



Initial Plan

40 Credits	CM3203 One Semester Project
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Project Title	"To what extent is the user aware of the privacy implications surrounding the Social Web and is there need for Personal Control of the issue?"

Project Description

Over the past number of years, there has been an exponential growth in the number of people using “Location Enabled Social Network” websites such as Twitter. Coupled with the implementation of features that allow Twitter to collect personal location information which can also infer detailed private information, there has been a lot of concern to users of the implications of giving this information away has on their privacy. With this investigation the intention is to assess the awareness of implications of location privacy on Twitter by assessing a group of Twitter users. On top of this, there will be recommendations of approaches to protecting user privacy on sites such as Twitter.

The process will begin with an initial look into what is currently outlined by Twitter in its terms and conditions. Things such as what type of data is collected, how it is collected and how is it manipulated by Twitter, users and third party entities after collection are of interest to the completion of this project. Further research into work related to this topic will be carried out in order to gauge a basic understanding of what is to be expected of the results of analysis generated by this investigation. Furthermore, there will be research into the user’s opinions of privacy concerns, using the medium of a questionnaire, interviews and focus group to understand their initial and after thoughts on this issue.

This research aims to highlight the concerns raised about privacy concerns using Twitter in relation to the geographic information it collects about its users. Moreover, it is intended that if these concerns are proven true, there will be further investigation into possible solutions for the users of Twitter to increase the visibility of the information that is being collected from them or even controlling what information that it allows to be derived from them.

Project Aims and Objectives

1. Carry out research of Twitter and its policies regarding the issues raised by this project. These issues involve collection of geographic location information, how this information is used and its effect on the privacy of users and are there enough effort raised to alarm the users the implications surrounding the information it provides.
2. Investigation into the current attitudes to privacy concerns of Twitter users by identifying what they think they know about what information is being collected from them, and if they are currently concerned about it.

Furthermore, identify if they would be open to the idea of implementing control features onto Twitter which will allow them better control of the information they give away.

3. Collection and analysis of tweets from a dataset created using a Twitter analysis application, created by a previous student, in order to identify what information can be derived by Twitter using the collection of geographic locations.
4. Another investigation into the attitudes of users, this time after providing them with results of the analysis and suggestions for control features that could be implemented to raise awareness of or control what information is given by the user.
5. Comparisons between both sets of attitudes of users, before and after the results were shown to them, to highlight whether or not the findings had an effect on them or not.
6. Evaluate the effect of increasing visibility of user's information on Twitter to help them become aware of what data is being collected from them and being used.
7. Outline possible control applications that could be implemented into Twitter which will allow the user to gain more control of what information can be collected from them and to see if these control applications will affect their attitudes towards their privacy concerns.

Ethical issues

Due to the nature of this project, which includes using user's tweets as a sample set of tweets, there are ethical issues surround this project.

Collecting and using data from other users for my own use can be viewed as an ethical issue. Therefore, I must ensure that I only use the data collected from the users for its intended purpose. Furthermore, I must ensure that I only collect the necessary amount of data required to carry out this project and not use any more than what may be seen as unnecessary.

In order to adhere to Cardiff University's policies for carrying out ethical research, I will fill in and submit an ethical approval form. By submitting this form, I am showing that I am responsible for my actions when it comes to any ethical issues involved in the project and ensures that I must remain professional and integral when working with this type of data.

Work Plan

Continuous Work throughout Project

- Task 1 Carry out research into other work that has been carried out in this area of study in an attempt to deepen my knowledge
- Task 2 Progress meetings with supervisor

Week 1 – Week commencing 26th January

- Task 3 Develop an initial plan for project
Outline the work plan and Gantt chart
Outline any ethical consideration when undertaking this project

Deliverables – Initial Plan

Week 2 – Week commencing 2nd February

- Task 2 Progress meeting with supervisor
- Task 4 Initiate the collection of tweets from Twitter users and to identify what geographic location information is collected from users. Also, look into the collection tool itself in order to gauge an understanding of how it functions and any changes that need to be made by myself in order to initiate my own collection of tweets.
- There is a potential **risk** involved with the tool not being able to initiate the collection of tweets due to debugging because of the time constraints of the project
 - There is an **alternative** plan in place in case the risk occurs which is using the research I will carry out into other work done in this area of study to develop assumptions of what results I would have expected from the tool, and analyse these for the project.
- Task 5 Research Twitter's terms and conditions for policies on how they use the precise geographic location information, which they collect from its users.
Research how geographic location information is collected and can be used by Twitter itself, by other users of Twitter that can access the data and by third party entities (advertisement companies, the government)

Create literature for research completed into studies carried out in this field of work with respect to the privacy implications on social media

- What are the users' current attitudes towards privacy implications and do they have any concerns about what is being collected from them when it comes to using their geographic location information
- What are the users' current awareness of the privacy implications that come with using social media websites such as Twitter

Deliverables – Written report of the findings from my research into privacy implications for users, using Social Networks

Week 3 – Week commencing 9th February

Task 4 Waiting for collection of sample tweets to be developed

Task 6 Develop questionnaire for initial survey of user opinions'

- Users will range from a number of expertise levels to ensure that a balanced survey will be collected
- Question the idea of "what data is actually the users'?" and "what data are the users' actually allowed access to?" Are they only able to access the raw data they provided to Twitter or can they access the information that Twitter has created from a manipulation of the raw data
- Gauge an idea of what the users are aware of in terms of the implications to privacy, what information is being collected from them and how this information is being manipulated by Twitter
- What are their opinions on possible control features being added to Twitter's application and their opinions on increasing visibility of what information is being given to Twitter so that they are aware of the information they are giving away

Pilot questionnaire by distributing it to two or three Twitter users to make sure that the questionnaire is designed to meet all the deliverables that were outlined in the design of the questionnaire and make sure the questions make sense

Distribute first questionnaire

Deliverables – First Questionnaire

Week 4 – Week commencing 16th February

- Task 2 Progress meeting with supervisor
- Task 4 Finish off collecting tweets from the tool and produce the results of the collection
- Task 6 Wait on results from questionnaire which has been distributed.
- Interview a select number of people using the questions from the questionnaire so that I can gauge my own understanding of what the user's opinions are on privacy implications. Write up results.
- Task 7 Begin the write up of final report including the introduction, background and approaches to the project

Deliverables – A collection of sample set of tweets from users
 Write up of the results from interviews

Week 5 – Week commencing 23rd February

- Task 3 Carry out the analysis on the sample set of tweets collected
- Task 6 Collect results from the first questionnaire and write up the results

Deliverables – Collection of results from First Questionnaire
 Analysis results of sample set of Tweets

Week 6 – Week commencing 2nd March

- Task 2 Progress meeting with supervisor
- Task 7 Continue the write up of final report adding a section on implementation
- Task 8 Design a second questionnaire including; the results from the initial questionnaire, results from the interviews and the findings from the literature that was produced on the findings from the research into privacy implications of Social Networks
- Pilot questionnaire with the aim of testing the design and structure of questionnaire
- Distribute the second questionnaire to the same users

Deliverables – Second Questionnaire

Week 7 – Week commencing 9th March

- Task 3 Continued analysis of sample set of tweets from previous weeks
- Task 7 Review of the written report and make relevant alterations
- Task 8 Wait on results from second questionnaire to be collected
Set-up a second set of interviews and carry them out based on questions from the second questionnaire

Deliverables - Write up the results from second set of interviews

Week 8 – Week commencing 16th March

- Task 3 Continued analysis of sample set of tweets from previous weeks
- Task 7 Continue with write up of final report
- Task 8 Collect the results of the second questionnaire and write up the results
- Task 9 Carry out a comparison on both sets of questionnaire results

Deliverables – Collection of results from second questionnaire
Comparison of results from two questionnaires

Week 9 – Week commencing 23rd March

- Task 2 Progress meeting with supervisor
- Task 9 Comparison of results produced from this project with results from other work. (Comparing with last year's project into LBSN and other work carried out that I had researched in week 3)

Deliverables – Write up of comparison of results with other work

Easter Recess – Week commencing 30th March

Task 7 Work on write up of final report including the evaluation of the results produced from the analysis and comparisons. Also, consider further work that can be carried out after project completion

Task 10 Arrange a focus group to get opinions of users about the idea of increasing visibility of what information is being collected and displaying it on the application

Develop a set of questions to ask the focus group

Carry out focus group

Write up the results from the focus group

Deliverables – Write up results of the focus group

Week 10 – Week commencing 20th April

Task 2 Progress meeting with supervisor

Task 7 Write up the conclusion of the report and include a section on my reflection on what I have learned while undertaking the project

Week 11 – Week commencing 27th April

Task 7 Finish up final report and produce a first draft

Week 12 – Week commencing 4th May

Task 7 Proof read over first draft and make relevant alterations to the draft

Submit final draft of project

Deliverables – Submission of final report

