

What is a venue or platform?

I like to think of LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and others as “venues” because they are places that have defined characteristics that facilitate certain kinds of interaction. Like restaurants or bars, they imbue meetings with a social context that can add or detract from the meeting. You already use dozens of (offline) places every month to meet clients. Similarly, various “social networks” are more appropriate for engaging clients, depending on’ personalities, the business at hand, etc. Let’s take a quick look at some major venues (“platform” would be more of a software term):

- [LinkedIn](#) has done a great job at creating a social context that’s all business, and this is congruent throughout the site. When you join LinkedIn, you are trying to improve your business—and that of the “Connections” in your network. It facilitates business relationships and conducting business.
- [Facebook](#) is more like “the portal of life”; many people think of it as more “personal,” and that’s accurate at a high level. The social context is playful and experimental—not as conservative. Here you have “Friends.”
- [Twitter](#) is a network, and it’s very social, but it is not a “social network” venue in the same way as the first two: it is not based on a profile, but on terse communications with networks of “Followers” whom you often follow as well. It can be very personal and businesslike.
- [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#) are also social networks, but in a different category, because their purpose is sharing photo and video content. However, like all Web 2.0 applications, much of their value is the conversations that unfold around the content. Members are connected though subscribing to each other’s (video) lists and photostreams.

Excerpted from Christopher S. Rollyson, managing director of CSRA, a management consultancy that advises enterprises and startups on Web 2.0 strategy.
<http://www.socialmedia.biz/2009/06/05/reflections-on-using-linkedin-facebook-and-twitter/>