A new paradigm for social media

THE EUROPEAN PROJECT "DIGITAL.ME" OPENS ITS CODE

August, 19th, 2013 - The use of personal information for private and business life is a trend in our increasingly information-driven society. Since the rise of social media, individuals are revealing more personal data online than ever before. This data disclosure provides value to users, such as enhancing social contacts or obtaining personalized services and products. However, the existing social internet makes it difficult for using personal information in a controlled way while retaining privacy where required. The European project **di.me** has been investigating on a new paradigm to mitigate this risk and now it has opened its code.

In 2010, a group of European research organizations and industrial companies started to investigate on a technology that would enable the user to **share personal data in a controlled, trustworthy and intelligent way.** The constituted cooperative project, digital.me, is aimed at researching on social technology that deeply incorporates user-control in design. The project's approach is to develop a technical platform with the "di.me userware" as the central component. Dime userware is a personal tool that can run under the user's control and offers social networking functionality, e.g. messaging.

Central to the research is that the system is thoroughly based on semantic technology to realize intelligent system recommendations and advice. The semantic model is also used to integrate external services. Di.me allows connection with external information, e.g. from social networking platforms. Thus, profiles from other systems can be synchronized and integrated in the di.me semantic store. This allows for comparing information across different sources and to show overviews of different data sources.

The project consortium has developed the dime platform that incorporates new paradigms of social network and service development:

- *Decentralization:* di.me realizes a decentralized social network which offers each person their own system holding their own personal data. A user can communicate via peer-to-peer technology with other users, without needing to trust an external server. Di.me can operate in two different modes: as a 'group server' hosting multiple user accounts, or as a 'single user server' which may run on a user's computer.
- *Multiple Identity Management:* The di.me platform is designed to support many user identities within one system. By switching between unique

profiles, a single user can assume names or aliases, and show different information to people. With that, roles for several life spheres can be managed in one single system. The semantic core of di.me allows analysis of revealed information and generates warnings for the user, e.g. if disclosure may allow the identities to be linked.

- *Trust Management and Recommendations:* - In di.me the user can tag data privacy or decide which contacts are trustworthy. This information enables the di.me system to become smart: A trust engine component analyses user actions and presents warnings, e.g. when the user is sending critical data to untrusted contacts, or sharing data in the wrong social context.

To involve users in the development, the di.me consortium has setup a prototype which is aimed at proving that this new paradigm is feasible. Through this trial, participating users can give feedback for scientific evaluation.

The di.me consortium is now honored to announce **the publication of the di.me code as Open Source [2]**. Di.me is extendible and the publication of its code enables developers to use it as a base for further initiatives. As trends change, more data sources can be connected, resulting in more information from additional personal devices, gadgets, services, and social networks to be integrated. The functionality currently covered in the demonstrator can be extended e.g. to specialized social services.

The dime project

The di.me project is a Collaborative Project (CP) - Small of medium - scale focused research project (STREP) supported under the 7th Framework Program of the European Commission in the area of Intelligent Information Management. The project is coordinated by Fraunhofer Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V. [DE], and includes as partners: Yellowmap AG [DE], University of Siegen [DE], CAS Software AG [DE], AMETIC - spanish multisectorial trade association for electronics, information and communication technologies, telecommunications and digital contents industries [ES], Fundacio privada Barcelona Digital Centre Tecnologic [ES] National University of Ireland, Galway [IR] and Telecom Italia S.P.A [IT]

[1] http://www.dime-project.eu/

[2] http://dime-project.github.io/

[3] http://www.vimeo.com/dimeproject