**ENHANCED SOCIAL INTERACTIVITY LEVERAGED BY LOCAL PARTICIPANT DISCOVERY USING A CLOSE RANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

**ABSTRACT**

A method is described for enhancing social interactivity by discovering potential participants within a geographical proximity using a close range communication system. Agents use a computer application, typically on a smart phone, to advertise identifying information to each other via a close range communication service, such as Bluetooth. A group of mutually identified agents can then form ad hoc communities of participants that interact in various social activities within the locale of the participants. Online interactions can be enhanced with the opportunity for personal interactions, leading to more satisfying social outcomes. Social activities might involve gaming, buying and selling, dating, and many more possibilities. Identities could also be authenticated, allowing trust-based transactions to take place.

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**CLAIMS**

1. A device, typically mobile, equipped a close range communication system that allows agents to identify and possibly directly communicate with each other in a local area that is within the range of the communicating system.
2. Together with the above, a centralized or distributed service accessible to the agents that allows them to form an ad hoc group to interact in various ways as participants in an enterprise of some sort. The service may take various forms. For example, gaming, buying and selling, and dating are possibilities.
3. The service may also embody an agent authentication capability that allows trust-based transactions, such as buying and selling to occur.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Before the advent of remote and online gatherings, local gatherings of people for various purposes were the norm. For example, church attendance was in person for centuries before television and the internet came about. While online interactions can indeed be convenient and efficient, it is believed by social scientists that they lack crucial information modalities that in-person interactions provide. For example, social media friends often interact wearing online “masks” that project an inauthentic version of themselves. More pertinently, voice tones and facial expressions are usually lacking in online behavior. These are extremely relevant in interpreting meaning in communications.

This invention seeks to gather participants in activities into situations that can feature both local and internet interactions. Agents gather in a locale where they can discover each other to participate in various endeavors. Their geographical proximity can foster in-person interactions that enhance their experiences.

*FIELD OF THE INVENTION*

This invention pertains to the fields of close range discovery and ad hoc networks hosting social activities. The social aspect of the invention is how it fosters in-person interactions that enhance participant experiences while simultaneously utilizing the power of internet applications.

*DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART*

Patents US 6842460B1, US 7685288B2, and US 9313030B2 deal with how agents can discover each other and form ad hoc networks. Patent US 9999096B2 is about how a decision may be made to join a social network. US 9999096B2 is about finding social contacts that happen to be nearby. This invention does not specify any particular discovery mechanism, nor the form of the social activities that can be participated in. The novel aspect of the invention is it generality, which could be implemented in platforms that support a plethora of applications.

*REFERENCES*

US 6842460B1: Ad hoc network discovery menu**.**

US 7685288B2:Ad-hoc service discovery protocol**.**

US 9313030B2: Method and apparatus for secure ad hoc group device-to-device communication in information-centric network.

US 9999096B2: Wireless ad-hoc social networking.

US 9999096B2: Place-specific buddy list services.

**SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

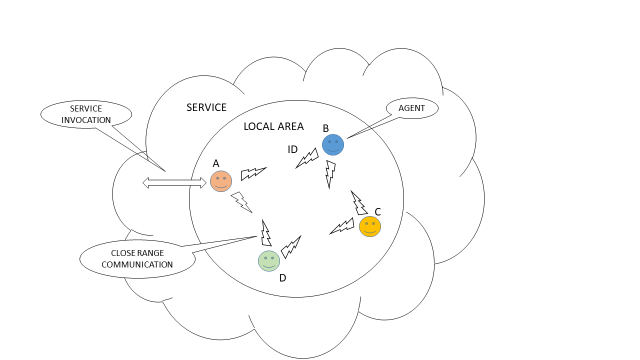


FIG. 1 – BASIC OPERATION