

# **GPS Mobile Social Networks: Reexamining Our Interactions with Urban Space**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper draws on spatial theories to explore how tying social information to physical locations can strengthen, modify, and rearrange how urban public spaces and social connections are experienced. Socialight is a GPS-based mobile social network which allows members to leave "sticky notes" for other people so that when members are near the tagged location they can receive the message on their mobile phone. Using a qualitative field study of Socialight in New York City, this paper reports on preliminary findings regarding the use and interpretation of this service. Two major themes emerge: communication about place and communication through place. This paper discusses how place-based flows of social information in urban spaces contribute to the social production of urban space.*

## **GPS Mobile Social Networks: Reexamining Our Interactions with Urban Space**

Mobile phones are ubiquitous in many parts of the world today with an estimated three billion subscribers worldwide (Tsai, 2008; Wolverson, 2008). With over 255 million mobile subscribers in the US (CTIA, 2008), more Americans own a mobile phone than have an Internet connection (On the Move, 2006). Considerable research has explored the social effects of mobile phone use (e.g. Goggin, 2006; Ito, Okabe, & Matsuda, 2005; Katz, 2003; Katz, 2006; Katz & Aakhus, 2002; Ling, 2004, 2008). Some have argued that mobile phones may lead to the atomization and privatization among users by discouraging face-to-face communication in urban environments (Banjo, Hu, & Sundar, 2006; Bull, 2004; Puro, 2002).

As mobile technology advances, however, new applications and services for mobile phones have been developed which allow people to create, develop, and strengthen social ties. Much like social network sites on the Internet (Benkler, 2006; Rosenbusch, 2005; Boyd, 2004; Donnath & Boyd, 2004; boyd & Ellison, 2007; (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007) Rheingold, 2002; Castells, 2000), these applications may help users to build and maintain valuable social connections through which to share information and resources. Software for mobile phones has been explicitly designed to help people network through location-centered interactions. However, much of the research to date has been experimental (e.g. Wang & Canny, 2006; Eagle & Pentland, 2004; Paulos & Goodman, 2004; Weilenmann, 2001) and therefore does not explore how people use such technology in their everyday lives.

Therefore, the goal of this ongoing project is to explore the everyday uses and perceived effects of mobile social networks. Three over-arching questions guide this project. First, how might mobile social networks help to make connections between people in urban public spaces? Second, what is the nature of

interactions that develop around mobile social networks (i.e. who is using it and what kinds of information are exchanged through these services)? Third, how might these interactions change the way users think about and experience urban public spaces?

The overall project examines three commercially-available mobile social networks. The first service, BEDD, relies on the *co-location* of users in urban spaces in order to connect people via their mobile phones. Singapore-based BEDD is a mobile application similar to dating websites such as Match.com where users fill out a profile and can meet BEDD members who are within 20-30 feet. BEDD members' phones automatically exchange profile information so that users can meet new people.

The second case, Dodgeball, is a mobile service that relies on *social networks* to distribute location information of users so that people can meet up at venues within cities. Similar to social networking websites such as Facebook or MySpace, New York City-based Dodgeball allows users to set up social networks of friends, but with an important addition of letting these networks know which bar or cafe users are at so they can meet up. For example, when users get to a bar, they can send a text message to Dodgeball which then broadcasts their location via text messages to everyone in their Dodgeball network.

The third service, Socialight, relies on both *social networks and co-location* to facilitate communication between people in cities. New York-based Socialight is a location-based messaging service which allows users to leave "sticky notes" or messages about places for people in their network. Unlike BEDD, users do not have to be co-located at the same time to communicate. Using GPS, the Socialight system will alert users if they are near a place, which someone in their network has tagged by leaving a "sticky". For example, users can tag a café with a sticky note saying "great oatmeal muffins" and when friends in their Socialight network walk by the café, they will receive the muffin message on their mobile phone.

This overall project explores how people use the three mobile social networks in their everyday routine and affect the ways users interact in urban public spaces. Together these case studies will contribute to better understanding of the role of communication technology in the modern urban environment. This paper will present the preliminary findings from the third case study under examination. Previous papers have specifically explored and discussed the uses of Dodgeball and BEDD separately (Humphreys, 2007; Humphreys & Barker, 2007).

## **Literature Review**

The study of Socialight as a mobile social network draws on several broad areas of literature. Because the service is primarily used in urban spaces it is important to understand characteristics of urban public space into which Socialight is situated. Specifically, I will discuss the social characteristics of

urban space and the ways in which space is socially produced. Because most of the social production of space literature does not acknowledge the role of media, I next draw on the concept of “MediaSpace” (Couldry & McCarthy, 2004) in order to explore the inter-relation between media and space. Socialight is also not the first service to offer users the ability to label or tag information, therefore I next review the literature regarding tagging in order to draw parallels between online practices of social navigation and information organization with the mobile geo-tagging services available through Socialight.

### *Public Space as Social Space*

This study explores social interaction in urban public spaces, therefore it is helpful to use Simmel’s (1903/1997) five qualities of *social* space as a basis for thinking about social interaction in public spaces. These five qualities of spaces are the ways in which a space may be divided into pieces; the degree to which social interactions may be localized in space; the degree of proximity/distance and the role of the sense of sight; the possibility of changing locations; the consequences especially of the arrival of the “stranger”. These characteristics may also affect the social interactions that occur through mobile social networking applications in public space.

In addition, Lefebvre (1991) also identifies three notions of space: spatial practice, representations of space, and representational space. Spatial practice is how we perceive space as we observe or perceive ourselves and others within it. The representations of space are conceived space which can be understood as how architects and designers conceive and subsequently code space. Representational space is the lived aspects of space as the symbolic aspects of space are experienced. Lefebvre (1991) suggests that space has the *illusion* of transparency, of natural simplicity, and of giving free reign. Analyzing the spatial practice, representations of space, and representational space in which mobile social networks occurs forces one to not take for granted the “naturalness” of such spaces but instead to question how this space is socially produced. As people use mobile social networks, how they actively produce spatial dimensions and practices should be examined in order to more fully understand the interaction.

### *MediaSpace*

While Lefebvre (1991) and Simmel (1997) identify how space is socially produced, they do not explicitly explore how media interact with social and spatial practices. Couldry & McCarthy (2004) argue media and space are inexorably tied, suggesting that media can create different kinds of space which in turn influence media and media use. “MediaSpace, then, at once defines the artefactual existence of media forms within social space, the links that media objects forge between spaces, and the (no less real) cultural visions of a physical space transcended by technology and emergent virtual pathways of communication,” (Couldry & McCarthy, 2004, p. 2). Media have the ability to shrink and expand distance. Drawing on Anderson (1991), Couldry and McCarthy argue that media can tie disparate people

together to create imagined communities. Media, however, can also create social distance as in the case of two people having lunch and being interrupted by a cellphone call (Humphreys, 2005).

Couldry and McCarthy suggest that “this dialectical sense of belonging and alienation, self and system, is integral to the experience of MediaSpace” (2004, p. 3). People are constantly negotiating their sense of self within a system of social order and disorder. Not only can the media impose an order, but other forces of power are influencing the larger system through which people make their way. As such, MediaSpace is constantly in a state of flux and transformation. By situating my study of mobile social networks in a MediaSpace framework, I draw attention to the mutual influence of spatial and media practices.

MediaSpace theory suggests that the use of and interaction through Sociallight may lead to the “production of communicative space” (Barnett, 2004, p. 66). New kinds of communicative space or representational space can be created through the social use of media technologies and through the organizational and political processes through which these technologies are created and understood. The production of communicative space is an *active* process. When space is denaturalized as Lefebvre (1991) suggests, it highlights that the politics of communication technologies are constantly being articulated and played out on local and global scales (Barnett, 2004). Therefore Sociallight becomes a lens through which to explore the ways that new kinds of communicative space are actively being produced through mobile social networks.

While Barnett’s discussion of MediaSpace is thought-provoking, he has little empirical evidence to support his theoretical claims. A second discussion of MediaSpace by Michael Bull (2004) does provide some empirical evidence for his analysis of social and cultural practices of media use in urban spaces. Specifically, Bull examines the aural spaces through which the privatization of urban life occurs. Bull argues that listening to music in one’s car or through headphones and talking on mobile phones in public represents the privatization of public space. While walkmans and mobile phones are both aural media, there are important differences in the privatism they encourage. Humphreys (2005) argues the mobile phones do not just privatize public space as Bull (2004) suggests, but elicit a much more complex negotiation of public and private. While mobile devices can certainly lead to the *reprioritization* one’s attention in public space, they do not completely monopolize it nor atomize those who use such technologies. By situating mobile social networks within a MediaSpace context, it draws attention the ways the media and public spatial practices are mutually influential, but not overly determined.

### *Tagging*

One increasing popular trend in social computing is tagging. Tagging is the ability to annotate online material or digital objects. These objects or materials may be visual, aural, or textual in nature, but the tagging itself is usually textual. Tags have been described as “freely chosen set of keywords,”

(Marlow, Naaman, boyd, & Davis, 2006, p. 31). Thus tagging systems differ from information classification systems that are hierarchical. Tags are usually generated by the users of websites and not the administrators or architects of the websites. Popular websites that allow users to tag content include Flickr.com (tags online photos), delicious.com (tags urls or links), and Last.fm (tags online music) (Golder & Huberman, 2006). Tags tend to be both organizational and social in nature. Zollers (2007) argues that tagging is an inherently social activity because tags are visible to all users. They are collectively used and produced. In an analysis of tagging functions on music and online shopping sites, Zollers (2007) identifies three broad categories of tags: expression of opinion, performance of self, and activism. This study seeks to understand Sociallight as a mobile social tagging service and examine whether the categories of tags found online are similar to those produced by Sociallight users.

A second kind of tagging which has been made increasingly popular is geotagging. Geo-spatial tagging or geotagging is the ability to link a word, phrase, or image to a particular physical location using a standard geographic reference system such as global positioning system (GPS) (Heuer & Dupke, 2007). Geotagging links online materials or digital objects to the physical world and ties content to location (Amitay, Har'El, Sivan, & Soffer, 2004; Casey, Lawson, & Rowland, 2008). One example of geo-tagging is the ability on Flickr.com to link an online photo to the physical location in which it was taken (Ahern, Naaman, Nair, & Yang, 2007).

It is helpful to review both online tagging literatures and geotagging more specifically because Sociallight can be understood as both. Sociallight can be understood as a form of tagging *offline* objects or places in that it allows users to add keywords and phrases to particular objects or places in the physical world. Using digital media, Sociallight users can add meta-information to offline or physical urban spaces. Sociallight can also be understood as way of geotagging content because it allows users to link online content accessed either through a mobile device or a computer to physical place. On other words, Sociallight allows users to add content to place and to add place to content.

Little research has sought to combine the tagging and the social production of space literatures. One study that does provide experimental evidence for the social tagging of physical space was conducted by Barkhuus, et al. (2008). While not drawing on the social production of space literature per se, the researchers did find evidence to suggest that geographic location alone does not provide enough information to capture the social experience and production of space. For example, Barkhuus et al. (2008) identified four kinds of location labels: "(1) labels of geographical reference, (2) place names that describe a location in terms of personal meaning, (3) names of locations that describe and activity, and finally (4) hybrids" (p. 501). The first label manifested at various levels of abstraction such as street names, neighborhoods, or cities. These first labels represent Lefebvre's (1991) notion of 'representations of space' or official conceived space. The second label manifested in vague but personally referential

terms such as mom's house and represents Lefebvre's notion of 'representational space' or symbolic lived space. The third label identified locations as activities such as shopping or drinking. This kind of label represents Lefebvre's notion of 'spatial practice' or perceived space. The social production of space, according to Lefebvre (1991), is at once divisible into these three components yet also mutually constituted, thus the hybrid location label that Barkhuss et al. (2008) found evidence for also represents this dialectical tension and the complex ways that people understand, experience, and produce space.

## **Study**

This study is part of a larger project about the role of mobile social networks in the city. Socialight is one of three case studies. For the purposes of this paper, however, Socialight will be examined in isolation in order to examine in-depth the particular characteristics of use and meaning.

Socialight is a location-based messaging service based in New York City which allows users to leave "sticky notes" or messages about places for other Socialight users (see Appendix additional details). Depending on privacy settings, users can make their sticky notes visible to everyone or just to their Socialight network of friends. Most users on Socialight keep their messages public rather than limiting to friends only. Using GPS, the Socialight system will alert users if they are near a place, which someone in their network has left a "sticky". Socialight facilitates communication between people who are co-located, but they are not necessarily co-located *at the same time*. In an interview with Socialight founder, Dan Melinger, he describes Socialight sticky notes as "communication around place, where a message may be written but only when it's contextually relevant, as in the person is nearby, does it get delivered to that person." Temporal distance allows Socialight members to rely on location as the relevant contextualizing factor in mediated communication.

In addition to mobile communication, Socialight is also a Facebook application that allows users to tag photos or content on Facebook with a physical location on a map. In addition, the Socialight website has an online mapping feature that allows users to find and post sticky notes on a map via the website.

In order to study the emergent practices of Socialight use, I employed a naturalistic and interpretivist framework (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006). In this vein, I have conducted in-depth and informal interviews with users and a producer of Socialight. I have also conducted participant observation where I have been a member of Socialight for over two years and have used the service in New York City. I observed the online component of Socialight as a member in order to try to identify changes over time in the online usage and branding of the service.

I chose New York City Socialight as the primary site of study because it has the largest population of users on the east coast of the US. I knew that I wanted to conduct face-to-face interviews

where possible, so I chose to concentrate my recruitment among active users in New York City. Active here was defined as posting a message or responding to a message via Socialight (either online or mobile) within the last month. In order to recruit participants, I used the web component of Socialight. I then left recruitment messages through the online Socialight messaging system. Where possible I conducted face-to-face interviews (n=2) in New York City and conducted phone interviews if for logistical purposes I could not schedule face to face meetings. The data collection is as of yet incomplete. To date, five in-depth interviews have been conducted (n=4 users<sup>2</sup> and n=1 founder).

Because this project draws on grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I have been using an iterative approach to data collection and analysis. This method suggests collecting and analyzing data continuously throughout the research process. Rather than linearly collecting data then subsequently analyzing it, a grounded theory researcher will iteratively collect and analyze, collect and analyze until he or she reaches theoretical saturation. Saturation occurs when all newly collected data can be understood and accounted for through the categorization and theoretical framework established from previous data collection and analysis. While I am not yet done with the data collection and analysis for the entire project, a grounded theory approach has allowed me to identify several preliminary themes thus far in the project. I intend to complete the interview and data collection process in Summer 2009.

Despite not have completed the data collection, I think it is important to describe some of the main characteristics of the users of Socialight because it provides helpful details regarding the context of use. Much like users of other mobile social networks (Humphreys, 2007), users of Socialight are likely to be what Rogers (1995) would identify as ‘innovators’. These are among the first adopters of technology. To date, all of the people whom I have interviewed work in the area of social and interactive media. For example one participant, Nathan, is a java programmer for mobile phone applications. Because he works in the industry he actively seeks out new and up-and-coming applications and services as part of personal and professional interest. Another participant is beginning her own start-up company in collaborative online search technology and first heard about Socialight because her friends shared an office space with Socialight. As typical of innovators, the participants in this study who use Socialight are technologically savvy people who have both a professional and personal interest in information technology and new media.

### **Preliminary Findings**

Overall, two themes have emerged from the participant observation and interviews. Each reflects various aspects of the social production of space (Lefebvre, 1991) as well as evidence of the collaborative online tagging functions (Zollers, 2007). The two themes surrounding the use of Socialight are (1)

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<sup>2</sup> The names of the users have been changed to ensure the anonymity of the study participants.



communication about place and (2) communication through place. Communication about place helps to build social familiarity with urban places with Sociallight, while communication through place allows users to create place-based narratives with Sociallight. Both kinds of Sociallight use help to reinforce social connections as well as deepen users engagement with urban space.

### *Communication About Place*

One common way for Sociallight participants to use the service is to tag locations where they tend to frequent such as coffee shops, parks, and bars. These sticky notes become a means of communicating their familiarity with locations around the city. For example, one study participant, Nathan, uses Sociallight as a way to communicate with his friends about places he likes in New York City. Most of his friends on Sociallight are not from New York, so Nathan conceptualizes Sociallight as a personal travel guide.

If I've already tagged some stuff lets say around my apartment or in the area I might hang out in at night then when people come to visit me, then they would be able if they were on the service as well in theory, then they would be able to walk around town when I'm at work and they would be able to see "[Nathan] says this is a good coffee shop" and stop in.

For Nathan, Sociallight is a tool through which to communicate with friends about interesting or good places they might want to visit. It helps his friends to gain social familiarity with places in the city that he likes.

Two other study participants from New York City, Leon and Neville, also use Sociallight as a kind of urban guide. Whenever they travel abroad they leave notes in various places that they would recommend to others. For example, Neville left the following note at Victoria Peak in Hong Kong:

"This is quite possibly one of the best views in the world – and quite romantic (although, sadly, I was there by myself last time). It is the highest point on Hong Kong Island (you are higher than all the skyscrapers for once). Get yourself up to the Peak, preferably at night when the HK lights make the city all that much more beautiful. The view looks down on Hong Kong Island, the harbor and across into Kowloon and the New Territories."

Neville also posted a photo he took from Victoria Peak at night to illustrate the view at night (see Appendix 2). Based on his own experiences, Neville suggests climbing Victoria Peak at night to take advantage of the views and makes a joke about it being a romantic scene even though he saw it alone. Neville shares his subjective perspective on the attraction in Hong Kong to better inform other potential Sociallight users. This kind of tagging is similar to the opinion expression tags that Zollers (2007) found online. Neville expresses his opinion in his note that "this is one of the best views in the world". At the

same time, Neville's note above could also be interpreted as a performance of self, particularly as he writes himself into the note when he writes "although sadly, I was there by myself last time". Zollers (2007) suggests that self-presentation tags are means through which people write themselves into the system.

It is unclear exactly at this point how often these Socialight members use other people's notes to become more familiar with places. Neville, Nathan, nor Leon mentioned reading other people's notes when they travelled. One study participant, Hannah, did describe a situation when she used notes for both her self and others. She used Socialight sticky notes to plan and organize a bar crawl with her friends.

"Here's the scoop on Socialight and the mojito crawl. I actually used Facebook to coordinate the event, but created a specific [Socialight] channel for the event with stickies for all of the spots we were visiting on the crawl before the event. This enabled me to post a map of sorts of our route for those of us who were going to attend the event but wanted to either meet up later or tell some friends where we'd be. Having already created the stickies made it easy for us to make comments on the stickies during the crawl, so we wouldn't forget what we wanted to say about them."

This quote from Hannah highlights two important points about Socialight. First, Socialight like other mobile social networks is not used in isolation but in conjunction with other media (Humphreys, 2007). Three of the four users I interviewed mentioned using the Socialight application on Facebook. In fact, Nathan suggested the interoperability of Socialight was one of its main attributes. The second point that Hannah's quote suggests is that Socialight can be a means of social navigation through the city as well as a means of engaging more interactively with the city itself. Hannah created a map of sticky notes for the bar crawl route so that her friends could socially navigate their way to the party. In addition, Socialight provided Hannah and her friends a means of commenting on the various bars and restaurants so as to interact in a new way with the actual places in the city.

As people build and share familiarity with various places in the city through Socialight, the users themselves are contributing to the production of space. Socialight members engage with all three kinds of space that Lefebvre (1991) identifies. As they use and create maps of sticky notes, Socialight members are engaging with representations of space or conceived space. When members use Socialight to navigate their way through cities, they are engaging with spatial practice or perceived space. Finally when members use Socialight to comment on and give opinions about various urban places, they are engaging with representational space or lived space. Each aspect of space is highlighted and constituted through the use of Socialight.

Another example of the social production of space can be seen in the changing ways that Socialight creators have conceptualized the role of place in their service. Originally, the Socialight creators had conceptualized place in very precise ways using longitude and latitude as a basis for definition and measurement, however, this changed as they explored different ways to use the service.

[Socialight was] always about placed-based messaging, but our understanding of what place meant or could mean changed a bit. In the beginning we were very concerned with tagging actually specific locations with a message and the accuracy of the latitude and longitude that we collect is important. And that's become less important because what we've realized is that we're trying to enable communication around place. It's less about tagging places and more about conversations that have place as a context. (Dan Melinger, Socialight founder)

This quote highlights the two themes that emerged from the findings to date. First, participants in the study used Socialight to communicate *about* place and in doing so build and communicate social familiarity with urban places. Melinger's quote, however, also hints at the second theme which has emerged about Socialight use and that is the way participants used Socialight for narrative storytelling. In this second case, Socialight is used to communicate *through* place.

#### *Communication Through Place*

The second theme that emerged regarding the use of Socialight was place-based storytelling. For example, a member might leave sticky notes throughout a particular neighborhood in order to tell a story that occurred at various places in that neighborhood. Communication in this second theme can be understood as occurring through place. One participant in the study, Neville, defined Socialight as a "platform for telling stories". For Neville, Socialight is a creative way of telling stories through a mobile place-based interface. When asked what advice he would give to a new Socialight member, Neville said:

I would tell them to tell stories about their childhood because everyone has stories about their childhood. These stories aren't necessarily big enough to be a biography, but they're tied to place. Like there's this one story about where a woman got in a car accident. Like no one would be interested in that just to hear it, but if you're at that place then it's interesting.

By tying information or stories to location, the stories themselves become more relevant and interesting. Neville is interested in creatively using Socialight in ways to more deeply engage both with stories through place and with place through stories. Understandings of stories are enriched when tied to physical place and experiences of places are enriched with tied to stories (Borer, 2006). Narratives become both the platform and the mechanism through which to engage with physical and social space.

The narrative and places also become means through which to connect with other people. Neville recollected a time when he told a story through Socialight notes throughout Central Park and Columbus Circle in New York:

Central park is a place where lots of people have put stickies. But I wanted my story to be different. So I told a story about a girl. This was last summer and I was kinda into her. It was maybe only the second time I had met her. And we went for a run together and then we got a Jamba Juice together and had a great time. Then she never returned my calls. So that was about me telling a secret. Because all stories are secrets. And some you keep private and some you make public. And there's just something about making a secret public.

For Neville, telling his story about the girl who did not return his interest provided him with a cathartic experience. Social psychologists have found narratives to be helpful way of coming to terms with life experiences (McAdams, 1996; Pennebaker, 1997). Because these narratives are tied to locations, it grounds the stories in the physicality of place. On Socialight place becomes the means through which stories about both told and read.

Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad can also be applied to place-based storytelling through Socialight. The narratives can be understood as examples of the intersection of perceived, conceived, and lived space. The sticky note itself has to be associated or connected with a particular location in a city that often relies on maps or a GPS measurement of place, which are considered by Lefebvre (1991) to be *conceived* space. The note as a form of communication about place becomes a means through which the place is *perceived*. The note as part of the story becomes the symbolic aspect of sociality, communication, and narrative, thus representing Lefebvre's (1991) *lived* space.

## **Discussion**

While this paper presents only the preliminary findings of Socialight meaning and use, it does provide some interesting insights into the ways that people create meaning with a GPS-based mobile social network. As MediaSpace theory (Couldry & McCarthy, 2004) suggests, the relationship between media and space is mutually constituted. Physical and social spaces influence how people use media and media use influences how people experience physical and social space. Socialight provides a lens through which to explore the ways MediaSpace operates. As participants create virtual sticky notes they are simultaneously engaging with place, engaging with media, and engaging with other people. As Zollers (2007) argues, tagging is inherently social. As people write narratives through Socialight sticky notes, they are telling stories to someone. The audience may be one other person, a small group of friends or it may be the entire Socialight userbase, but the fact that the story is being told through stickies at all

suggests an implied sociality in the communication. Regardless whether people are using Socialight to communicate about place or through place, they are still communicating with other people.

As I collect more data regarding the usage of Socialight, I expect the initial themes of 'communication about place' and 'communication through place' to remain. Additional themes may emerge and are likely to do so. The project has several limitations. New York City is a unique city within the United States. These findings are based on Socialight users in New York City and thus may not generalize to Socialight users in other cities. The findings from these 'active users' are also not necessarily representative of other less active users in New York City and beyond. The challenge of having to recruit users through the website also suggests that it may privilege those users who use the web component of Socialight over those who primarily use the mobile phone to use Socialight.

One of the goals behind the creation of Socialight as a company was to create more contextualized urban communication. Contextual information here is defined by the co-location of information and people. One of the challenges of this technology is to identify key contexts in which it would be most useful. Leaving a virtual sticky note can be more than just place-based or location-aware communication; it also offers location-enhanced communication. Mobile communication increasingly raises the issue of place as an influential factor in communication. Socialight tries to leverage the richness of physical location as a means of enriching communication patterns and practices. Communication about place and communication through place both emphasize aspects of MediaSpace. Future research should continue to explore the complex MediaSpaces that advanced communication technology help to produce.

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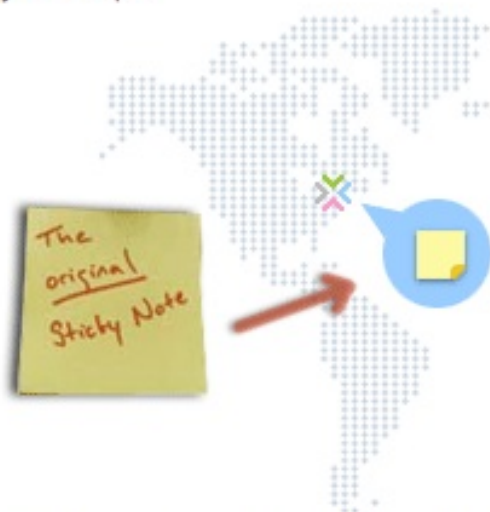
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## What is Socialight?

Socialight lets you discover *right here, right now* information about places all around you. Simple.



### The Sticky Note

The basic building block of Socialight is the Sticky Note- similar to a yellow Post-it note that you find at the office, except that it can contain text, images, audio and even video! Sticky Notes can be stuck to any location in the world and you can choose who can see yours...

### Socialight Mobile

The best part about Socialight is using it on your cell phone. This lets you discover all kinds of things that are actually near to you! You can also make comments and rate the things you find as well as stick your own notes.

We can also notify you about the things that interest you so you never walk past something cool again!  
You will never get spam because you control exactly what we send you!





Appendix 2:



Photo of the view of Hong Kong from Victoria Peak posted by Neville with his Sticky Note.