

Introduction:

The city of London, Ontario is known as one of Canada's greatest "party" cities, as the students at the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe College are famous for their social events. From large house parties to small gatherings, Londoners do them all. But how do the more than fifty-one thousand students in London stay in the loop for all these events and parties? The truth is, they don't. Students are missing out on the biggest events and parties in their cities simply because they don't know about them.

This problem became evident when some friends and I made a trip to the University of Waterloo. My friends had a medium sized network, so we assumed that finding a couple of parties wasn't going to be a problem. We visited several parties but each only had a few people. We asked the hosts if they had made an event page to promote their party, and every host said he or she did in fact make a Facebook event but they also admitted that they were relying heavily on the word of mouth. That got us thinking: If the host's friends were supposed to spread the word for the party, how big could that party actually get? Logically, the hosts' friends would have overlapping friend circles, so how could they reach people outside of their groups? As the night progressed, we became more and more exasperated by the lack of communication for these parties. We wished there was an app that could help us locate the best parties and events nearby.

The current methods of bringing awareness to an event/party are very ineffective. The first possible option is to create a Facebook event, but anybody who has ever tried to create a Facebook event knows how ineffective it is: Inviting all your friends on Facebook is very tedious, and you have to go through a long list of friends to choose who to extend the invite to. Also, you would not want to send a party invite to somebody who you are not on good terms with, and at the same time, you are constrained to only inviting people who you are "friends" with. Parties are supposed to be great opportunities to meet new people, so what's the point of going to a party when you know everybody there? Another problem with Facebook events is that the number of people who click "going", "maybe" and "invited" is very misleading. Many people make it a habit to not click "going" or "maybe" for an event to avoid committing to something in case something else comes up. This can be detrimental to the success of the event. Other options such as Eventbrite and Smobber provide a list of concerts and paid events that are in your vicinity, but the problem with these apps is that they target an older generation. For example, if you search "party" on Eventbrite, your results are "SCP Christmas Karaoke Party" hosted by "Royal Canadian Legion Sir Arthur Currie Branch 116" or "LEDC Holiday Open House" hosted by "London Economic Development Corporation". Thus, it's easy to assume that university students who are looking for a good time wouldn't use these apps to find the next big party. Finally, another problem with these apps is their dull presentation and interface. These apps strictly list out events that are close by, and require the user to select from a long list of events just to read through description paragraphs. After all that reading, the user still wouldn't know if the event was going to be good and whether or not he/she should bother going.

Idea:

Our idea is to create a social network of events, and we hope to turn our app into a social hub where students can go to find the best parties and events close to them. The concept of our app is very simple. As a user looking for a party, you log onto the app which is synced to a pre-existing social media account such as Facebook. Depending on how far you want to travel, you set your distance to show only the events happening within that radius. Event banners will start appearing on your screen one-by-one. If you are interested in learning more about the event such as the date, cost, who's hosting, and pictures, you can click on the banner, but not much detail will be included to keep it straightforward. If you are interested in going to the event, you swipe up ("Turn-up") and if you want to pass on the event, you swipe down ("Turn-down"). These simple gestures make our app more interactive and almost game-like. If the event is "open", meaning that everybody is welcome (usually for bars, clubs, concerts and fraternity parties) you will get "matched" with the event right away. When you get "matched", you will have access to the event's full details, such as time, address, dress code, who's going, reviews, and what to bring. However, if the event is "private", the host will receive a notification that you are interested in going. The host can then decide whether or not to extend an invite to you by swiping up or down. A possible factor that the host may consider could be whether or not the two of you have mutual friends.

As a user looking to create an event, you will be prompted to fill out a template. The app will instruct you to fill out basic information such as the name of the party, the date, affiliation with an established club/bar, whether the event is "open" or "private", etc... It will also suggest that you upload pictures of who the hosts are and if possible, where the party will be. Another important feature is the capacity limit. For example, if the host wishes to keep the party under 200 people, he/she may set the limit at 250 (some people who claim they're interested may change their mind last minute). After 250 people have "swiped up" and declared their interest, the event will no longer appear in the events feed. For more serious event organizers, a premium account will ensure that their event is one of the first few that users see when searching.

We have included additional features to give users a more complete experience. Once a match has been made, users can message the host with any questions or concerns they have. There will also be an event wall, where reviews and ratings may be left by attendees during and after the party. During the party, users can access this wall and post about the status of the party. If the party is going great, they can make a quick post saying "Party is live" and more people will come. If the party isn't going so great, someone can post "Lame" and people will quickly find a different event to attend using the app. The idea of ratings and reviews is the fundamental basis for our social network. Since users are synced via Facebook, profiles are easy to create for hosts, and the reviews and ratings for the party will contribute to the host's "score". Over time, scores will accumulate and this translates into the host's credibility. Users will also have the option of following a host, which will ensure that any event they throw will be near the top of the list when searching. As with any app, users can "flag" and report abuse, where any inappropriate comments can be reported and the account could be suspended.

Our revenue model will be simple - We will receive the majority of our money through either in-app advertisements or our premium service. Premium accounts will primarily be used by users who aim to make money off their parties, and will place the banners of those users on the top of the events feed, where the banner will have maximum exposure. However, we will only incorporate our revenue model in the second or third year of launch, depending on how large our user base is at that time.

It is now the age of social networks, where they have become incorporated into our everyday lives. There's a social network to keep up with old friends in Facebook, a social network to find new professional opportunities in LinkedIn, and a social network for "finding the one" in Tinder. In fact, there's even a social network for making videos in YouTube. However, what's surprising is that when people think of the most primordial way of socializing, gatherings, there is no social network to be found. Our vision is to fill that void. Will you join us?