## 

## 

## 

## 

## 

## **ChatMaps Deliverable 0**

Stephen Goodridge, Clark LaChance, Nicholas Pease, Joseph Gallant, Aidan Bradley

COS420

4 February 2024

**Group Name:** JACSN

**App Name:** ChatMaps

**Category:** Social Communication Web App

**Members:** Stephen Goodridge, Clark LaChance, Nicholas Pease, Joseph Gallant, Aidan Bradley

**General Overview**

ChatMaps is a web-based social networking service that allows users to connect to others in their local geographic area. It will implement an interactable mapping utility to show general user locations relative to other users, as well as a chat room feature that allows users to start public conversations based on a specified topic. ChatMaps is primarily intended for use in densely populated areas, such as college campuses or metropolitan areas, so people of similar interests can start conversations. The goal of this project is to create a web app that plots locations, gives a radius of the local area, and connects users into different topic-based chat rooms.

This service will implement user login and profiles, allowing users to add each other as friends and start private conversations. There will be several default chat rooms of varying topics, but users will also have the ability to create their own topics that will be viewable by other users. For example, a user at the University of Maine could create a joinable chat room titled “COS420”, which would be visible to others near this campus.

This app shares some similarities to other social networks that implement location-based content. ChatMaps’ novel approach is to utilize user location to facilitate real-time communication with others within a given radius.

**Comparable Apps**

*YikYak*

Yik Yak is an iOS exclusive chatting platform where users can opt to join multiple communities, such as their verified college campus. Verification is completed via a check of the user's location. Previous versions of this app strictly allowed users to communicate anonymously with those in a 5 mile radius of the user. Our proposed application shares some similarities with YikYak in both its former and present iterations due to several factors. Mainly, the core concept of location based communication is similar to our proposed app. We had discussed both an avatar-based user approach and an anonymous-based approach to user management, both of which YikYak has implemented in some way.

Our project’s differentiation stems from its platform, as our platform is a web based service, as well as the use of live chat rooms as opposed to the forum structure of YikYak. We are pursuing a real time messaging approach rather than communications akin to a discussion board. Additionally, we intend to implement user profiles, whereas YikYak is primarily anonymous communication.

*Snapchat*

Snapchat is a cross platform communication service where users primarily communicate through “snaps” and “chats”. Snaps are photos taken from a mobile device and sent to others to be viewed once, whereas chats are more persistent, like traditional instant messaging systems. Snapchat and our application share the concept of keeping track of a user's location to aid in social networking. However, Snapchat uses locations as a feature for users to socialize with friends they have already made. Our app uses location to connect users with those around them and to enable users to view chat rooms from anyone in their area.

Our platform aims to be usable on desktops and mobile devices as a web app. While Snapchat limits some features to their mobile apps and some features to their desktop application, our application intends to be fully functional on both devices.

*Omegle*

Omegle was an anonymous social chatting website that would allow users to chat one on one with someone else from around the world. The user would be paired with someone random based on an optional shared interest without the need to create an account or login. Omegle supported text-based chat rooms as well as video-based chat rooms using a webcam. Our app has some similarities, such as chatting with other users based on similar interests of their choosing. Another similar trait is the text based chat where users can engage in conversation before moving on.

Our app differs from Omegle as our app will exclusively focus on text communications, as well as implementing chat rooms that vary in size. Another difference is that Omegle didn’t require users to login and always kept chatters anonymous. Our app will allow users to login to personalize themselves and have the option to add friends with other chatters that they meet.