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### Marketplace: Connected in the tech world

Saturday, March 21 | 8:12 p.m.

BY JULIA ANDERSON

COLUMBIAN BUSINESS EDITOR



Kathy Condon

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There are online networking sites that as a business communication coach, Kathy Condon realized she needed to know about. "If I was going to teach intergenerational communication in the workplace, I knew Generation X and Y folks would not see me as credible if I didn't know about the new tech world of TV, cell phones and laptops," Condon said. "As well, how can you explain that world to older workers and executives, if you don't understand it?"

Such sites as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are now part of Condon's personal online communications tool kit. Her message to baby boomers: "You're missing out, if you are not taking advantage of the online insider's view of peoples' lives and careers ... of what's going on in the world."

Friends and family now call Condon, 62, "The Twitter Queen." Here is some of the leading edge info Condon shared with me.

— **Twitter:** A mass text messaging service that lets you send out 140-character messages to a group of followers, answering the question, "What are you doing?" At first

glance, Twitter seems like a frivolous way to burn up time. Condon sees Twitter as an "amazing place to learn." That's because Twitter is interactive. You can search followers by professional category, by membership association, by topic. Condon's Twitter Rules: Make entries just three times a day. Include information you are finding on the Web to send to others. Do not use it for self-promotion more than once every other day. Don't write about what you're eating, drinking or doing.

For some, Twitter is their only contact with the world.

— **LinkedIn:** An online professional network that connects users by job title, interest group, business organization, school or profession, or all of the above and more. The idea is to build an online resource group. For Condon, that has meant linking up with other professional coaches, Rotary International and a speaker's bureau. "It's an amazing tool," Condon said. "A speaker's bureau on the East Coast found me through LinkedIn. You can pose questions and get responses from people in your field from all over the place." Condon's LinkedIn Rules: Be cautious about who you link up with because a LinkedIn connection may appear to be an endorsement. LinkedIn is a place to talk about your work, your career and accomplishments.

— **Facebook:** A free-access social networking Web site. Users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school or region to connect and interact with other people.

Members may add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. The Web site reportedly has 125 million members.

Condon sees Facebook as least useful to professionals but important to know about. "It's a way to stay connected with high school friends," she said. "I set up on Facebook and put it aside."

More and more employers are checking all three sites — Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn — before hiring someone to see what shows up. According to a Pew Research Center survey, 34 percent of job applicants are eliminated after searching sites while 24 percent are hired because of good things they find.

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