European Collaborative Innovation Centres for Broadband Media Service

Instant Profile Sharing

Smart, Simple and Easy

EUROPEAN UNION
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Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme

1 Executive summary

We came up with the idea of an application or service for instant profile sharing that makes contact information sharing less time-consuming and complicated. It can also reduce the mass of paper used to make business-cards and brochures significantly, thus helping with the environment issues.

1.1 Our Inspiration

We were inspired by a product called GetYoo. The purpose of GetYoo is to have easy and quick access to information just by one click of a button. The concept is that you can store information in a RFID tag, hidden in for instance a sticker you put in a information desk, an a person withholding a GetYoo device can with a click of a button receive e.g. a pdf-file containing product or company information. The information is stored in a database, so that when you later want to access your information, you plug the GetYoo device in to your computer and simply log on to the GetYoo website. We found this an interesting concept, but it is currently available for professional use exclusively, so how do you bring this to the people?

1.2 Our Concept

We want to put GetYoo in the phone. Our idea is that everyone who owns a Smartphone; Android-phone, iPhone or Symbian-based, should be able to share contact information in the same way as you do with GetYoo. We suggest the development of platform-free software to create the possibility to instantly share information about a friend, customer or someone you got to know at a party. It should become just as popular as the business-card which dates from the 17'Th century. This concept should give the possibility of quickly exchange your own- or someone else's contact information by the push of a button. IPS, it is smart, simple and easy.

2 Problem statement

Something we all had considered before CeBit 2010 was how great it would be if there was a quick way of sharing contact-information with each other. Why, with all of this advanced and modern soft- and hardware, should we still be depending on business-cards and have notes disappearing because there is no efficient and quick way of simply exchanging profiles with each other?

3 Alternatives

3.1 GetYoo

3.1.1 About GetYoo

Quoted from their webpage www.getyoo.com:
Getyoo is a privately funded startup based in Brussels, Belgium. The company was founded in April 2009 by Geoffroy Simon and Alexis Tinel, two young Belgian entrepreneurs.
It combines creativity, innovation and technological leadership to create a product-based service that connects people and collects information in real life. It is then used and shared through a web-based community. Getyoo's goal is to help people share real-world information in their online lives.

3.1.2 Pros with Getyoo

GetYoo gives businessmen and businesswomen the possibility of easily sharing their information with each other at e.g. conferences or conventions (like CeBit). With the GetYoo-device you can with one click of a button have information about a company, co-worker or product. It is as for now intended for professional use only, but are planning to expand their concept to include consumers within the next five or ten years.

3.1.3 Cons with GetYoo

Our spontaneous reaction was that it seems too complicated to have to invest in a special device and then need a user-account at their website to be able to send and receive information. The concept behind GetYoo is intelligent and very practical in theory, but in the real world it even makes the process longer and more complicated than just simply taking a business-card and then manually typing the information into your phone. So far, we have not seen or heard of any similar concepts, and are left to assume that GetYoo is unique, which startles s since there has to be someone other than the GetYoo team that has noticed that the business-card is one of few things that has not yet found its way to our phones.

3.2 Platform-dependent contact exchange

3.2.1 About platform-dependent contact exchange

Almost every mobile platform has the ability to send a contact from their contact list to a different mobile phone. Usually each developer has built their own way of contact exchange. The transfer of these files is usually done by the internet, a MMS-message, Bluetooth connection or in the past-days via IR.

3.2.2 Pros with platform-dependent contact exchange

The big upside about this system is that every platform accepts the corresponding medium of contact-exchange. This usually results in a faster way of exchanging contact information.

3.2.3 Cons with platform-dependent contact exchange

The name all ready tells the major con about this way of exchanging contacts. The systems are platform dependent and usually won't allow you to quickly send a contact to another phone. This is usually done by opening a contact, clicking export, fill in the email address of the recipient and send a vCard via Internet. This system is far too complicated to quickly exchange contact information. The fact that almost everyone uses their business-card these days is all the proof we need.

Another con is that the profile is not extensive enough. Currently, contact information is limited to one profile with any number you want to add and there are no possibilities of storing information about how to reach someone at a social network. Also, you can only share other contacts information since most of today's cell phone users can not add a profile of their own.

4 Conclusion

There has to be something we can implement to make it easier to share information about yourself to your friends or colleagues. If we use the concept from GetYoo, and create an application for Smartphone's we can revolutionize the way of handling contact-information, and we can also assume that such an application would reduce the mass of paper being produces for creating business-cards and phonebooks since it probably will be more effective.

With our concept, you do not only share telephone numbers and email-addresses, but you can also link to your Facebook or MySpace page and perhaps a blog or anything you might find relevant to put in your profile. To make sure that the right information goes to the right people, you can have different profiles according to what information is suitable for that specific profile. This will be a great way of sharing your information at for instance parties, or when you bump in to an old friend at the supermarket.

5 Implementation

5.1 No new technology should be required

To be able to ensure that as many users as possible can use IPS, it has to be platform-free and use an existing standard for sending information between phones. Our goal is not to re-invent the wheel but to use current technology to improve the existing possibilities of profile sharing. We have suggested Bluetooth, but of course this can be modified if there is more suitable standard or protocol. We assume that a product like this is more attractive at the market if it does not require one to purchase new devices to use it, and that such an application has to be open source to make the interest even greater. A consumer should be able to simply download the application to his/her phone and then be able to use it without any great complications. All new contacts are also added to your phonebook, so we can see it as an improvement and extension of the phonebook.

5.2 Profiles

It is important to be able to choose when and where your information should be shared. One might not appreciate information being spread in the wrong places, and therefore there should be a possibility to create different profiles intended for different uses. Here follows some examples of usable profiles.

5.2.1 At Home

This is a profile used when you share your profile with friends and family. It could for instance contain information on how to reach you at social networks, it can contain the adders to your blog and it also has your private cell-phone number. When you bump into an old friend, or meet a new one, you can instantly share your home profile and later find that someone wants to add you on facebook or perhaps want to add you at an IM-service like MSN. The concept of IPS for the home user is that he/she can share his/her profile on the run.

5.2.2 At a Party

When you are at a party and want to give your number to someone you have met, maybe you do not want to share your blog address or your home number, so you can have a party profile with information that you feel is not too private. At parties, the music is often very loud, and IPS simplifies phone number exchange since you can send a request to a nearby phone and receive a profile that way. This can prevent any miscommunication and you can stay in touch with new friends.

5.2.3 At Work

As a professional it is important to be representative, so sharing your Facebook or mySpace profile is not to prefer. Here, you can have a profile with your business-card and a link to your company's web page.

5.3 No information can be spread further without permission

For all profiles you can choose what information you want to allow being shared by others who have your profile. With a private or public setting, you can tell your friends' phone what information is only for his/her eyes and what you feel is okay to be forwarded.

6 Participants

This case study has been done by the fourth group at the E-CLIC meeting in Hannover, Germany. This group has the following members:

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The team was expanded by two students who created a camera-team. They supported us in the assignment and recorded footage and an interview for the video about the subject. The two members who joined the team are:

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