# Michael Plasmeier

## Media Lab Thesis Mariana Cristina Baca Del Rosario

Television meets Facebook: Social Networking Through Consumer Electronics

I found this thesis on the Media Lab thesis website. I figured that this would be the best place to look for work close to our research. Henry Holtzman was the supervisor, so it is not in my group. The author used OCAP, now branded Tru2Way, to connect a digital video recorder (DVR) to Facebook. The recorder than shared what TV shows she watched with her social network. This is similar to my group’s research, except that we are looking and consumption and purchasing rather than TV watching. My hypothesis is that they will correlate. Her project was part of the CE2.0 initiative at the Media Lab.

Social networks are increasingly creating large piles of data. We can’t and don’t want to just read it. However, if the device can filter and aggregate the data and present it at just the right moment, it can be helpful. Similar services exist in the Music space. The author mentions one called Ringo which 2000 people use. The author also talks about the background that television has as a social medium. People would watch big blockbuster shows and then talk about them the next day at work. Today, that world is falling apart. More people are watching cable or no TV at all, leading to a drop in advertising revenue, which makes it hard to support such big shows. It seems that in the last few years the “water cooler” talk is shifting more to viral web videos. These become popular as an accident; it is hard for big companies to engineer one for the creation of revenue. Separately, the internet has allowed smaller communities to form around cable shows; however, these communities are anonymous. You don’t know if your friends like similar types of shows, because it may never come up in the conversation. However, this device allows people to realize that other people that they know are interested in the same thing as them. The author did not seem to show many results, if any from their study. I wonder if this is common practice – or if I am missing something.