**THE PROBLEM**

Since the inception of the social revolution, pioneered by Myspace and popularized by Facebook, the most ambitious startups and the most prestigious corporations have endeavored to lay a digital layer over our existing social lives. While they have, in most respects, enjoyed much success, the existing digital infrastructure is far from comprehensive in its coverage of our social interactions. While many elements of our social life have been made more efficient, such as our ability to share photos, pioneered by Facebook, or to quickly reach millions of people willing to listen, pioneered by Twitter, there exists a disconnect between our digital world and our physical world.

**THE IDEA**

We want to bridge that disconnect with locol: the geosocial network. Locol allows its users to find the most relevant information to them by subscribing to interest-specific communities. For example, there might be a soccer community, a Settlers of Catan community, or a Texas Hold'em community, or a computer science community. Users submit posts to a community, which are tied to a specific location. A post might be "Pickup soccer game on the Midway at 11", posted at that location. Then users who've subscribed to the soccer community, and are nearby the Midway, would see that post.

There also needs to be the distinction between public and private communities. While many communities will allow anyone to join them, some users will want to restrict access to their community to only their friends. For example, there might be a Hype Park Parents community, in which members post play dates and events for other parents, but the members don’t want to allow anyone other than parents they’ve met into the community. A moderator of that community could choose to set the community to private, and only allow access to specific members.

All communities, and all posts in all communities, will be user-generated. Locol is not the content generator; locol is the platform on which users can generate and distribute their own content. As such, there are undoubtedly use cases which we haven’t considered, and will not become apparent until there is a significant user population. Our goal is to provide the most flexible and intuitive system to allow for those unforeseen use cases.

**THE SOLUTION**

The key is only presenting the most relevant data to you. While having social generation of content allows our system to have the most up-to-date and otherwise obscure information, a significant problem with allowing all the data on the system to be user generated is that much is of content is irrelevant or low quality. To solve this problem, we needed an algorithm to rank posts within a given community based on the relevance of that post. A post’s relevance is determined by how close in time a user is to that post, how close in space, and how many other users have found it relevant. Users can ‘echo’ posts they think are most relevant, and ‘challenge’ those they find irrelevant. Not only do we find the most relevant data overall, by how temporally relevant a post is and how socially relevant it is, but we determine, through your interests and location. The key is presenting the most relevant data to you.

**RESOURCES**

- **MongoDB** - NoSQL, non-relational database that stores information in BSON, slightly specialized dialect of JSON
- **Apache Maven** - build automation tool, for retrieve and building projects
- **Google GSON** – Java library to serialize and deserialize JSON objects
- **Jetty** – HTTP server
- **Heroku** – hosting and infrastructure for server functions
- **Google Maps API** – Allows use of Google Maps in app UI

**Acknowledgements**

This project was completed as part of CS 234 Mobile Computing (Winter 2013), taught by Professor Chien, with TA support by Tanakorn L. and Falcon Dai