Stanford eCorner

Open Social Mobile Framework

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April 17, 2013

Entrepreneur and Stanford Professor details her approach to creating and open social mobile framework to improve user interaction in the creation of "genuine" social networks.

Transcript

So here is the architecture that we have come up with. The funny thing is that it took us - this is our fourth try. We threw away three different systems. To come up with this architecture, it's very, very simple, and only simple things work by the way. So what does this say? It says, look, today, the way we connect to our friends is through these huge social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and what have you. And each one of these networks has its own set of rules. These are the social rules of engagement. We know what it means to be friends or friends on Facebook, okay. For you to friend me, you know that you're going to give me access to a lot of things than just to do some - play a game together on using Facebook connect. So there are lots of rules associated with Facebook or LinkedIn and so forth.

However, if I look at the phone it's like the phones are so powerful, why are they - why are we treating them like they are little, little thin client attached to the cloud? Why is it that I can go and talk to you directly? You have your phone, I have a phone, why do I need a third-party storing or keeping track of our relationships and following us, so why is it? And one of the biggest problem with these phones is that they route using TCP/IP address. What is your TCP/IP address? I don't even know my TCP/IP address let alone your TCP/IP address. So what we have created is a very simple messaging core infrastructure and what it does is that it allows people to exchange messages based on their existing identities. What are they? E-mail, phone numbers, Facebook numbers, all right, and as long as I know you via some kind of a name identity I should be able to connect with you via this messaging service. So we are now going back to more like a contact book model and when I do something with you, all you get is what I am doing with you, you don't get all the friends of friends and pictures that I'm sharing on other networks. It is just that straight up, that is the connection, we do something together and that's the end of that. So that's the basic idea is that now that if I can connect with you personally, then I can do all kinds of things with you. And one thing we do is to make that messaging function available to the apps, okay. Oh by the way, I should mention that when I say that there is this messaging system, sometimes my phone is offline, so it is necessary for the messaging core to hold on to the data until it is retrieved, okay. But once it give - it hands you over the data, it can go ahead and delete it, because it is only a messenger.

So what we have done is then make this messaging layer available to the apps, so for example if you're playing a little Scrabble game between three people, the Scrabble game can just run straight on those phones. As I play the word 'hello' on row two, column three, it's just a little bit of a message, it just goes onto the network and deliver to those two phones. The three of us are in a little Scrabble social network together for a short little while and there is nothing more to it than that. So now we can enable all kinds of multi-party interactions built on top of this simple messaging core. And then you would say to me it's like what, I mean, where - what happened to the data? What happened if I lose my phone? Well, you know you have a lot of valuable stuff on your phone already, it's called the gallery. What do you do with a gallery? You back it up, okay. Maybe you use Dropbox, maybe you back it up to your PC and so forth. So what we're asking to do then is that you have your phone backup, all the communicated data can also be backup and you can choose the backup of your choice. You can put it in G

drive, I can put it in SkyDrive, you can put it into different accounts of the Dropbox and now we are sharing across these resources together, these servers in the cloud. There are a lot of free services in the cloud or you can pay for some of these services and it is all up to you, but now we can interact with each other.