Email is one of the most widely used communication tools in professional and academic environments. It provides a formal method of communication that allows users to send messages, documents, and other files to individuals or groups. Email communication **offers advantages such as asynchronous communication, documentation of conversations, and the ability to reach multiple recipients simultaneously.** However, it also presents **challenges including spam, phishing attempts, and privacy concerns.**

2.2 Instant Messaging

Instant messaging includes applications such as **WhatsApp, Telegram, and Messenger.** These platforms enable real-time text-based communication between individuals and groups. Instant messaging has **become increasingly popular due to its convenience, speed, and the ability to share multimedia content.** Users should be aware of privacy settings and the potential for message interception when using these platforms.

2.3 Social Networking

Platforms like **Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter)** allow users to share content and interact globally. Social networking sites have transformed how people maintain relationships, share experiences, and



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consume news. These platforms **raise important ethical questions about data privacy, content moderation, and the spread of misinformation.**

2.4 Web Communication (WWW)

The World Wide Web **enables access to websites, online services, and digital information.** It serves as a vast **repository of knowledge and a platform for various forms of communication** including blogs, forums, and collaborative platforms. **Users must critically evaluate the credibility of information** found on the web and be mindful of their digital footprint.

2.5 Mobile Applications

Mobile apps provide **real-time communication** and often **collect user data.** These applications have become integral to modern communication, offering features such as push notifications, location sharing, and integration with other services. Users should carefully review privacy policies and permission requests when installing and using mobile applications.

3. Ethical Issues in Networked Communication

As networked communication becomes increasingly embedded in our daily lives, several ethical issues have emerged that require careful consideration and responsible action from all users.

3.1 Privacy

Users must respect the confidentiality of personal and sensitive information. Privacy in digital communication involves protecting one's own information as well as respecting the privacy of others. This includes being cautious about sharing personal details, **understanding privacy settings on various platforms,** and **obtaining consent before sharing others' information or images.**

3.2 Security

Users should avoid unsafe links, phishing attempts, and malicious content. Security awareness is crucial in networked communication, as cyber threats continue to evolve. This includes **using strong passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, being skeptical of unsolicited messages, and keeping software updated to protect against vulnerabilities.**

3.3 Respect and Behavior

Online communication should be respectful and free from harassment or abuse. The anonymity provided by some digital platforms can sometimes lead to disrespectful behavior that individuals might



not engage in face-to-face interactions. Ethical digital citizenship requires treating others with dignity and respect, regardless of the communication medium.

3.4 Responsibility

Users are responsible for the content they publish and share. This responsibility extends to **verifying information before sharing, giving proper attribution to sources**, and considering the potential impact of shared content on others. Being a responsible digital communicator contributes to a healthier online environment for everyone.

4. Spam and Unwanted Communication

Spam refers to **sending unsolicited messages to a large number of users**. This practice has become one of the most prevalent issues in **networked communication, affecting email users**, social media platforms, and mobile messaging services worldwide.

Problems of Spam:

- Wastes time and resources
- Can spread malware
- Violates user privacy

Ethical Consideration:

Sending spam is considered **unethical** because **it ignores user consent**. It intrudes upon the recipient's **time and attention without permission, and often serves deceptive purposes**. Ethical communication requires obtaining consent before sending messages and respecting recipients' preferences regarding communication frequency and content.

5. Internet Interactions

Internet interactions include **all forms of communication between users online**. The digital nature of these interactions creates unique dynamics that differ significantly from face-to-face communication.

Common Issues:

- **Cyberbullying** - the use of digital communication to harass, threaten, or intimidate others
- **Misinformation** - the spread of false or misleading information



- **Lack of accountability** - difficulty in identifying and holding responsible parties accountable for harmful content

Ethical Practice:

Users should communicate honestly and respectfully. This involves being truthful in communications, treating others with courtesy, and taking responsibility for one's words and actions online. Building positive online communities requires each participant to commit to ethical behavior.

6. World Wide Web (WWW)

The **WWW** is a **system of interlinked web pages accessed via the Internet**. It has become the primary interface for most internet users, providing **access** to an unprecedented **amount of information and services**.

Key Concern:

Not all online information is reliable or accurate. The open nature of the web means that anyone can publish content, regardless of its accuracy or quality. This democratization of information has many benefits, but it also requires users to develop critical evaluation skills.

Ethical Use:

Users must verify information before using or sharing it. This includes **checking** the credibility of sources, cross-referencing information with reliable sources, and being cautious about spreading unverified claims. **Responsible web usage contributes to a more informed and trustworthy** online environment.

7. Mobile Applications and Ethics

Mobile applications often **collect user data**. The **convenience and functionality offered by mobile apps** come with **important privacy considerations that users should understand and actively manage**.

Ethical Issues:

- Data collection without consent - gathering user information without clear disclosure or permission
- Tracking user behavior - monitoring user activities for advertising or other purposes



- Sharing personal information - distributing user data to third parties without adequate disclosure

Best Practice:

Users should **read privacy policies and control permissions**. Taking an active role in managing app permissions, understanding what data is being collected, and making informed decisions about which apps to use are essential practices for protecting personal privacy in the mobile age.

8. Case Study

A user receives an email containing a suspicious link. This scenario is increasingly common in today's digital environment and provides an opportunity to apply ethical decision-making principles.

Analysis:

- The email may be a phishing attempt designed to steal personal information
- Clicking the link may compromise personal data and lead to identity theft or malware infection

Ethical Decision:

The user should **avoid clicking unknown links and report the message**. This protects not only the individual user but also helps protect others by contributing to the identification of phishing attempts. Additionally, the user should **educate themselves** about recognizing suspicious emails to prevent future incidents.

9. Conclusion

Networked communication is a powerful tool that enables global interaction and information exchange. However, it must be used responsibly and ethically. The choices we make in our digital communications have real consequences for ourselves and others.

Users should:

- Respect others - treating all individuals with dignity and courtesy in online interactions
- Protect privacy - safeguarding personal information and respecting the privacy of others
- Verify information - checking the accuracy and credibility of information before sharing
- Use technology responsibly - making ethical choices in all digital communications



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InClass Activities

1. Discuss whether sharing personal photos online is ethical.
2. Analyze a real example of spam email.
3. Identify ethical and unethical online behaviors.

Quiz Questions

1. Define networked communication.
2. What is spam?
3. List two ethical issues in online communication.
4. Why is privacy important in digital communication?
5. What is cyberbullying?

Assignment

Question 1:

Explain the concept of networked communication with examples.

Question 2:

Discuss ethical issues related to email communication.

Question 3:

Explain the risks of using mobile applications..

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

- Understand networked communication concepts
- Identify ethical issues in online communication
- Apply ethical principles in digital environments