Microsoft Research Faculty Summit 2014

15TH ANNUAL

Microsoft Research
Faculty Summit
2014 15TH ANNUAL

Neighborhood in the Internet: Disruptive Possibilities

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Get to The Point

- Despite perennial rhetoric and data of “lost community”
- Community is rising
- Computer-supported community innovation has a 50 year history
- New opportunities abound

Community: Lost and Found

- The foundation of citizenship and society
- In conflict with mass society
- Perennially in crisis and slipping away

- Identity – self, commitment, development
- Awareness/Participation – engagement, collaboration
- Social Support – multiplexed, highly brokered networks

Community is Rising

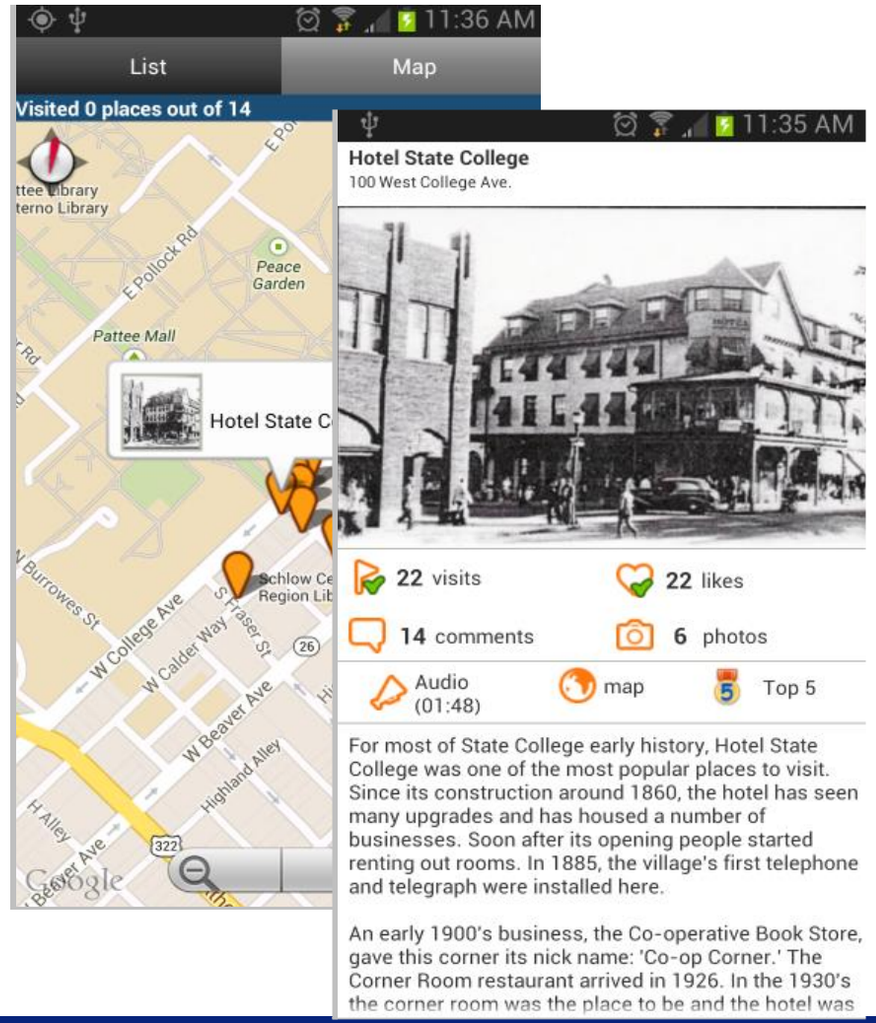
- New "givens" in municipal government
  - Letting the genie of democracy out of the bottle
- More adoption of existing innovative models
  - Worldwide growth of timebanking and volunteering
  - Co-production of social services, such as UK NHS timebank treatment for mood disorders
- New grass roots social innovation initiatives
  - Local/organic foods, co-working/co-spaces, crowd funding community development, co-labs for specific issues such as affordable housing, …

Computer-Supported Community Innovation

- Not a new idea
  - Community network of forums and b'boards
    Berkeley Community Memory (1973)
  - Web-based community network
    Blacksburg Electronic Village (1993)
- Transformative possibilities with each generation
  - Mobility and location
  - Service aggregation
  - Alternative currency and exchange
  - New infrastructures

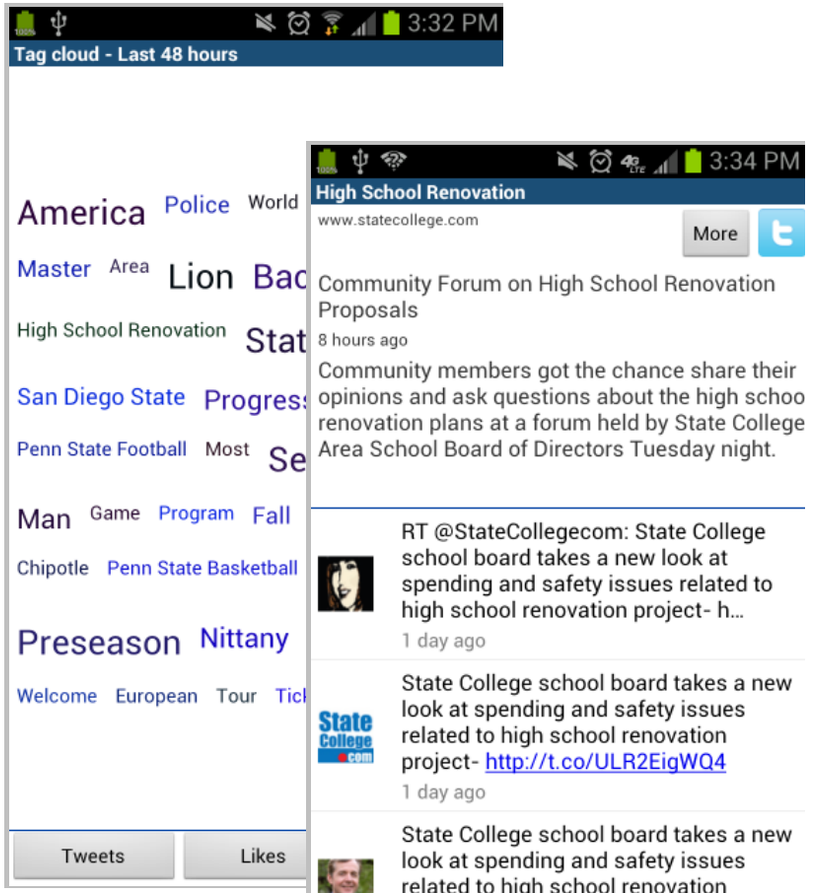
http://www.well.com/~szpak/cm/

Mobility and Location



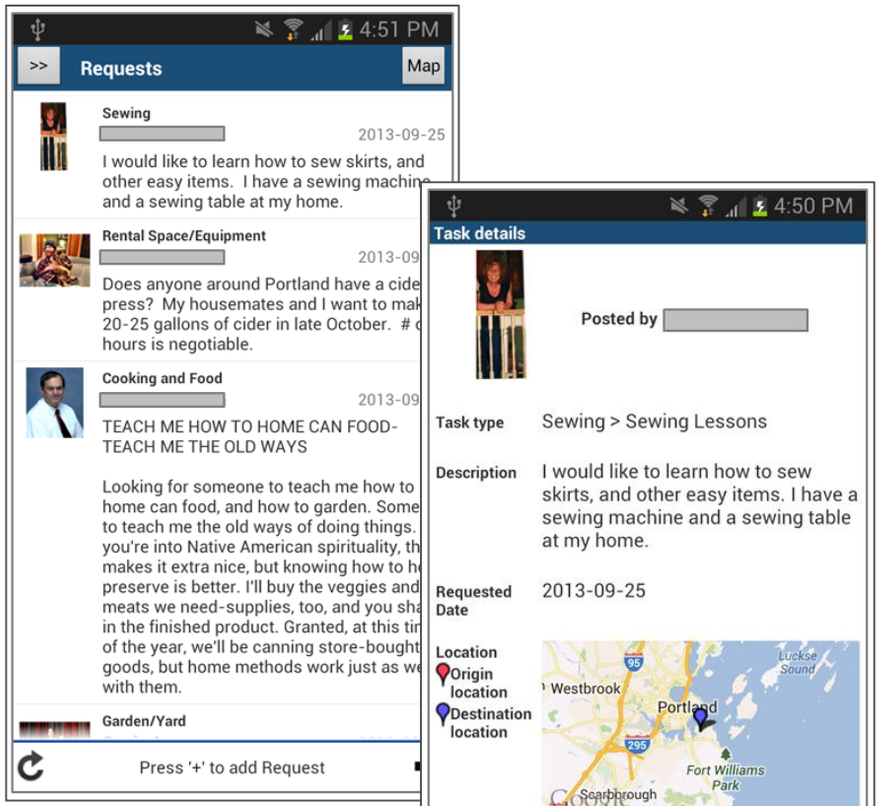
- Lost State College helps citizens be more aware of and contribute to community heritage
  - Enable place-making
  - Leverage interstitial time
- Future State College
- Community Animator

Service Aggregation



- Local New Chatter – Continual text analysis of local news feeds; extracts trending topic tags to pair with local Tweets
- Integrate formal and informal community news
- Facilitate hyperlocal discussion/interaction

Alternative Currencies



- Network of emerging (converging) initiatives
- Local currencies, Timebanks, p2p collaborative microenterprises, cryptocurrencies
- Common factor: remove mediation of central entities (national governments, large corporations, banks)
- Expand concept of economic exchange

New Infrastructures

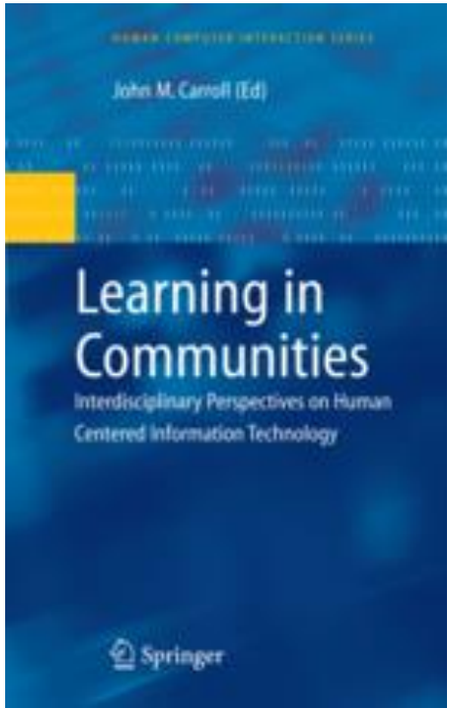
- Smart social grid
- Human sensors identify issues; organize/analyze through service aggregation
- Visioning ➔ geoliberation ➔ prioritizing
- Civic crowdfunding (via timebank)

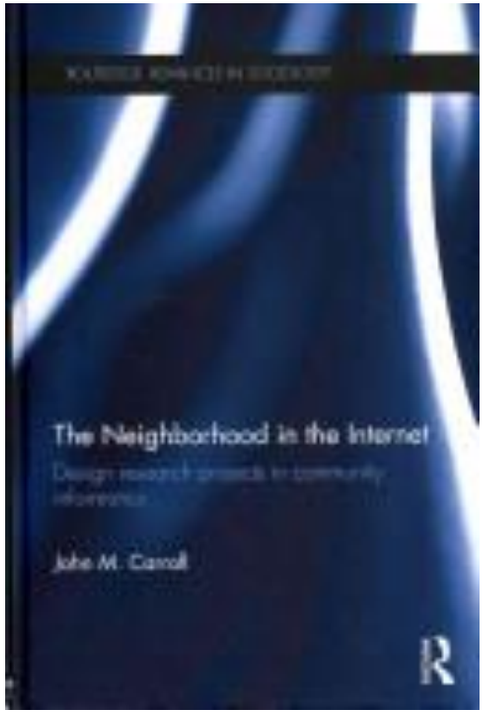
Future Opportunities

- Neighborhood as living laboratory
  - An old idea (Park et al., 1925)
  - Unique opportunities, e.g., relative density of strong ties, place making, long-term & large scale PD, timebanks and local economy, smart social grids, …)
- New ways of accessing people and cultivating markets (smart social grid infrastructures)
- Bottom-up transformation to more distributed framework for innovation/coordination

Thank you!

Comments, questions, suggestions





Supported by National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research, Intel Corporation, Hitachi Foundation, Knight Foundation, Edward M. Frymoyer Endowment.

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