Abstract

Since the advent of the online social media that enable the proliferation of user generated content, individuals’ retransmission behavior has received lots of research attention. Online social media is amplifying the sheer amount of information communicated, the diversity of information sources, the interactivity between content and end users, and the narrowcast communication within a niche audience. All these characteristics have generated new effects on the diffusion process that have not been systematically incorporated into existing diffusion theories. Based on data collected from social media platforms, new research findings have questioned some assumptions and hypotheses in the early diffusion research and pointed out potential directions for developing a more appropriate diffusion mechanism. In this paper, I summarize the traditional diffusion research as the Mechanism of Diffusion as Adoption and propose an expanded diffusion model, Mechanism of Diffusion as both Adoption and Retransmission, and discuss future research directions.