CS 6474/4803 Social Computing: Social System Design

Munmun De Choudhury
munmund@gatech.edu
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Sign up for project proposal lightning talks

- Link to sign up for each team: http://tiny.cc/ProposalLightning
- Slides due by 11:59pm tomorrow (Tuesday) via email to Sandeep and me.
Presentation style

- No more than 5 slides
- Structure:
  - What is the problem
  - Why is it important
  - What has been done so far
  - Are there any/what are the gaps in this prior research?
  - How does your project close these gaps/extend current state of the art
“Social Translucence: An Approach to Designing Systems that Support Social Processes”
• “Socially translucent systems” — visibility, awareness, accountability
• Many analogies to physical world social encounters
• Central hypothesis – online social and collaboration tools should mimic these encounters
In another town on business, you and a few colleagues are looking for a place to have dinner. You notice a small restaurant: through its window you see a cozy room with waiters bustling about; you hear the murmur of conversation, and the clink of glasses and cutlery. You head for the entrance...

You have arrived at the opening reception for a convention. You look around for someone to talk to and see someone you recognize gesturing excitedly as others listen intently. Curious, you wander over...

You are shopping for wine to bring to dinner. As you browse the racks you hear a muttered “Aha!” and watch another shopper grab two bottles out of a nearly empty bin. You get a bottle for yourself...
• “Socially translucent systems” – visibility, awareness, accountability
• Many analogies to physical world social encounters
• “Translucence” stands for the power of constraints
  • In face to face interactions, physical space is translucent (and not transparent) to socially salient information; it is an important resource for structuring interactions

• Context: Knowledge management in organizations – tools for capturing, retrieving, and disseminating information within the organization
• Concept of knowledge community (conversationally based communities in orgs), a place within which people would discover, use, and manipulate knowledge, and could encounter and interact with others who are doing likewise.
Every day we make countless decisions based on the activity of those around us

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The glass window makes socially significant information visible
The glass window supports awareness: brings our social rules into play to govern our actions
Accountability behind opening the door, as a consequence of public knowledge of the above awareness
• Design of socially translucent systems:
  • *Making activity visible*
  • *Conversation Visualization and Restructuring*
  • *Organizational Knowledge Spaces (managing visibility and privacy)*

• Design of a system called Babble, a knowledge management system which makes social information visible, aware, and accountable
  • Textual representation of the conversation
  • Social proxies
  • Group awareness
Babble’s Design

---Friday 12 Dec 97 3:43:44 From: Bill
Hi Steven!

---Friday 12 Dec 97 3:44:49 From: Steven
Hellooo Bill. A little guidance please? Is the [...] summary we're preparing for [...] supposed to be an exercise in feeling good, or are we supposed to be giving him hard-headed guidance?

---Friday 12 Dec 97 3:56:55 From: Bill
yes :-)
Erikson and Kellogg say that “Digital systems are generally opaque to social information”

Is it really the case?
Give one example where it is
Given one example where it is not
Erickson and Kellogg look at social translucence in the context of a corporate environment.

What are the implications of this design beyond collaboration and knowledge communities?

How would these considerations of social translucence (visibility, awareness, accountability) change if it were a different environment?
How can we adapt Facebook’s News Feed to support social translucence?
Open Design Issues in Babble

• Should private chats be presented (the social scope)
• Should asynchronous conversations be shown – longitudinal view (the temporal scope)
• Should multiple conversations/topics be shown (the spatial scope)
• Coherence and evolution of activities and norms not shown
• Best way to visualize a conversation?
• Structure of knowledge communities or knowledge spaces (conventions)
Erickson and Kellogg point out the tensions between visibility and privacy in designing socially translucent systems. What kind of design elements can help resolve this tension? Modify from the design you started with for Facebook in Class Exercise I.
The Chat Circles Series: Explorations in designing abstract graphical communication interfaces
• An early paper on visualizing social conversations.
• The paper shows a progression from allowing simple features to more complicated manifestations of interactions.
• Key challenge: how to balance between rudimentary text and highly graphic representations of conversations.
• Chat circle series:
  • *Environment*: what demarcates the space? What is there to do besides chat?
  • *Communication channel*: how do the participants communicate with each other?
  • *Individual representation*: what do the participants look like? Is there a particular meaning to one’s appearance?
  • *History*: is the conversation permanent or ephemeral? How can one see bygone interactions?
  • *Movement*: how do the user’s move in the space?
  • *Context*: what is the purpose of the site?
such motion has no effect on the visibility of the text. In (or just boring), one cannot simply walk away (or politely so). Although the cost of doing so is not at all high, it does Chat Circles introduced the notion of "hearing range". Circles' users to make use of the space in all discussions. However, online text chats often allow participants to scroll back to view the history of the conversation, which one can peripherally monitor even if frequently use online chats while also doing other things, significantly in their feel, purpose, and function.

Chat Circles history interface is a separate screen that requires one's full visual attention and it is easy to miss conversation, which one can peripherally monitor even if. Communication channel: how to communicate with each other? What do the participants, and depicting the activity in the virtual space. Each of the pieces we will be discussing derives from Chat Circles [16] is the original project in this family and describes each of the four projects described in this paper form the most extensive environments that foster lively, engaged interaction.

The design process described in this paper shows a series of.

Chat Circles introduced the notion of "hearing range". The history interface maintains the hearing range patterns within the room: who talks a lot, who is mostly silent Circles, ChatScape and TeleDirection) have been interfaces for distance learning or remote game playing. This paper includes a series of projects evolving environments that foster lively, engaged interaction.

The Chat Circles series projects described in this paper form the most extensive projects evolving significantly in their feel, purpose, and function. What demarcates the space? What is there to do besides chat? As a contextual basis for examining one or more of these projects, but also to examine how varying these interface features change the feel, purpose, and function.

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Chat Circles II – the viewing range
Chat circles were about online chat rooms where people conversed.

To what extent these principles of design (environment, history, individual representation, comm. channel etc.) are present in today’s social media sites?

Interpret Snapchat and 4chan with the design principles of chat circles (environment, history, individual representation, comm. channel etc.).
Which platforms could benefit from the design principles of chat circles, and for which ones this design can have counter-productive outcomes?
How would you implement a “hearing range” feature within a social media conversation? Take Facebook and Reddit as two examples.
Situate how the visualizations of social interactions by Donath and Viegas fit with the social translucence theory
A common premise for both papers is that they want online social interactions to mimic offline interactions. Almost 15 years later, is this still a requirement in the design of social computing systems? Why?