

Community Inventory

CTIN 590 Directed Research Proposal

Fall 2006

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Summary

“Community Inventory” is a project which seeks to define user’s physically owned objects, into a virtual online inventory world. I will be investigating how users interact with current social networking websites (MySpace) as well as more inventory and consumer based websites (Amazon.com). The goal is to mix the two types of sites and create a social networking site that allows users to lists their possessions, trade their possessions, and sell them, with the early primary focus being on DVDs/Movies and Games. If possible I will try and leverage MySpace and Metacritic to take advantage of the numbers of people on MySpace and the numbers of reviews of media on Metacritic.

Background

In the past few years, social network websites have been dramatically increasing. Many of these sites have been searching for new applications and services to help redefine how users can interact with the web in a “Web 2.0,” way. Many of these services help to redefine the user’s relationship to others and the web. I am hoping to add to this definition by creating a site that will list a person’s “inventory.” The initial focus will be upon digital media (DVDs and Video Games) and can expand from there.

This idea came from the need to be able to share items with friends of similar mindsets. Working at EA last summer, I was lucky to have access to a large library of media (Movies, Books, Games, etc.) but when I worked at Pandemic this summer their library was lacking. I knew that if everyone in the company listed what games they owned then their library would be just as complex as EAs but there were no services that made this easy. This also became an issue with sharing games, movies, and books among various other friends, designers, directors, actors, etc. Upon doing a bit of minor research and talking to a few experts I found that, while there was work being done in this area, nothing had been realized as of yet.

“Community Inventory” will help to allow this type of interaction and sharing among like minded colleagues. I am hoping to use both the IMD community, Pandemic community, and possibly parts of the EA community to help jumpstart the listings.

Approach

Research will play a large part in the early stages of this project. The main focus will be looking at social networking websites and speaking with experts on this subject matter to have a better understanding of how they work.

The next phase will be looking into services that each of the various websites offer.

Which ones are useful, most used, most complained about, and what services are not yet there.

After compiling and analysis of all the research brainstorming will begin. This phase will focus on what worked and didn't work with various sites and what will work for the this specific project. When an outline is formed then it will be reviewed and improved upon. When enough feedback is gained and the outline is finalized then production will occur and testing will begin.

Throughout the process, I will be consulting with Leonard Lin (Upcoming.org) and a few other experts in the area of social networking websites.

Timeline & Milestones /Goals

September 11th

Begin research phase.

Research various relatable websites, consult experts, and question users.

September 27th

Finish research phase and document all useful information (specifically user interfaces, user choices, and user services).

October 2rd

Begin brainstorming and website design.

Focus on user services that would be most useful.

Research necessary resources and technical needs (this will also be done in the early phase but will need to be updated due to website design).

October 18th

Find dedicated server space and necessary tech.

Feedback on brainstorming and website design.

October 30th

Have a working early prototype of the site up for feedback.

Start updating with feedback.

November 16th

2nd iteration of the site and feedback phase.

December 6th

Finalize website prototype and publish documentation.

Deliverables

- Website prototype demonstrating proof of concept.
- Documentation of research and findings.

References

Metacritic.com

<http://www.metacritic.com/>

MySpace

<http://www.myspace.com/>

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/>

Board Game Geek

<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/>

Linkedin

<http://www.linkedin.com/>

Yelp

<http://www.yelp.com/>

Social Networks List – Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites

Web 2.0

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0

Signatures

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