

Kassi: Everyday Favors in Social Media Matching Resources by Means of Campussourcing

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Abstract. Kassi is a social web service for changing favors and borrowing items, especially in a local community such as a university campus. Kassi will be used in studying motivation to contribute to collective action in social web services.

Resources People Have

We all have skills that others might not have and we own things that we need only occasionally. Thus, we have different kinds of resources that we could offer to others, and at the same time we may lack some resources ourselves. Despite of this supply and demand of everyday small favors, there are no efficient and widely used ways of dividing resources among ordinary people. Social web offers a great opportunity to support this kind of communal action and spirit.

A Web Service to Match Resources

The preceding is the ideological basis of a social web-service called Kassi, which we have been developing since the summer 2008. Kassi is now in beta phase and will be released in autumn 2009. Kassi is mainly designed for campus setting, both in relation to studies and other student activities and also to help students in their everyday life in general. Currently Kassi allows people to create their own

profiles, where they can write down items they could lend and favors they could do. These items and favors can then be searched and browsed by other Kassi users. Users can also add their own listings if they are looking for help that is not found already or if they have a more specific need or offer in mind.

Motivations to Contribute to Collective Action

For us, Kassi is not only a service, but also a research platform. Some user research has already been done during the design process, but actual studies on the use of the service will be done in academic year 2009-2010. The main studies consider motivations to contribute to collective action. Brzozowski et al. (2009) have studied how feedback and peer pressure affects the amount of contributions in enterprise social media. They found that manager and coworker activity correlated with employees becoming active users. Also, corporate culture may be a motivational factor for employees. We are going to study similar topics in a campus setting. Why people participate? What will increase or decrease participation? How could the systems be designed to encourage positive participation? Antin (2009) is also addressing a similar topic in his research on meaning of knowledge and competence in contribution to collective goals.

Studies will be made using interviews, focus groups and questionnaires as well as monitoring users' actions in Kassi. Furthermore, two master theses will be finished in autumn 2009. One considers reputation mechanisms in social media and the other user-created content classification. The work is a part of the research project that develops new mobile social media services for urban communities and studies their adoption and use in everyday life.

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References

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