

# Facebook sharing sending readers to big news sites

May 9 2011, By MICHAEL LIEDTKE , AP Technology Writer

---



A Jan. 3, 2001 file photo shows the Facebook headquarters in Palo Alto, Calif. According to a study released Monday, May 8, 2011, by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, Facebook is playing a role in what news gets read online. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma/FILE)

(AP) -- Facebook is influencing what news gets read online as people use the Internet's most popular hangout to share and recommend content.

That's one of the key findings from a study on the flow of [traffic](#) to the Web's 25 largest news destinations. The study was released Monday by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism.

Facebook was responsible for 3 percent of traffic to the 21 [news sites](#) that allowed data to be tracked, according to the study's co-author, Amy Mitchell. Five of the sites studied got 6 percent to 8 percent of their

readers from Facebook.

The referrals typically came from links posted by friends on Facebook's social-networking site or from the ubiquitous "like" buttons, which Facebook encourages other websites to place alongside their content.

The Facebook effect is small compared with Google's clout. [Google Inc.](#)'s dominant search engine supplies about 30 percent of traffic to the top news sites, according to Pew.

But Facebook and other sharing tools, such as Addthis.com, are empowering people to rely on their online social circles to point out interesting content. By contrast, Google uses an automated formula to help people find news.

Facebook is at the forefront of this shift because it has more than 500 million worldwide users. That's far more than any other Internet service built for socializing and sharing.

"If searching for the news was the most important development of the last decade, sharing the news may be among the most important of the next," the Pew report said.

Meanwhile, major news sites are getting less than 1 percent of their traffic from Twitter, even though it had about 175 million accounts last year.

Among those studied by Pew, only the Los Angeles Times' website got more traffic from Twitter than Facebook. Twitter accounted for 3.5 percent of the online traffic to the [Los Angeles Times](#), compared with slightly more than 2 percent from [Facebook](#).

The Drudge Report, a site started during the 1990s, is a far more

significant traffic source for news sites than [Twitter](#), according to the Pew study.

The Pew report is based on an analysis of Internet traffic data compiled by the research firm Nielsen Co. during the first nine months of last year.

©2011 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Facebook sharing sending readers to big news sites (2011, May 9) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-facebook-readers-big-news-sites.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.