

The future of mobile search *is social*

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Mobile phones are “personal”



Context impacts on mobile information needs





Mobile users tend to seek “fresh” content





Social beings: seek new ways to interact



Where is the nearest florist?



Where is that really cool cocktail bar
I went to last month?

Search engines don't always hold the
answer

Sometimes our friends, family or other people are in a better position to help us

Can we improve the search and discovery experience of mobile users by providing a readily available connection to their social network?

Social Search Browser (SSB)

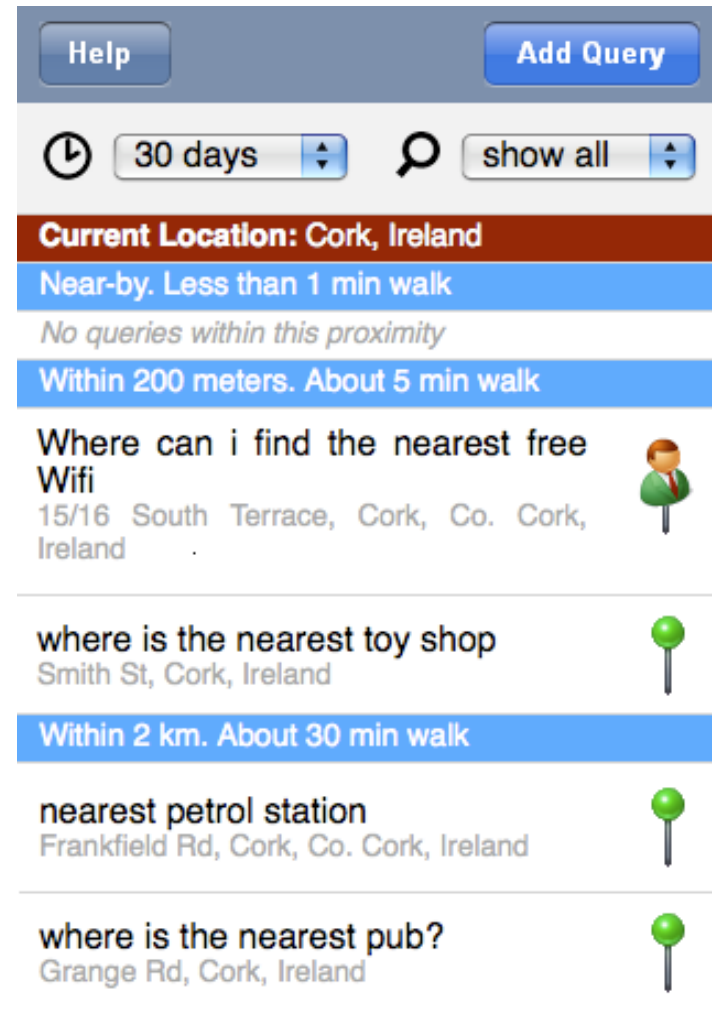
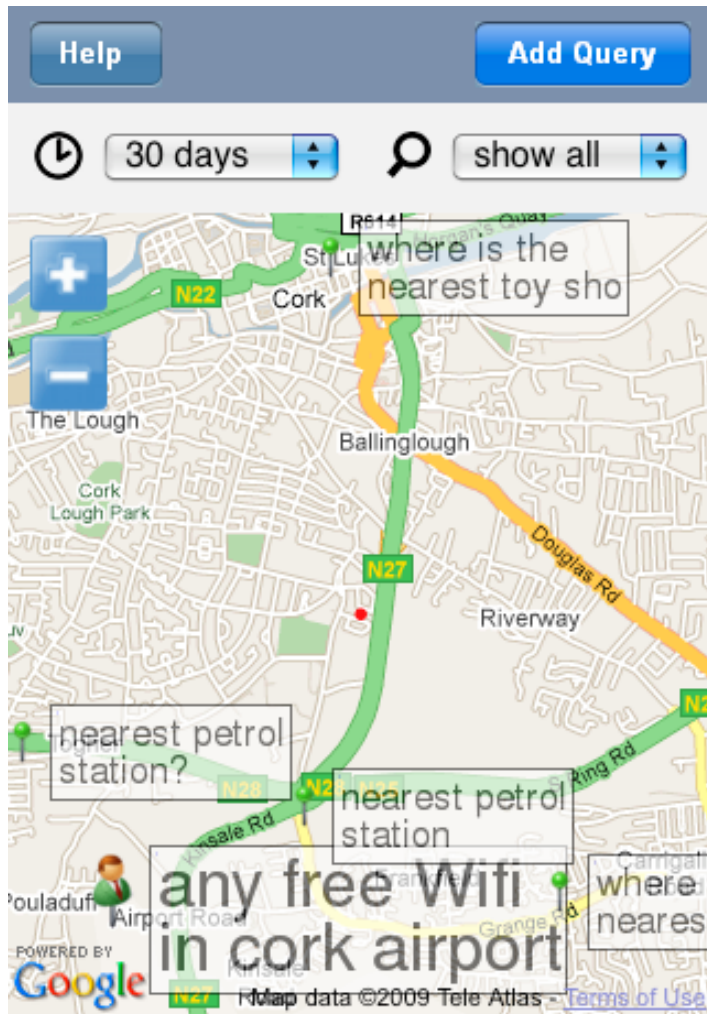
- Proactively displays the queries and interactions of other users in a given location
- Provide an enriched *sense of place*
- Encourages discovery of new, interesting content
- Incorporates social networking capabilities with key mobile contexts: allows friends to answer your queries while on-the-move

SSB1: Initial incarnation!



- iPhone optimized web-application
- When launched it centers on the users current physical location
- Displays all queries/questions posted by other users in that location
- As users pan/zoom the set of queries is updated
- Users can post new queries or interact with queries of others

SSB2: focus on interfaces for LBS



Query details

- Full query details
- Answers
- Local search results from Google Local Search API
- Event search listings from Eventful API

The screenshot shows a search interface with a blue header containing 'Help' and 'Map' buttons. Below the header is a search bar with a location pin icon and the text 'where is Banai Thai restaurant'. Underneath the search bar, the query 'where is Banai Thai restaurant' is repeated, followed by 'issued 1 month ago'. Below this is a section for 'Answers' with a green 'Add Answer' button and a dropdown arrow. The first answer is titled 'There's one in town too, near Smyths Toys' and is dated 'issued 26 days ago'. The address '1-16 Maylor St, Cork, Co. Cork, Ireland' is listed below the title. A map of Cork, Ireland, is shown below the address, with a red pin marking the location of the restaurant. The map includes street names like 'MacCurtain St', 'N Summerhill', and 'R614', and landmarks like 'Paul Street Shopping Centre' and 'Merch Quay Shopping Centre'. The Google logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the map, and 'Map data ©2009 Tele Atlas' is in the bottom right.



Live field studies *in-the-wild*



01

**APR 2009, 16 USERS, 1 WEEK,
IRELAND**

02

**SEPT 2009, 34 USERS, 1 MONTH,
IRELAND**

Proactive UI enables discovery of content!



A tool for helping and sharing.....



A tool for supporting curiosity





....extension to my social network

Current research focus

- Nature of mobile information needs:
 - Goal: understand exactly how important **social** is to mobile information needs
- Evolving snapshots of mobile search behaviour
 - Portal-based search and information access
 - Indicators of evolution: query variation, diversity, topics, etc.
- Social Search Browser 3 – beyond LBS

Future research focus

- We need to continue learning about the dynamic behaviours of mobile users
 - Transaction log analysis, live field studies
- Novel mobile search and mobile information access prototypes
 - Beyond location-based services
 - Utilizing mobile social networks
 - New search interfaces/interaction paradigms
 - Emerging markets

Thank You!

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