

> Wednesday, December 7th, 2022

10:00 - 11:30

MIS

**RESEARCH
SEMINAR**



EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

‘UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMIC PROCESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA SWITCHING’

BY YASSER RAHROVANI - IVEY BUSINESS SCHOOL



ABSTRACT

Individual social media (SM) switching is particularly vital nowadays, given SM’s rapid and broad proliferation and the large number of alternatives that are a few clicks away. However, our existing knowledge of SM switching processes and outcomes is limited by (1) drawing heavily upon rational decision-making theories that view switching as a one-off choice between two systems; (2) ignoring switching in the user’s view of SM spirit (i.e., how a user interprets the high-level value of a SM); and (3) assuming users as relatively independent decision-makers in switching, rather than enmeshed in their social-relational circles. To address these gaps, the present study examines SM switching as a process by conducting a grounded theory study over four years in a not-for-profit organization that adopted several SM technologies. Our findings complement prior variance-based research by providing insights into the processes that shape SM switching, including different switching-related practices (affordance crawling, situated identity work, and constructing a SM spirit) leading to different switching moves (affordance, spirit, and application switching). Drawing on these findings, we develop a process model of switching along with propositions. Our findings broaden the conceptualization of SM switching to encompass not only switching at the application level (macro), but also switching the affordances and/or spirit of an incumbent SM application (micro).