



## e-G8 FORUM

### **e-G8 Forum Summary**

Paris, May 24-25 2011

#### **Conversation:**

**Mark Zuckerberg**, Founder & CEO of Facebook talks with **Maurice Lévy**, Chairman and CEO of Publicis Groupe

The phenomenal success of Facebook owes to a basic human desire that turns out to be even more universal and more powerful than Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg appreciated when he founded the social networking site as a student at Harvard in 2004. "I just wanted to let people stay in touch with people around them," Zuckerberg said. "It turns out that's a universal need."

Equally important is Facebook's role as a forum in which people interact under their real identities. There is room on the Net for anonymous social networking media and there are even advantages to interacting anonymously—a willingness to speak controversial truths, for instance. Facebook, however, has staked its future on people's growing willingness to share more of themselves without the cloak of anonymity. For one thing, it promotes sincerity. "With transparency comes accountability," said Zuckerberg. "Your real name is attached."

Do people share too much information? Only they can decide where the boundary line falls, Zuckerberg said, but that boundary appears to be shifting ever outward. In Facebook's early days people were reluctant to share much of anything. But more people are discovering the value in sharing different aspects of their lives. The past few years have seen a huge leap in the number of people sharing their location, for example, so they can see which of their friends might be nearby.

Future growth will be propelled in large part by companies that build social networking into applications hosted on Facebook's platform. The best examples are social gaming applications like Zynga and Playfish, which are now at the forefront of the gaming business. Facebook will never launch its own applications like these, says Zuckerberg. "Any one company can only do one or two things well. We know technology and psychology, but we know nothing about games." In future, he adds, media and music companies will increasingly "bake in" a social design, and Zuckerberg is hoping Facebook will serve as one of their primary platforms.



Zuckerberg downplayed Facebook's role as an agent of change in the democratic movements of the Middle East, North Africa and elsewhere. It is the power of the internet that lets people share their thoughts, both trivial and passionate, with one another. Facebook was just part of a bigger trend, he said. However, he does feel proud, he added, to see heads of state communicate directly with the citizenry through their Facebook pages, because "That's what democracy is about".

So is Facebook just a trend, a flash in the pan, asked a Facebook user ? The mediums of social networking will change. Facebook itself has changed considerably since its early days, and is still changing. Some 300 million Facebook users access the site through mobile phones, and that segment is growing much faster than the web. But the basic need to share one's self with family and friends will remain.

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**Tuesday May 24, 2011**