“Think-Tank 2 Meeting Notes”

D5.2.2

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The Chorus+ Project Consortium groups the following Organizations:

Partner Name	Short name	Country
JCP-Consult	JCP	FR
The French National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control	INRIA	FR
Centre for Research and Technology Hellas - Informatics and Telematics Institute	CERTH-ITI	GR
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Technicolor	THOMSON	FR
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0	1	Pieter van der Linden	16/11/2010
Comments:			
0	1	Pieter van der Linden	29/11/2010
Comments:	Fixes after comments by participants. Integrated some slides from the presentation and added appendixes with presentation material and questionnaire.		
1	0	Pieter van der Linden	02/12/2010
Comments:	Final updates following a conversation with a subset of the participants. Appendix on usage of social networks added following a suggestion by Arnon Amir.		
0			
Comments:			
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Comments:			

Abstract

Notes taken during and following the Chorus+ "Social Search" Think-Tank roundtable discussion held during the ACM Multimedia conference in Florence (Italy) on October 27th 2010.

The Think-Tank aims at getting together experts and stakeholders of social and search related aspects in order to exchange on trends on technologies and features for the next years. Participants will contribute to assessing the current technological and economical landscape of social search and estimating its evolution over time. These meeting notes, produced after the meeting, will be provided to the EU commission and will be posted on the Chorus+ web site (subject to approval by the participants of course).

Around 30 people including leading industrials, expert SMEs and highly renown researchers in the social search field did gather in Florence to discuss these subjects. The results of a survey, conducted among the participants and some additional experts from the Chorus+ Cluster community, were presented and discussed during the meeting.

The meeting did start with a 3 minute presentation by the participants giving to the participants to present themselves and to provide a quick vision statement on the domain.
After this introduction, the Keynote Speaker – Mr. Jean Veronis – from Université d'Aix en Provence, presented his "Social Media Travel Diary".
Finally the survey was discussed by all the participants.

Table of Contents

1. Thinktank participants

Name	First name	Initials	Organization	Comment
Amir	Arnon	AA	IBM	
Anania	Loretta	LA	EC	.
Back	Maribeth	MB	FXPal	
Begin	Ali	AB	Cisco	
Boll	Suzanna	SB	Oldenburg University	
Boujemaa	Nozha	NB	INRIA	
Chang	Shih-Fu	SC	Columbia University	
Chua	Tat-Seng	TC	National Unversity of Singapore	
Clavel	Chloe	CC	EDF	
Croce	Vincenzo	VC	ENG	
De Sutter	Robbie	RdS	VRT	
Del Bimbo	Alberto	AdB	Florence University	
Gouraud	Henri	HG	INRIA	
Hanjalic	Alan	AH	Delft University	
Haseyama	Miki	MK	Hokkaido University	
Jaimes	Alex	AJ	Yahoo	
Jain	Ramesh	RJ	University of California, Irvine	
Joly	Alexis	AJ	INRIA	
Kompatsiaris	Yiannis	YK	ITI	
Lawto	Julien	JL	Exalead	
Lin	Qian	LQ	HP	
Mariotti	Andrea	AM	Ricoh	
Mitchell	Keith	KM	Lancaster University	
Point	Jean-Charles	JP	Secretary	
Sebe	Nico	NS	University of Trento	
Smeulders	Arnold	AS	CWI	
Van der Linden	Pieter	PL	Technicolor	Moderator
Veronis	Jean	JV	University Aix en Provence and WIKIO	Keynote speaker
Wilmet	Michèle	MW	Organizer	
Zhang	Lei	LZ	MicroSoft.	

2. Reminder on the objectives of the Think-Tank

The emergence of Social Networks is certainly one of the most marking trends observed over the last years. Photo and video sharing sites such as Flickr and Youtube have been and are still tremendously successful. Millions of individual or professional users contribute on a very regular basis to personal blogs. After being founded in 2004, Facebook has attracted more than 400 million users worldwide and continues growing at a steady pace. Success of micro-blogging service Twitter has been even more rapid. Founded in 2007, the company announces currently around 50M tweets being submitted daily.

Obviously the social networks are being taken up in modern society at unprecedented speed. Observer expects the audience of social network sites to exceed current search engines on a relatively small timeframe.

Main questions debated in this Think-Tank revolved about the following subjects:

- Which search tools for the social networks?
- Do we envision new tools and services to emerge anytime soon?
- Do we envision new applications and service to emerge from the combination of automatic information retrieval and social tagging and comments from the social networks?

These notes, summarizing the topics being discussed are the main outcome of the Think-Tank. The notes will be communicated to the commission and published on the Chorus+ web site.

3. Think-Tank discussion: introduction of the participants

The second Think-Tank session started with a three minute presentation of each of the participants and a brief position statement by each of the participants on the "Social Search" subject.

We will not transcribe the integrality of the participant statements here. Instead we will try to summarize the main tendencies being presented:

- All the participants recognized the importance of the theme being debated. Social media is seen as the main enabler of advanced information services. Nevertheless the participants did also point to several threads and challenges, including spam, privacy and lack of objectivity.
- On the main concerns the presentations converged on a relatively small set of items:
  - Social media should facilitate access to relevant information.
    - Mentioned directly or indirectly by most of the participants (Ex: Travel search, Recommendation Engines and Personalization)
    - Several participants alluded to models for building the social structure from content
  - Several participants foresee specialization towards a set of specific key areas such as for instance Healthcare and Education.
    - Example 1 – Healthcare- : The relationship of physicians and patients can be expressed as a social network to assist to search in healthcare records with structured and unstructured text, test results, electrocardiograms, angiograms etc….
    - Example 2 – Education- : Association of slides and videos allows enhancing video search. A social network of students (e.g., taking the same course) and lecturers (studying same or related fields) would allow to further enhance this search.
  - Also the application of social context and social media in professional environments was often cited; especially by industrial participants
    - Several experiments and projects were cited mainly by industrial participants including FX, Exalead, Cisco.
  - At the technological level, in addition to the statistical and linguistic methods, participants did report on several innovative experiences such as: the Analysis of social relationships in photo albums, and the use of real time censors ("Extreme" search).

4. Keynote by Prof. Jean Veronis.

Jean Veronis opened his presentation by comparing the 15 y old search industry to the 130 y old car industry. He concluded that search is still in infancy. With only some years of existence, social networking is even less mature.

He compared the homepages and main operation mode of the main search engines 15 years ago to now, and concluded that no real change of paradigm had taken places over this period

(colors and artworks have changed, but the essence remains similar). 15 years ago search engines started displaying lists of matching urls in response to keyword queries, and today they continue to do so. He believes that this "pioneering" mode of interactions is getting poorly adapted to the current needs. In particular he demonstrated that this mode is poorly adapted to today's prevalent navigational requests (around 50% of requests on fixed Internet, more than 70% on mobile).

He foresees that the social networks will change the paradigm from a pure pull model (the user does an inquiry) to a push model of media via a person's social network (you should be interested by this). To illustrate this point he showed an application by Nomeo combining augmented reality and social networks on mobile phone (location based recommendation from social networks).

After this introduction, Professor Jean Veronis forecasted the biggest evolution in search technologies since 1990, in relation to the dramatic changes, caused by social data and behaviour, taking place in the Web topology. Among the factors causing these changes:

1) Spam: typing "restaurant Paris" yields full pages of links to restaurant specialized search engines. Very few links do actually point to real restaurants. The few restaurants featured were further rather irrelevant for most internet users (some very high profile jet set restaurants).
   Blogs are a major source of spam. He estimated that spam blogs (sblogs) represented about 50% of blogger.com blogs back in 2005. This ration may well have increased since.
2) Content duplication: duplication of a limited number of articles, in relation to events, buzz or other, can dramatically influence traditional ranking. He mentioned the word "segolisme" (derived from the first name of a candidate to the 2007 French presidential election) was used in 2006 only in some hundreds of original articles, but, because of duplication, generated hundreds of thousands of hits.
3) Changes in recommendation methods: instead of using back links, more and more people use social bookmarking such as twitter and likes.
   According to studies around 30% of bloggers do use a twitter account. When looking at the most prominent bloggers (Top 1000) this penetration rate goes up to around 50% (with some regional variation).

He then presented his latest work on Wikio combining web topology information (such as links, and likes) with linguistic analysis. He illustrated the capabilities of these developments by several examples using his own blog and tweet account and some user profile driven search queries.

His conclusion word was "*Hic sunt dragones*".

5. Roundtable discussion

PL introduced the discussion by presenting the results of the online survey prepared by the Chorus+ team.

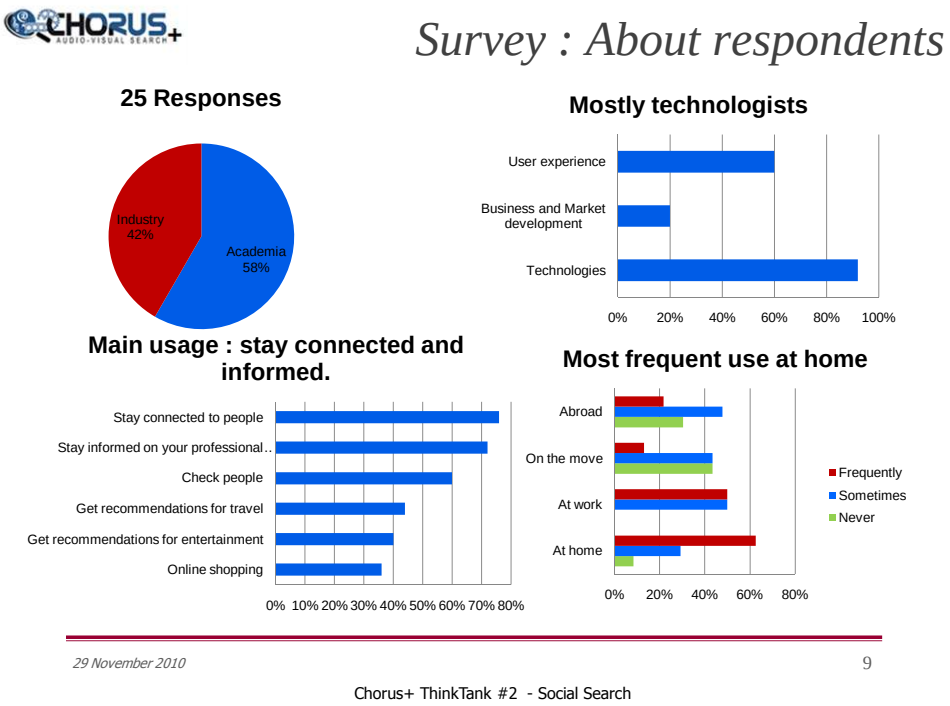

Figure 1: Profile of respondents to questionnaire

25 respondents, mostly participants to this Think-Tank, did fill the questionnaire. We believe therefore that the results examined do reflect the aggregated opinions of the Think-Tank members. When applicable, the slides presenting the results are included in this document. Full slide show used during the session is provides in Appendix 3.
The opinions and comments which were debated during the meeting are further summarized in this document.

5.1. Social search encompasses a wide range of different activities

The survey results summarized in slides 10 to 13 on general and business considerations do show quite important divergence between the respondents on basic services. In particular, opinions diverge greatly on important aspects such as technological maturity and business model. Figure 2 shows that on the subject of technological maturity the respondents divide evenly between those who consider that the technology is already there and those who have the opposite opinion.

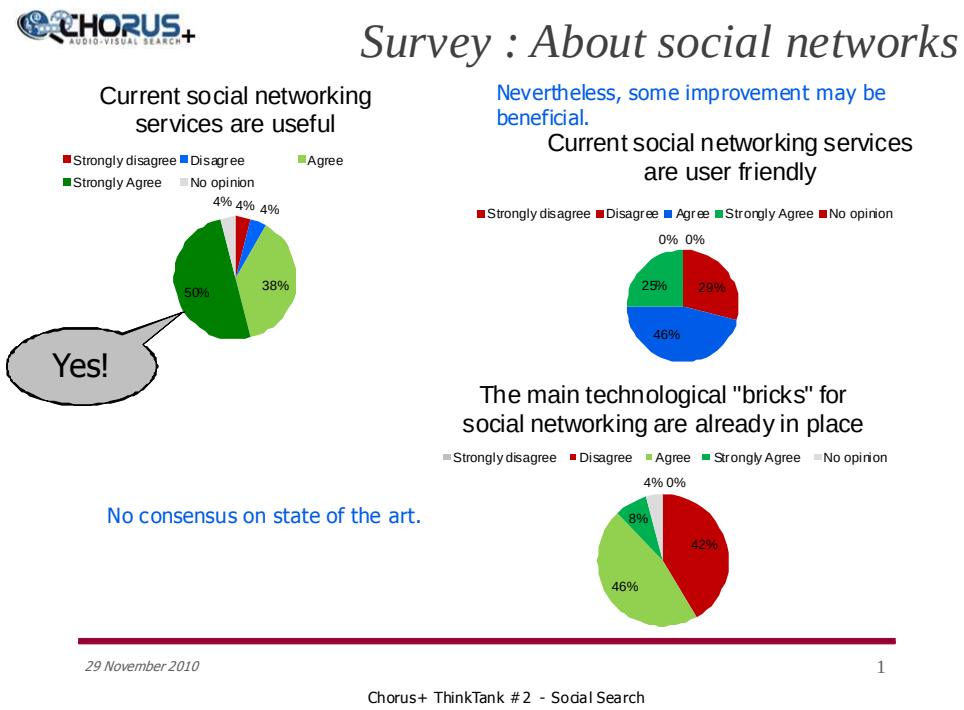

Figure 2 : Divergence on technological maturity.

The technological maturity divergence triggered a discussion on what "Social Search" really is.

YK suggested that the lack of consensus on technological maturity may be related to different viewpoints on the actual definition of Social Search. He proposed an "algorithmic" categorization of social search distinguishing between two different activities involving social media:

1. Search in social media.
2. Use of social media for enabling search.

The survey also shows a lack of consensus on business models and suppliers of services. A large majority of the respondents consider that the business models are still unclear. Regarding the most likely business model question, responses spread out quasi evenly on a number of options including advertising, community based and premium services.

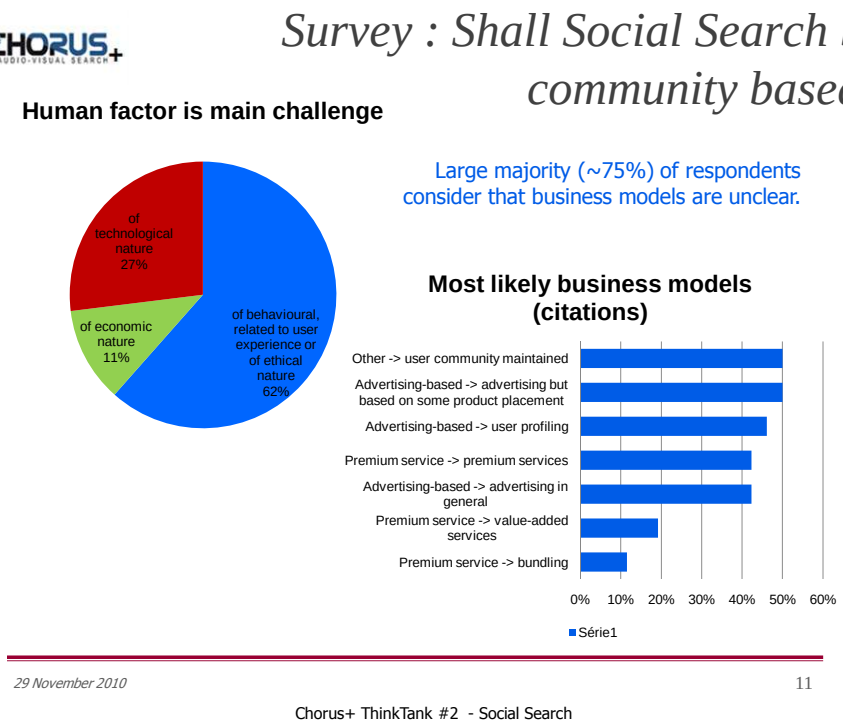

Figure 3: Business models remain unclear.

Most likely the large spread of the responses again results from divergence on what social search really is. The most likely supplier of a service depends in a large extend on the information being searched for.

AA has explained that to his opinion there are fundamentally two kinds of search.

- Information search,
- People search.

He thinks that the Social Network service providers are best positioned to succeed in the People Search area. Search Engine suppliers may well strike back on Information search.

AM suggested a socio-economic categorization: he expects Social Networks to evolve into two directions:

- Private life networks
- Business life networks

He expects each of these directions to have a clear market leader. To his opinion the market is far from mature, and current market leaders might well disappear or otherwise be overthrown. He mentioned in particular (lack of) Privacy as one of the main issues with current services. He said that Facebook is screwing up with respect to introduction of services that are more and more invasive to the privacy of the users. Nevertheless, in his opinion Facebook is actually doing this industry a favor in that it is discovering where the boundaries lies between what people will find acceptable and what they will not. Several participants agreed on this analysis. More on privacy in the next section.

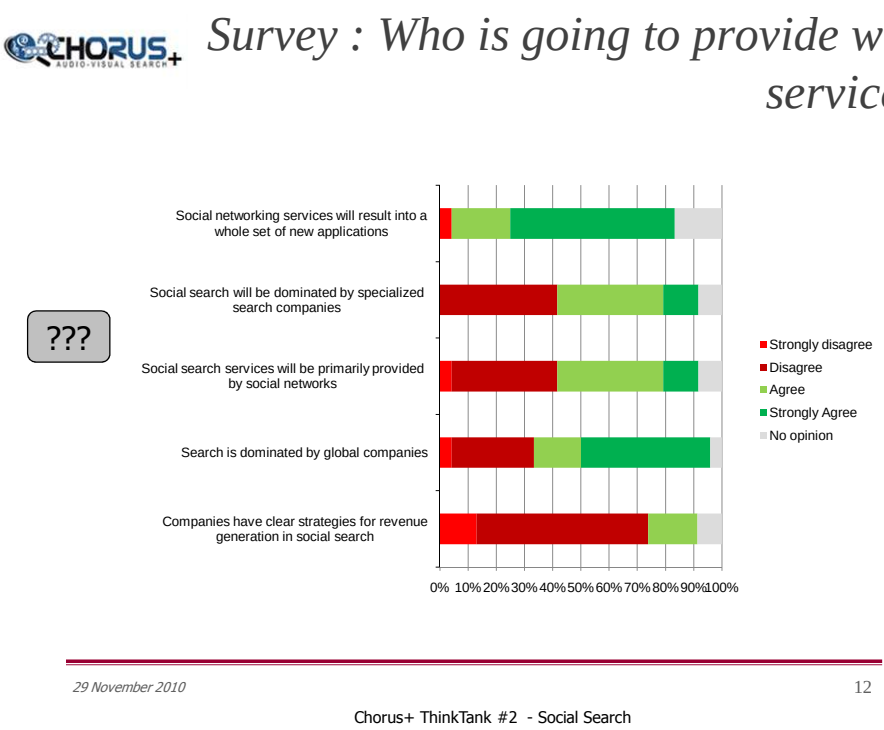

Figure 4 : No clear prediction for the service suppliers.

Social networks and search on those networks was also mentioned by several participants as a very promising tool for enhancing collaboration and education in Enterprises. MB sees Social Search services evolving towards awareness systems, especially in the enterprise context. Typically Enterprise solution could be provided by means of software licenses or by means of dedicated services.

5.2. With or without privacy social networks will continue to develop

Statement by AM described above on Privacy triggered quite some debate on the subject.
AJ pointed to a site demonstrating that the Privacy on Facebook has steadily decreased over time. Facebook.com gives away more and more private information (http://mattmckeon.com/Facebook-privacy/).

Face recognition techniques, such as Google Picasa name tagging feature, were also mentioned. Picasa utilizes face recognition to label faces in private albums and link them to your address book. It also propagates these labels with photos uploaded to Picasa Web. However, so far it does not allow public search or view of these labels.

RJ argued that people prefer convenience and will sacrifice privacy if they have to select between the two. Anytime there is a trade-off between privacy and convenience, convenience does win. The attendance did mostly agree to this view. SB illustrated this consensus with an additional comment on this topic. She said that she was using Facebook for professional rather than private purpose, simply because she considered Facebook was more user friendly than other networks, such as LinkedIn.

These comments and statement concur with the findings of the survey: users appear willing to trading privacy against better services. Privacy is certainly issue, but this issue will not prevent the social networks from continuing to develop and spread.

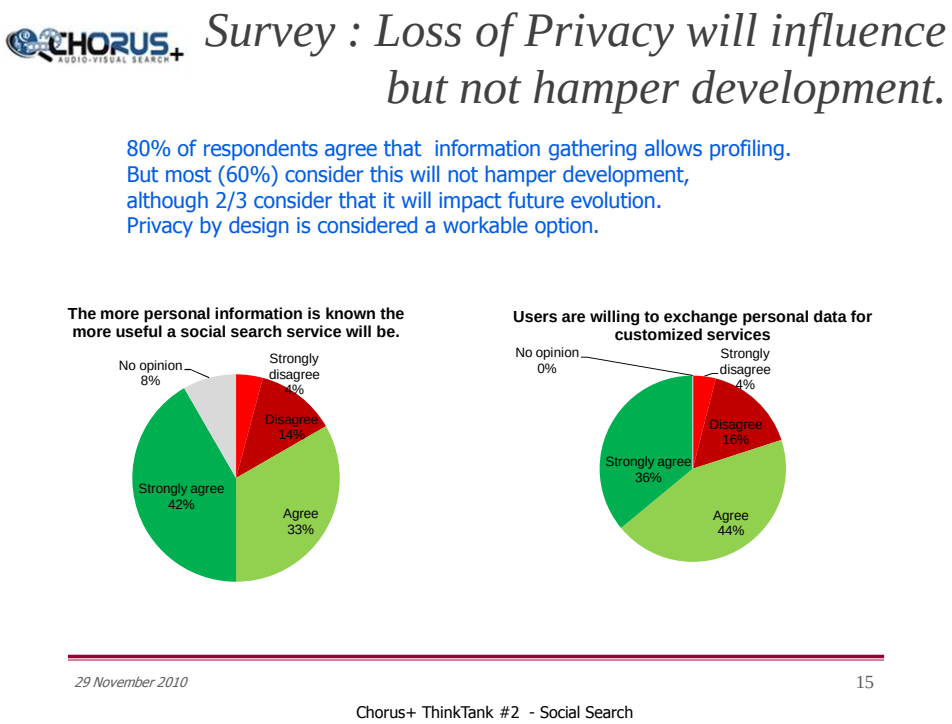

Figure 5: Development of social network will continue, with or without privacy.

5.3. Will personalization engines narrow down access to information?

After the discussion on privacy, AS has pointed on, what he considers, an even more important concern: the fear to see recommendation engines and content personalization mechanisms narrowing down the access to content. He is convinced that content personalization service providers may, intentionally or not, confine the user's choices to some limited set of documents.

RJ somehow has tempered this fear. He assimilated Google to a recommendation system (PageRank is in fact a recommendation mechanism). He believes that content specialization and recommendation may be useful on special occasions or situations. Whether or not you get recommendations should be manageable by the individual.

AS concluded that he hopes that, in one way or another, this issue will disappear by auto-regulation by the users: "The more you squeeze people into a box, the more they will complain".

5.4. Certifying information: no Trusted authorities but education

The question of trusted authorities for certifying information and authenticating users was at some point floated. Several participants did object strongly to this idea which they considered unrealistic (AH). This feeling appears to be the prevalent opinion beyond the participants.

According to AS, with or without social networking and social search, instilling critical spirit on information reliability by appropriate education is the only good solution on the long run.

5.5. Technologies: social search requires social science

According to the survey results the most important technologies are (slide 14):

- information extraction and data mining,
- mobile communications,
- new interfaces.

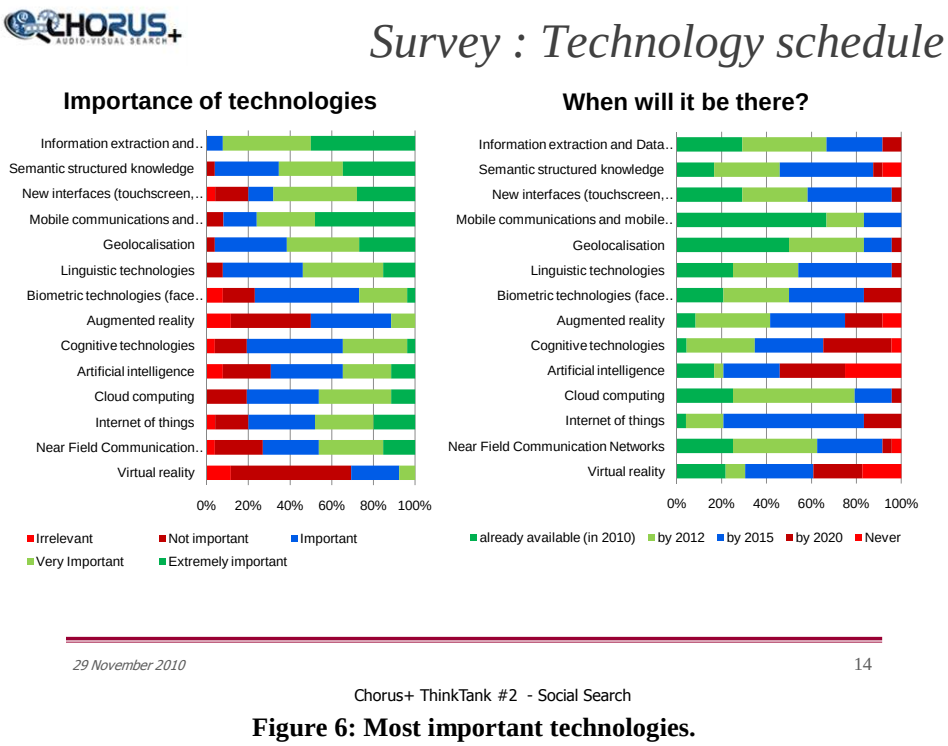

Figure 6: Most important technologies.

AdB objected that most of the technologies of the survey did apply to search rather than to social search specifically. In particular the social science dimension and subsequently the implication of sociologists were missing. He added that social science skills should be used to represent the structure in social media (which layers, what is the paradigm?). This opinion appeared to be shared by a large number of the other participants.

AH explained that the extraction of information from social network works differently than "classical" search; in particular a mechanism for deciding on information value is needed.

RJ pointed to the fact that the social search mechanisms should focus on the users: "Knowing the person is the key".

On the survey list of technologies MB then added she was missing gaming. She mentioned she was among the very few respondents to rate positively the need for Virtual Reality just because she felt that of the provided list this technology was most close to gaming.

AS added that to his opinion Image Processing was a very important technology to be considered.

In addition to the active research topics listed in the survey, LQ underlined the importance of the software platform and the service features. Sometimes, the software platform and the use model, rather than new technologies, have created new business opportunities.
For example, Facebook is now the most important channel for photo sharing. Three billion photos are uploaded to Facebook each month. This is largely because Facebook figured out the importance of sharing photos in people's lives, and supported it in their software platform. The primarily mechanism for tagging people on Facebook today is manual tagging. So in this particular example, the content analysis technologies are playing a second role, at least for the time being.
Similarly, the reason Twitter works is because of their usage model of sharing/broadcasting of short messages and their scalable software platform. Meanwhile, content analysis research on Twitter content has become a very rich research area.

Appendix 1 : Survey: social network usage by respondents.

In response of a series of question regarding usage of social networks by the individual respondents on usage of social networking services below described sites were mentioned.

Name	% respondents mentioning.
Facebook	60%
LinkedIn	36%
Google	36%
Twitter	20%
Flickr	20%
Youtube	20%
Kurzweil	8%

Tripadvisor, athlinks, mixi, live, Nagoya were mentioned once.

Appendix 2 : Text of the survey

1.1. About you vision on social networks and social search

For each one of the following statements please indicate the level of your agreement.
Response (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 5 = no opinion)

1. Current social networking services are useful
2. Current social networking services are user friendly
3. Social services are a threat to privacy
4. The social networking landscape is expected to evolve dramatically with new actors and new services
5. The main technological "bricks" (devices, networks, applications…) for social networking are already in place
6. Potentially disruptive technologies (cloud computing, internet of things…) will determine the way social search will evolve
7. Social networking services and information extraction can be used to generate additional knowledge (e.g. monitoring for trends, events, points of interest detection)
8. Social networking services will result into a whole set of new application (such as collaborative-based personalization, automatic tag propagation, etc.)
9. Privacy concerns hampers technological evolution
10. Empowerment of the user for granular privacy and identity control will affect the way social search will evolve
11. Companies have clear strategies for revenue generation in social search
12. Search is dominated by global companies
13. Social search services will be dominated by specialized search companies (e.g. Google, Yahoo, Bing)
14. Social search services will be primarily provided by social networks (e.g. Facebook, twitter)
15. Strategic decisions on innovation and investments in social networking and social search are taken outside the EU
16. The European industrial landscape is strong (operators, suppliers…) and builds upon past success stories of co-operation
17. Europe has a high ICT adoption and literacy in general coupled with comparatively high income levels

1.2. About You and How You Use of Social Networks

- You work in
  - Academia

- Industry
- Public Administration
- Other (specify, please)

- Your expertise in social networking
  - 3 years or less
  - from 3 to 5 years
  - more than 5 years

- Your expertise in connection to social networking (tick as many as apply)
  - Technologies
  - Business and market development
  - User experience
  - Law / Regulation
  - Other (specify, please)

1.3. How you use social networking

1. What Social Networks do you use? (Please provide URLS)
2. What service(s) do you use for searching on social networks?
3. How often do you access Social Networks
   - more than 3 times a day
   - 1 to 3 times a day
   - 1 to 3 times a week
4. For how long have you been using Social Networking search applications?
   a. for less than one year
   b. for one to two years
   c. for more than two years
5. Where do you use your social search services
   a. At home
   b. At work
   c. On the move (i.e. using mobile devices)
   d. When abroad

   Response (1 = never; …5 = always)
6. What do you use social search for? (tick all that apply)
   a. Stay connected to people
   b. Check people
   c. Online shopping (e.g. product reviews)
   d. Offline shopping

e. Get recommendations for entertainment (e.g.: Movies, TV, books, music, games, …)
f. Get recommendations for travel, hostelry and restaurants
g. Get recommendations on financial matters (e.g. stock exchange, …)
h. Stay informed on your professional domain.
i. Other (please list)

1.4. Social Search Technology today and tomorrow

Technologies:

- Semantic structured knowledge,
- Information extraction and Data Mining,
- Augmented reality,
- Virtual reality,
- Artificial intelligence,
- Biometric technologies (face recognition, voice recognition, ….),
- Cognitive technologies,
- Linguistic technologies,
- Geolocalisation
- Mobile communications and mobile devices
- Near Field Communication Networks
- Internet of things,
- New interfaces (touchscreen, micro-projectors, gesture-controlled, , ..),
- Cloud computing,
- Other

Importance of the above technologies for Social Search: Response (1 = irrelevant; 5 = extremely important)
…irrelevant
…not important
…important
…very important
…extremely important

Time horizon of the above technologies: When will these technologies be commonplace in social search applications
… already available (in 2010)
… by 2012
… by 2015
… by 2020
… Never

Choose the <u>combination</u> of the most important technologies (select up to 3 from the list above) to shape social search applications and services in 2011-2012

Choose the <u>combination</u> of the most important technologies (select up to 3 from the list above) to shape social search applications and services in 2011-2012

1.5. Social Search Applications and Business Models

The major challenge to Social Search is …
…of technological nature
…of economic nature
…of behavioural, related to user experience or of ethical nature
…of legal / regulatory nature

The most likely future business model for social search services is likely to be (tick up to three options)

Advertising-based

- advertising in general (i.e. like in today Internet search) merchandising (i.e., as a way to sell some other product or service) or affiliation
- advertising but based on some product placement (i.e., linked with another product: a tv show, a cinema premiere, …)
- user profiling (i.e., selling the user profiles for commercial purposes)

Premium service

- premium services (i.e., the basic functionality is free, but the advanced options not)
- value-added services (i.e., a contract for a pack of services on top of usual ones)
- bundling with other services (i.e. social search comes with your subscription to some other service…)

Other

- user community maintained by user contributions (like Wikipedia, for example)
- not a commercial service (i.e., a public service)

any other, please specify

1.6. Privacy Issues and Personalised Services in Relation to Social Search

For each one of the following statements please indicate the level of your agreement.
Response (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 5 = no opinion)

- Gathering information about individuals or groups, even if anonymized, allows for profiling
- The more personal information is known about the user, the more personalised and useful a social search service will become
- Users are willing to exchange personal data for customized services

- "Privacy by design" (e.g. privacy-enhancing, transparency-enhancing technologies) is not viable (e.g. hacking, costs, etc)
- Requesting explicit consent for companies to process user's personal data is not viable on a large scale (e.g. opt-in options difficult to implement, use of data for future applications unclear, etc)
- Customers are aware of privacy issues
- "Privacy by law" is efficient to avoid abuses

Appendix 3 : Presentation material.

CHORUS + Think Tank #2

Social Search

Firenze October 27th

Hosted by ACM Multimedia

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Grant Agreement No. 249008 CHORUS +
01/01/2010 – 31/12/2012

Agenda

- A (very) quick reminder on the objectives
- Participant presentations (3mn/participant)
  - Who are you
  - What are you working on
  - What is your vision / What are your concerns
- *Jean Veronis :* Social Media Travel Diary
  - Keynote by Jean Veronis
- Open roundtable discussion starting with quick presentation of the survey results.

For facilitating the debate and the notes, could you please put your name and affiliation on a piece of paper in front of you.

29 November 2010 1

Chorus+ ThinkTank #2 - Social Search

Attendance

Special Guests

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ENG	Vincenzo Croce	

Reminder on the objectives

- About Chorus+:
  - Chorus+ is a Coordination Action aiming at coordinating national and international projects and initiatives in the Search-engine domain.
    - Chorus+ is supported by the European Commission as part of the FP7 framework.
  - The 6 Think tank sessions aim at building a sense on what is laying ahead in this area.
- This think tank proposed objectives:
  - Which search tools and technologies for the social networks?
  - Do we envision new tools and services to emerge anytime soon?
  - Do we envision new applications and service to emerge from the combination of automatic information retrieval and social tagging and comments from the social networks?
  - What is the future for real time trend and opinion analysis?

The think tank outcome

- A - possibly consensual - assessment on the top features and top priorities on technological developments in the Social Search area.
- Following approval by the participants, the Meeting notes will be submitted to the commission and published on the Chorus+ web site.

Participant presentations

Who are you
What are you working on
And don't forget to tell what are your concerns and your vision for the domain.

Social media travel diary

About Jean Veronis

Jean Véronis is a Professor at Aix-Marseille University, and founder of jvTech, an IT consulting company focused on research and advanced topics in language technology. He has been involved for more than 25 years in research on this topic (web search and indexing, semantic analysis and representations, automatic translation, speech synthesis and recognition, etc.), a domain in which he has contributed more than 200 articles, communications or books. Jean Véronis has taught for several years in the United States, and has been an active member of several international expert groups. He has served as president of the Association for natural language processing (ATALA) from 2000 to 2008.

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And now the roundtable discussion

Introduced by survey results

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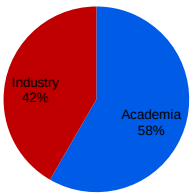
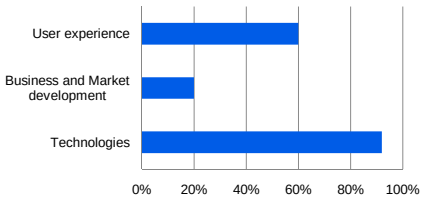
Survey : About respondents

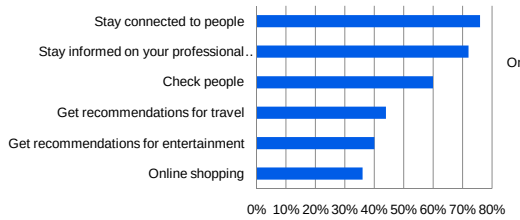
25 Responses



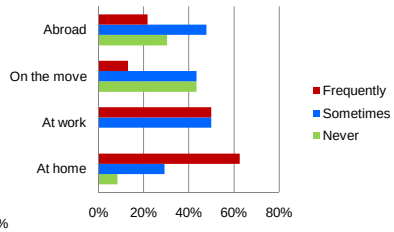
Mostly technologists



Main usage : stay connected and informed.



Most frequent use at home



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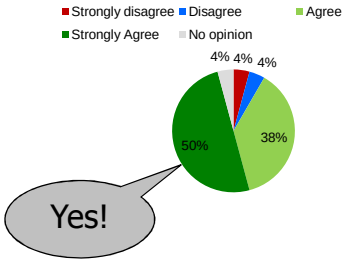
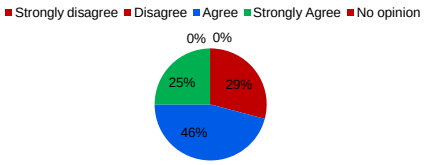
Survey : About social networks

Current social networking services are useful



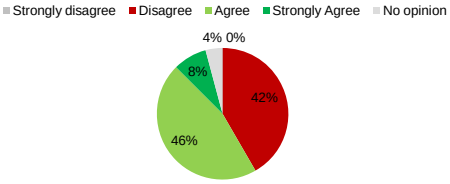
Nevertheless, some improvement may be beneficial.

Current social networking services are user friendly



No consensus on state of the art.

The main technological "bricks" for social networking are already in place



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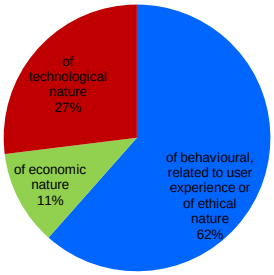
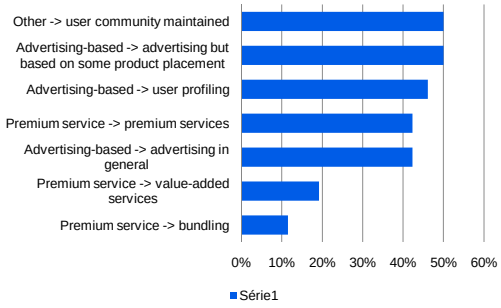
Survey : Shall Social Search be community based?

Human factor is main challenge



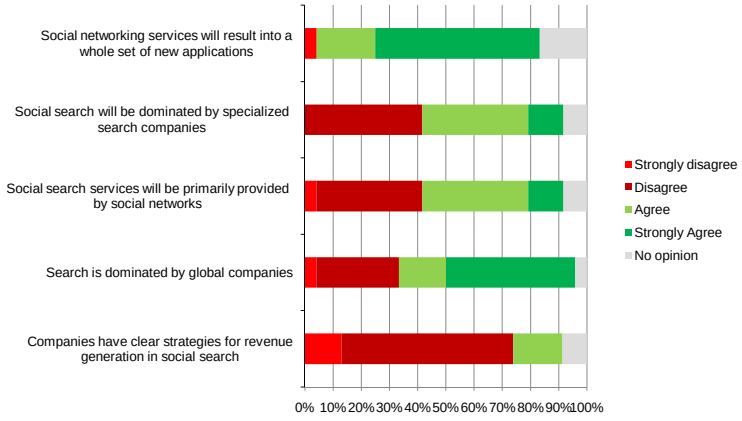
Large majority (~75%) of respondents consider that business models are unclear.

Most likely business models (citations)



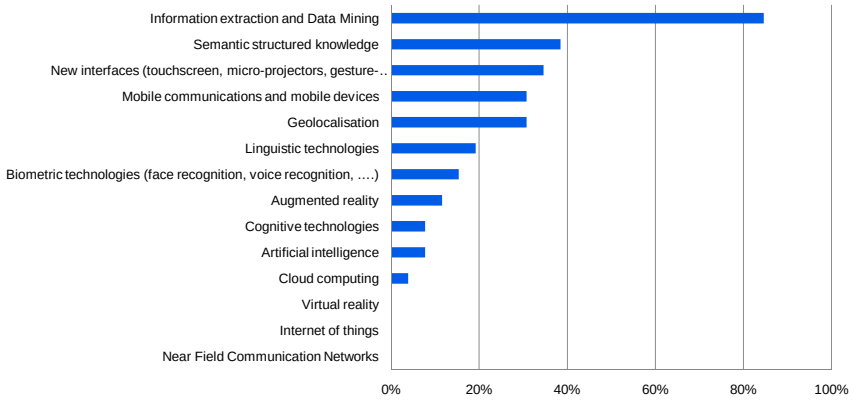
Survey : Who is going to provide what services?

???



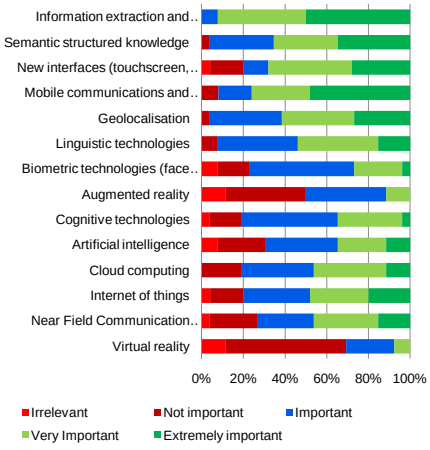
Survey : Most important technologies

Information extraction/data mining far away most important technology

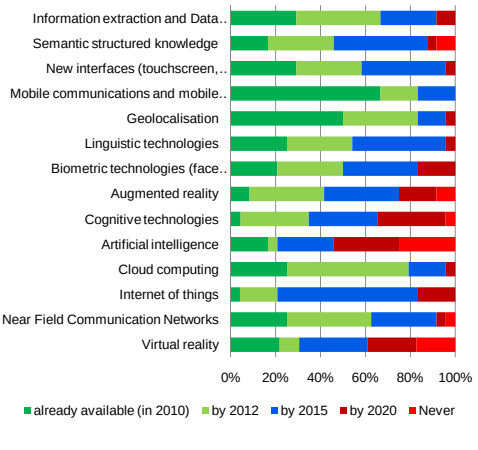


Survey : Technology schedule

Importance of technologies



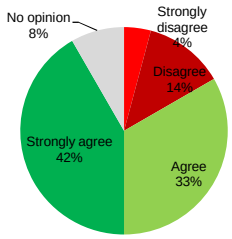
When will it be there?



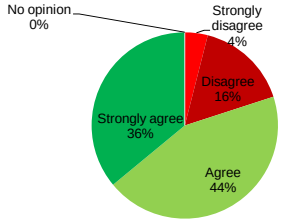
Survey : Loss of Privacy will influence but not hamper development.

80% of respondents agree that information gathering allows profiling.
But most (60%) consider this will not hamper development,
although 2/3 consider that it will impact future evolution.
Privacy by design is considered a workable option.

The more personal information is known the more useful a social search service will be.



Users are willing to exchange personal data for customized services



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Many thanks for your participation

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