

# Too Close to Seek: Impact of Online Social Connections on Content Seeking in Social Media

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## **Abstract**

Online social connections increase proximity to connected fellows and their content. Despite the intuitive effects of proximity, this research focuses on the detrimental effect of online social connections on content seeking in social media and the underlying mechanism. Findings from five studies reveal that users tend to seek content less actively when they feel a closer proximity with (vs. without) social network connections and the negative learning effect is more pronounced for consumers who have greater cognitive capacity. Further, we show how the feeling of knowing about the connected fellow is bounded in this effect. Consequently, this research offers a cautionary note to online media managers that extending connections through online friendships, memberships, and subscriptions may not directly guarantee future involvement by followers.

**Keywords:** *Content consumption; Online social connection; Feeling of knowing*

**Track:** Digital Marketing & Social Media