

Location Based Mobile Applications CHEAT SHEET

Location Base Mobile Apps and Mobile Social Networks

Social networking has redefined how business is conducted. The wave of the social media movement that includes social mobile has now adopted several location based applications. This allows people to connect and engage their fields through virtual community. Use this sheet as a starter guide for your personal or business use of location based mobile applications.

Business Uses for Location Based Mobile Apps

1. Connecting

With business travel, particularly to conferences, it can be difficult to even know if friends and colleagues are in the vicinity. Foursquare notices appear from friends on the network to help facilitate meet-ups that can provide avenues for fruitful work.

2. Socializing

A few years ago, Twitter took conferences by storm, with attendees utilizing the technology to track people down. LBS apps have the same potential to impact social media. Finding clients at a nearby cafe or restaurant could be great for business, so long as their personality meshes well and the exposure doesn't turn them off.

3. Discovering

Gone are the days of being on a business trip and having to rely on the concierge for restaurant suggestions or the wait staff for meal recommendations. Foursquare tips show all of the above and more. Foursquare's recommendations offer a more interactive experience as you venture into new businesses and look for favorites.

4. Promoting

The really interesting thing about an LBS is how local businesses can leverage it to attract more customers. The concept that members can get discounts and perks from businesses by becoming "mayor" or frequenting a place often is genius. There are endless ways to apply the promotion option of location based mobile applications.

Source: webworkdaily.com/2010/02/02/how-to-use-location-based-social-networks-for-business/

Location-Based Vocabulary

Check-In	When you tell a LBS where you are, that's called "checking in". This alerts friends and followers where you are.
Badge	A badge is a reward you earn for checking in at interesting places. Badges are constantly evolving and broadening.
Tag	Many badges are tied to venue "tags". People use tags to describe places and unlock badges.
Points	Points are awarded for check-ins. You can earn points for frequent visits or adding a new place to software listings.
Off the Grid	This check-in occurs when the location is hidden. This allows users to add points while still maintaining some privacy.
Mayor	This foursquare term is awarded to users who check-in at locations more than anyone else. The title can change hands, and incentives are offered by some places.
App	Software designed to help the user perform a singular task or multiple related tasks. In this case, an app creates a platform to connect with a social network.
Geocaching	Essentially a high-tech version of hide-and-seek. Users explore the outdoors, using mobile GPS to keep score.
Geotagging	The process of adding geographical identification (i.e. latitude,longitude) to mobile technologies.

Popular LBS Applications

Source: inventorspot.com/articles

Foursquare

Some call Foursquare a game changer. It's unique from other applications because it works on a points system awarded to users who visit more places and meet with more people.

Brightkite

Brightkite was one of the first companies to really make a splash in the LBM space, combining location sharing, friend connections, and placestreams to create a photo and status update feed for your check-in history for each location. This network has Twitter-like usability.

Whrrl

This is a storytelling application that allows people to share and remember their real-world experiences as they happen. Users have total privacy control with Facebook and Twitter integration available. Publishing photos and stories is quick and simple with this application.

Loopt

Loopt's community is built on three basic principles: Connect, Share, and Explore. This operates like a compass and GPS. Installing this app creates a map on your phone that will locate your friend's. Instant messaging is supported.

Gowalla

Gowalla has been pitted as direct competition to Foursquare. It similarly creates a game with points and icons to collect based on places visited. Gowalla uses GPS coordinates to verify physical location, making it very difficult to "game" the game by fibbing about visits.

Others: yelp, mytown, gypsii, citysense, plazes, mobiluck, google latitude, ipling, aroundme.

Privacy and Personal Security Concerns

1. Data Theft

Cybercriminals are becoming more intent to use mobile phones not just for simple attacks, but for data theft.

- Smartphones are normally synchronized with desktop computers to back up important contacts. This makes accessing documents from a compromised mobile phone as easy as stealing from a PC.
- The theft of a phone is less important than the theft of a phone's content.

2. Material Theft

It makes sense that if you check-in at a restaurant via Foursquare or a similar LBS, you are not home. Does this invite criminals to invade your home while it's unattended? Some think so.

- As social media usage has increased, so too has the amount of crimes that have been linked to information given out over social media networks.
- While some security providers try to over-capitalise on people with hype and fear-mongering, it is best to use good judgment with what you post, and refine your networks to include trusted contacts.

Spotlight: Yelp

For customer service providers like restaurants and hotels, reviews can make or break. In the location based mobile application world, Yelp is the foremost provider for this opportunity to draw or lose traffic.

Yelp users can post pictures, make comments, and give menu tips before their waiter brings the check. This immediate feedback reaches an entire network that may still be looking for a place to eat that night.

This is just an example of the influence mobile social apps are capable of.

13 Innovative Ways to Leverage

Location Based Mobile Applications

- 1. Coffee Shops:** Coffee shops typically build a loyal fan base and there are chains almost everywhere on the planet, with Starbucks leading the pack. With internet readily available in most, why not allow users to update their location and status as their reward card, gift card or debit card is swiped?
- 2. Gyms and Health Clubs:** It's no mystery that everyone wants to be the mayor of the gym they frequent. This could be the most coveted check-in for LBS's because it will show just how active and fit users are. As customer's swipe their gym card, gyms can check them in. Gowalla could create special stamps for number of check-ins at a gym with unique names.
- 3. Movie Theatres:** A slam-dunk because of the direct competition that exists between movie theatres in a given area. Why not drive traffic to your locations by letting the power of user networks to take over?
- 4. Airlines:** Reward miles to folks who use their Advantage card or Advantage Credit Card and tie to their social stream. For example, if a customer gets upgraded to first class, update their lifestream and location. Why not hit their stream when they get upgraded to Executive Platinum or Platinum as well?
- 5. Car Rentals:** When you upgrade them to a nicer car or higher status, let them update their social stream.
- 6. Nike + iTunes:** Now I know there is a way now that you can tweet about your run once you sync to iTunes, but what about while you are actually running. It sure would be neat if you could optionally, tweet your location and distance while on the run. Something like "Mike is on mile 2 at Russell Creek Park".
- 7. Marathons, Triathlons, and Bike Races:** What if using GPS and markers at each mile or significant mile marker you could automatically update an athlete's location on their route? Then folks could follow real-time from home.
- 8. Hotels:** Update their status when they check in with their Hilton Honors or Marriott Rewards card for example.
- 9. Music Purchase:** Why not give folks the option to check in and update their applications when they download a song via iTunes.
- 10. iPhone App Installation:** Similar to above, why not give me the ability to update that I downloaded and installed an app, my location and share with my stream.
- 11. College tours:** Every campus should use these for touring campus as well as for existing students similar to what Harvard provided. Let folks connect and get to know each other. More importantly, think of the great hidden tips about historical buildings you could provide. Gowalla already has the concept of trips built-in.
- 12. City Tours:** Take this to the next level and use for athletic city scavenger hunts. Provide tips and tricks to find the next place to check in and use for competitive races or for just folks to go on walking tours. What if you teamed with Gowalla to provide special stamps along the way as well.
- 13. Giveaways:** Foursquare offers this today for businesses. Reward a new mayor with 50% off their bill. What a great incentive for folks to visit and to check in where they are. Who knows, maybe more folks will visit your establishment if they keep seeing that folks are eating there.