

Why social networking is a driver for NFC

Payment and ticketing are tough areas to change. First of all, you have a lot of players in each area with own thoughts about the business models and revenue shares. Second, the infrastructure and phone distribution is expensive and no one really feels responsible to carry the initial costs of it. Third, the consumers are still far away (at least in Europe) to understand what really happens if they touch something with their mobile phones...for these reasons, the adaptation of Near Field Communication (NFC) was not as fast as expected by some a few years ago.

On the other hand, social networks such as Facebook.com see massive growth – which means they are highly accepted by the users and are here today and not in the distant future. To bring these fields together, we thought about combining NFC and social networks and created the service “friendticker”. “I am here!” is the claim of the service – Let your friends know where you are and what you do! Friendticker is a mobile NFC-based location platform to communicate my current location and activity to my social network, see what my friends are doing right now and identify hotspots and points of interest.

To facilitate the use of the system, we created NFC stickers attached to bars and restaurants. Touching the sticker equals to say „I am here!“ to your network (Facebook) and the friendticker website. The stickers use Mifare Ultralight tags or alternatively text



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messaging to communicate the ID number of the sticker to the backend system. They are water-resistant, easy to remove, not technologically driven, and unique (every single one). They are produced in cooperation with Hansaprint and NXP.

The process is as follows: first, you touch the NFC sticker with your NFC phone; each sticker is unique. Via phone the location number is transferred to the server. Then your location is shown on friendticker.de and/or facebook.com.

This means friendticker is among the first NFC-based Social Network with constant location updates. Currently we are in a beta testing phase and have applied more than 250 bars & restaurants with stickers in Berlin, Germany. After the test phase, the stickers will be adapted to user needs and applied to many bars and restaurants with benefits also for the restaurant owners. We think this will help to advance the NFC ecosystem very fast, because the friendticker.de ecosystem is set up by the company itself. It makes use of standard Mifare NFC tags that can be basically applied everywhere. Insofar the ecosystem is built by the company. The roll out is planned for 2009 in Berlin and Frankfurt. Local cooperation with content providers e.g. city magazines helps to add Viral Marketing.