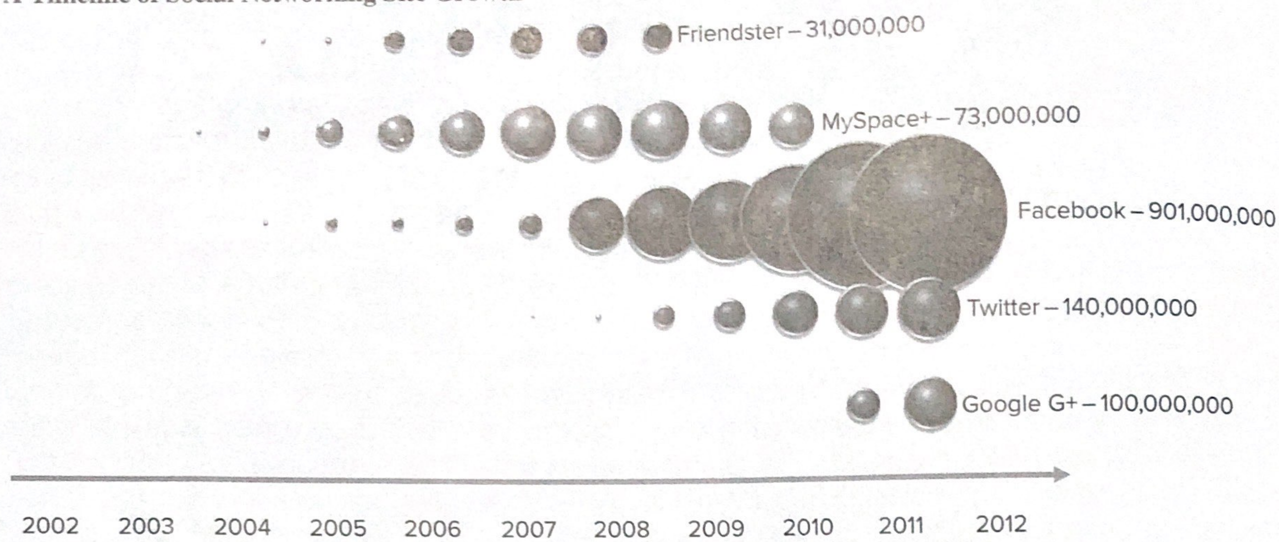
FIGURE 5.1
A Timeline of Social Networking Site Growth



updates like Facebook; however, it also offered video chatting and stronger functionality to enable users to organize their contacts into groups—a move that was considered important to enhance users' privacy. By 2015, Google+ had 2.2 billion profiles posted online, but only 300 million users were active. Figure 5.1 provides a timeline of the growth of social networking sites.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the first social networking sites fail? Is there anything they could have done to survive?
2. What factors made MySpace more successful than Friendster and SixDegrees.com? What factors enabled Facebook to overtake MySpace?
3. Are there significant switching costs that lock users into a particular social networking site?
4. What will determine if Google+ can overtake Facebook?

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