

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE **Current**

April 5, 2006

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Technology Innovators, Professionals, and Scholars Gather at UCSB to Examine How Technology- Based Communication is Reshaping Life

What do wikis, blogging, online political petitions, cell phone ads, and mobile gaming have in common?

All involve technology-based activities that are reshaping the nature of community life and social relations in the digital age.

A group of approximately 100 technology innovators, researchers, and professionals from around the globe will gather at UC Santa Barbara on April 9 and 10 to explore how these and other new communication products and services are creating novel forms of social interaction.

The 2006 Santa Barbara Forum on Digital Transitions: Social Collaboration and Dynamic Communities will be the first in a series of annual events organized by UCSB's Center for Information Technology and Society (CITS).

Participants in the invitation-only event will include an eclectic mix of professionals from traditional and new media, industry, nonprofit organizations, user communities, foundations, and the government.

"We are designing the Santa Barbara Forum to be one of the pre-eminent meetings anywhere of people involved in the social revolution online," said Bruce Bimber, director of CITS and a UCSB professor of political science and communication.

"We are bringing together leaders from all sectors to discuss the social and cultural transitions unfolding now through technology.

Just as important as what happens at the forum is what hopefully will follow--productive new relationships among the participants that sustain themselves beyond the event."

Among the expert panelists will be Angela Beesley, co-founder of Wikia, Inc.; researcher John Seely Brown, who specializes in the management of radical innovation; Lance Bennett, professor of political science and communication at the University of Washington; technologist Supratik Bhattacharyya of Sprint Advanced Technology Laboratories; Sheeraz Haji, chief executive officer of GetActive; Amir Hasson, co-founder of First Mile Solutions; technology author Howard Rheingold, founding executive editor of Hot Wired; social software specialist Clay Shirky of New York University; and blog developer Mena Trott, co-founder and president of Six Apart.

A complete list of participants is available at www.sbforum.cits.ucsb.edu.

The interactive workshop will focus on the processes and challenges of using technology to improve the quality of community life and collaborative efforts, both online and off.

Panel discussions will address how to sustain engagement in online communities; self-regulation in online communities; coordinating people online; lessons from developing countries about technology's role in community emergence and transformation; and emerging trends in the use of mobile social software. Social software lets people rendezvous, connect or collaborate by use of a computer network.

For more information or to request an invitation, call (805) 893-2838.

The Santa Barbara Forum on Digital Transitions is supported by a grant from the David and Diane Toole Foundation.

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[Forum Participant List](#)

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The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.