Deepening the Facebook integration into a customized Drupal 7 profile

Context

Internews Europe has created a Drupal 7 based support platform consisting, among other features, of a community based questions and answer forum. The project is currently operating in 2 languages with 2 separate Drupal 7 implementation (customizations in a Drupal profile).

Source code available here:
https://github.com/ResourceCenter/VirtualResourcesCenter

Contact

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Objectives

The objective of this document is to describe the functional elements of a Facebook App and adaptation on an existing Drupal 7 platform (https://github.com/ResourceCenter/VirtualResourcesCenter) that will facilitate the creation and management of a searchable/categorizable knowledge base for partners of Internews that already have a well established presence on Facebook.

The app will be used at first in partnership with an Arabic online support group. The group answer questions regarding the use of Information Technology from users among their thousands of followers. The communication (questions and answers) are, at the moment, mostly done via Facebook private messages.. The following use cases describe an adaptation of the workflow and interactions.

With a minimal amount of user-education, users should be enticed from a Facebook app, to first search in the database of questions/answers and, if they could not find any useful information, ask questions to the Arabic online support group, through a form integrated into a Facebook app.
They will also have access to the content of the Drupal 7 website via the Facebook app with access to lists of questions and a search facility.
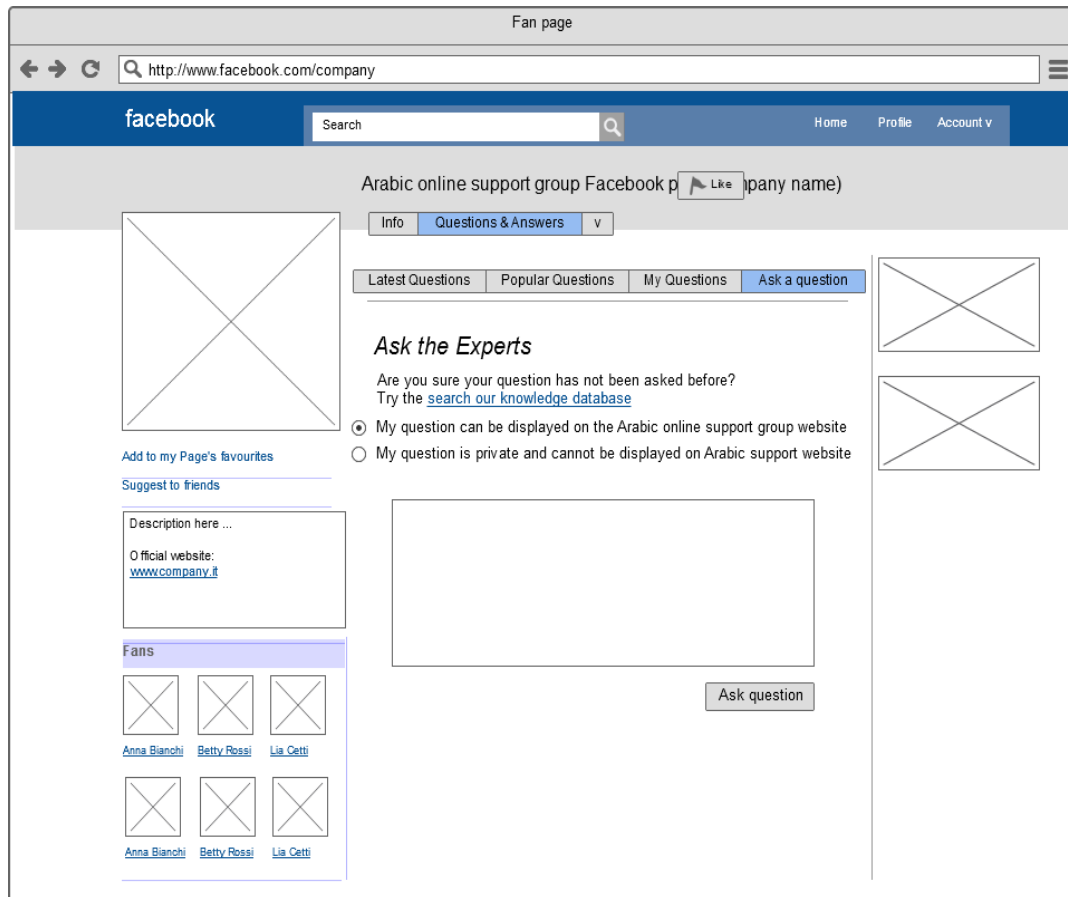
Use cases

How does a Facebook user communicate with the Arabic online support group?
- through a unified contact form called "Ask the Experts"
- the form will contain several fields (title for the question; description of the question; free

tagging; "can this question posted" *or* "I wish to remain anonymous")
What happens in the background:
1. the question is created into the Drupal database, it is linked to the user account of the creator (with proper permission request for the user; following best practices of privacy control on Facebook).
2. the question is put into a queue in the Drupal platform until it is answered by Arabic online support group

How does the Arabic online support group answer to questions?
The Arabic online support group have access to the Drupal 7 dashboard.
They view the queue of questions that have been posted and not answered (flagged in the Drupal 7 website as "unpublished").
The Arabic online support group answers the questions through the Drupal 7 website user interface and marks questions as "resolved".
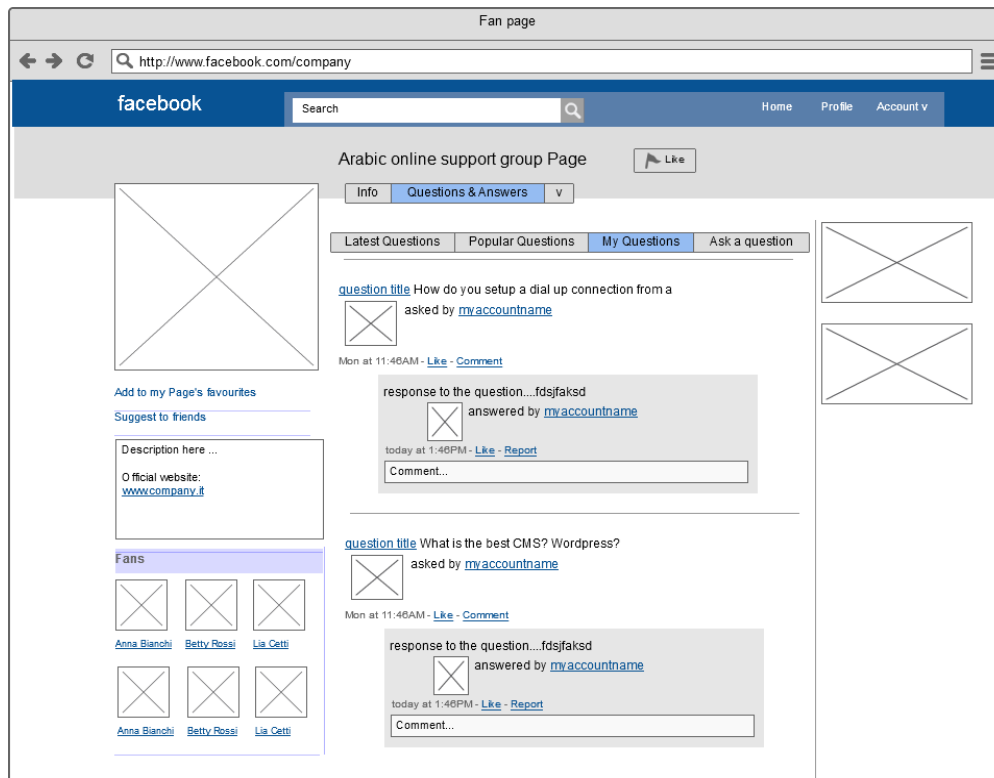The Arabic online support group can perform administration actions on the questions (standard content administration function: tagging, delete, edit, etc).
Most of these functionalities are already implemented in the existing base code of the Drupal 7 platform.

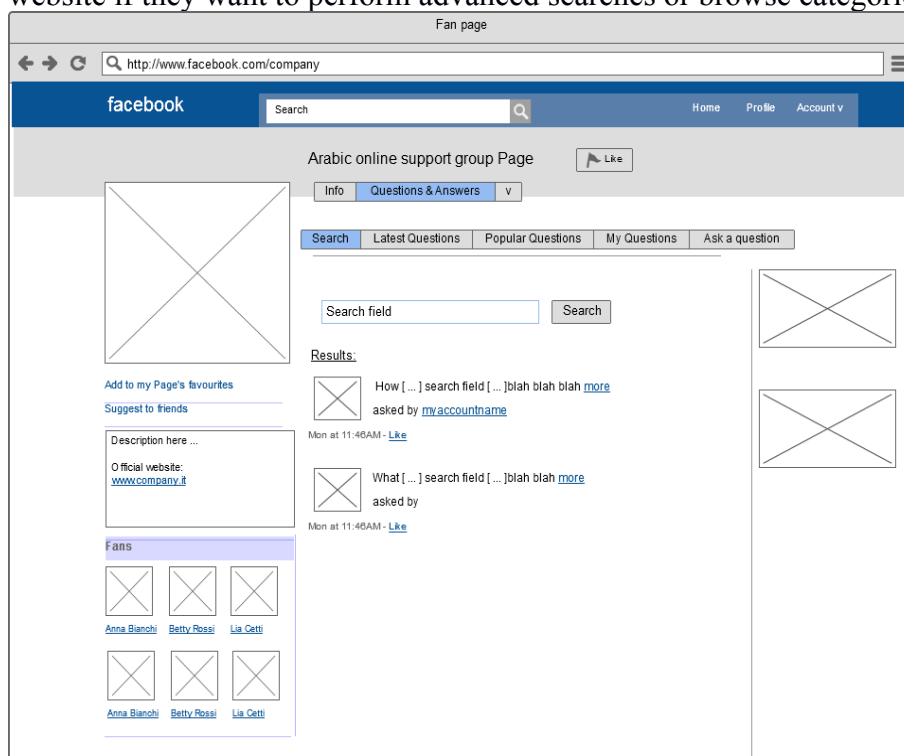**How do users keep up to date with questions they asked?**
Users have access to a dashboard from the *Arabic online support group Facebook page* where they can see the questions they have previously asked.
They can also see the questions that have the most likes (popular) or the latest questions that have been asked.

How do users search for existing questions?

Through a search field. Questions that have not been flagged as private are pulled up from the Drupal website and displayed in Facebook. A link would redirect users to the Drupal 7 website if they want to perform advanced searches or browse categories.

How do users "like" content?
Users have the possibility to "like" and "share" content.

Requirements

The process of posting a question should be user friendly, the question form should adopt the same UI as Facebook in terms of positioning and colors, while being user friendly.

When users are asking a question though the form, the question is inserted into the Drupal 7 database as content type "question" (custom content type; see Drupal 7 https://github.com/ResourceCenter/VirtualResourcesCenter).
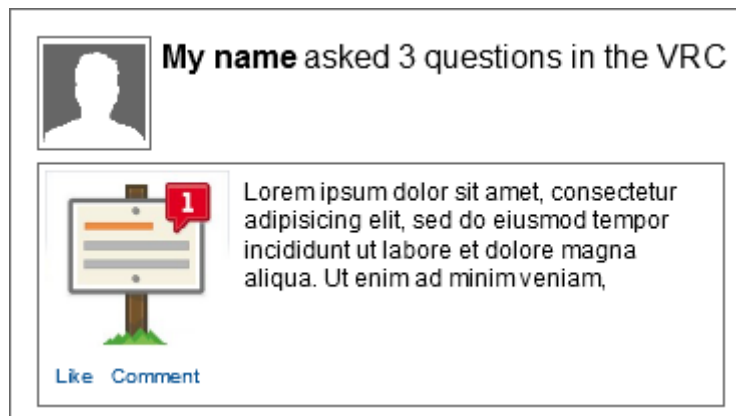
The question form will allow users to decide whether their question can be posted and will become researchable for other users, or if it contains sensitive private information that should not be displayed online (it will then become equivalent to a private message).

The Facebook app will provide an interface for accessing questions:
- via a search box
- 3 quick tabs (like in the main Drupal 7 website): "my questions", "latest questions" and "popular questions".

The App should include a **Facebook notifications** whereby users posting a questions will have a notification on their news-feed (if the app was given the necessary the permissions). Ex:

Similarly, when an answer is posted on a question (private or public) the information should go back on Facebook as a notification to the user.

Deliverables/Responsibilities

The company is required to create a Facebook Application.
The company will perform required adjustments to the Drupal 7 customized system, including: ensuring that private content remains hidden from non-authorized users, adapting content type structure, creating the necessary Views.
The above provided mockup models are to described functionalities and are provided indicatively. The company is expected to deliver a user friendly interface on the Facebook App.

Internews Europe will provide the Drupal 7 test platform as well as access to the source code of the customize profile.
Internews will validate the deliverable.
The Arabic online support group will support Internews by installing and testing the Facebook application.
Internews Europe will coordinate the testing feedback to the company.

Note

In a second phase of development, Internews Europe will wish to upgrade the Facebook application to:
- make the answer collaborative: i.e. give the possibility to other facebook users to post answers
- interact with the Drupal 7 to setup a badging system