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Location Sharing: Women Respond to Trust; Men Share to Connect with Others

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Poster/Work-In-Progress (WIP) Paper Abstract Template

Title: Location Sharing: Women Respond to Trust; Men Share to Connect with Others

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ABSTRACT
Background: Location-enabled applications are providing tremendous value for community and commerce. Despite significant investments by companies such as Facebook, Google, Tindr, FourSquare, mobile applications and websites see only minor usage. Location-sharing interactions are qualitatively different than traditional social networking activities. Broadcasting location online or sharing with providers remains uncomfortable for many users. In addition, location-sharing interactions that combine online and offline exchanges come with risks to privacy and security—often dissuading sharing behaviors. We develop and test an interdisciplinary causal model for the determinants of location-sharing. While trust perceptions and critical mass in social channels were found to influence participation overall, trust is more important for women, and critical mass is more important for men. Both trust propensity and structural assurances influence interpersonal trust, but trust propensity has no apparent effect on men. These findings offer practical insight for designers and provide theoretical foundation for future research.

Objective:

1. Develop a theoretical framework for understanding the role of trust and trust antecedents in location sharing behaviors

2. Identify gender related differences in the behavioral drivers of location sharing

Methods: Surveys were distributed to 1,200 subjects age 18 to 35—the heaviest users of mobile and web applications. The sample included five northeast US universities with subjects varying by age, gender, income, and country-of-origin. Survey items used a 7-point Likert scale. SPSS and AMOS were used to evaluate a covariance-based structural model.

Results (See Figure 1.): Fifty-two percent (52%) of the variance in behavioral intentions was explained by trust in friends, trust in the network-at-large, and perceived critical mass. Therefore,

†p<.1; *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<=.001

Figure 1. Results of the Structural Model Analysis
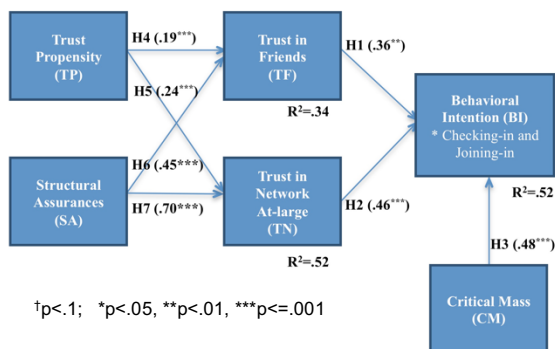
- The more users perceive H1.) their immediate network of friends and H2.) the network-at-large to be trustworthy, the more they will share location.

- The more individuals perceive H3.) a critical mass of other users participate in location sharing, the more they will share location in return.

Trust in the network of other users—both friends and the network-at-large—is influenced by trust propensity and structural assurances. Therefore,

- The stronger users' general propensity to trust other users, the more they will trust their H4.) immediate network of friends and H5.) the network-at-large.

- The more users perceive structural assurances are in place to protect against harmed by H6.) their network of friends and H7.) the network-at-large, the more users believe in the trustworthiness of others.

Unexpected Findings: There was a moderating effect of gender on both trust and critical mass. 1.) While all subjects reported an equal propensity to trust others, women reported that location sharing is a riskier proposition than men. 2.) Men identified online location sharing as an opportunity to benefit from and connect with like-minded people. In addition, men considered location sharing an unlikely risk.

Future Work: Initial research considered the influence of trust and critical mass on location sharing. We expect other significant differences based on age and user motivations. Further, we wish to study additional communities and applications to test the generalizability of the model.

References: N/A for abstract.