
The town that runs on Twitter reading and discussion

Discuss the questions below in small groups, continuing straight onto the second part when you finish the first part.

General social media discussion questions

- How many social media services can you think of (in your country and worldwide, including ones which are less popular)?
- Which social media services are more closed (= only used to communicate with people you already know, usually quite privately)? Which are more open (= ways of communicating with more people, including people who you don't know)?
- What kinds of things do you do on social networks? What other things do and could people use them for?
- Are there any potential disadvantages of using these kinds of sites? Is there anything that you wouldn't use them for?

Communities using social media discussion questions

- What do you think about the idea of using social media to communicate within and organise a local community such as a village or city neighbourhood? Is it a good idea? Why/ Why not?
- What things could people in the community do using social media? (Brainstorm as many ideas as you can, including things that you wouldn't necessarily recommend).
- Are any of those things not a good idea to do on social media? Why/ Why not?
- Would you choose a more open platform such as Twitter, or a more closed one such as Snapchat or Line for those kinds of uses in a local community?

You're going to read an article from the Independent newspaper called "The Town that Runs on Twitter" (<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/features/the-town-that-runs-on-twitter-juns-residents-tweet-to-report-crime-and-chat-to-their-mayor-10248167.html>). Do you think that would work?

Do you think the comments in the article are going to be:

- overwhelmingly positive, with few or no negative comments?
- mostly positive, with some negative comments?
- (more or less) evenly balanced between positive and negative points?
- mostly negative, with some positive comments?
- overwhelmingly negative, with few or no positive comments?

Read the text to check.

Read the text again and highlight and/ or list:

1. Positive points of using Twitter in this way
2. Negative points of using Twitter in this way
3. Comments about other (more traditional) ways of communicating in and organising local communities

(Optional) Label the parts in bold in an annotated version of the text with the numbers above (1, 2 or 3) depending on the topic of each part.

Post-reading discussion

Are there any other things that the community could do using Twitter which aren't mentioned in the text?

Can you think of any other advantages and disadvantages of using Twitter in these ways?

What other systems could the community mentioned in the article use (with or without technology)?

Do you agree that the system could easily be used in big cities like London?

How about using it in (small, medium-sized or big) communities in your own country?

Language presentation

Brainstorm language for talking about both good and bad sides of something, and then phrases for coming to a conclusion.