

Promotion and information systems



Running head: LOCATION BASED SERVICES ON MOBILE PHONES Knowing where you are and what you do: Advertising using social networks and location based services

Name of Client

Name of University

Name of Class

Knowing where you are and what you do: Advertising using social networks and location based services

With the development of the social network system, it was not unexpected that new and innovative technologies would be developed that advertisers could take advantage of in order to promote their services and wares.

Initially, the location based service was intended to provide mapping information that could provide directions from one location to another via GPS (global positioning system). However, new trends in advertising have increased the use of location based applications so that by simply carrying one's phone, the places visited can be tracked and reported in order to increase advertising potential. The use of social networks and location based services have opened a door on the privacy of individuals that can be exploited by advertisers, but also by those who have ideas that can use that information for criminal purposes.

Location based services are designed to provide information based on tracking the location of the user through the use of the cell phone. Several services can be provided through location based services, including turn-by-turn navigation or finding someone or something. GPS navigation allows the user to have a moment by moment update of how to achieve finding a location. Using location based services to find a specific need, such as asking

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the application to find the nearest business that provides a certain product or service, allows for quicker mobility and access to businesses. The technology is engaged as the user's location is stored through a location provider object which is then configured to the specification of the builder of the application in order to react in a way that creates a benefit for the application that is being created (Fitzek & Charaf, 2009, p. 199).

The use of the website Twitter has been designed to provide a short description of what is being done by the user so that followers can know what they are doing at any given moment. Foursquare, however, has developed the use of business and services and the reporting of that use so that networks of friends are updated regularly into a game that rewards users with badges and sometimes free goods and services from businesses based on the reported use of those businesses through the website combined with the application on the smart phone. According to Levinson & Gibson, (2010) using the gathered information about a competitor and its patrons can provide a business with the ability to contact those patrons and provide a special Twitter coupon in order to divert users of one business to your own competing business. Foursquare provides lists of users of each business as well as their Twitter addresses so that this can be accomplished (p. 107). However, according to an article in *The Economist* (4 March 2010), the use of these micro logging services opens the door to those with less than honorable intentions to exploit the invasion of privacy in order to use the information to steal or abuse the users.

The use of smart phone applications combined with location based technologies in order to promote businesses can be a slippery slope from which the provision of too much information can then be exploited by those

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who would wish to abuse that information. The creators of Pleaserobme. com have driven this point home by suggesting that by telling everyone where you are, you also tell them where you are not providing those who might wish to steal from you information on whether you are or are not home (Borsboom, van Amstel & Groeneveld, 2010). As advertisers have creatively developed ways in which to use social networks and location based technologies, so will those who engage in activities that are intended to steal from or exploit users. The social network appears to be unstoppable as do the creative uses that are being developed to use the information gathered through services such as Twitter or Foursquare. The challenge will be to have the law and the legislation keep up with the creative uses that exploit users in order to protect users from theft of identity or of their own personal assets.

References

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Follow me Adverts that know where you are could be lucrative—not to mention controversial (4 March 2010). The Economist.

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