

Comparison of work with similar design

Our team is developing an app called Where2Next, which aims to help people share their experiences of various locations, and discover new places to visit. This paper will compare, and contrast Where2Next with various popular location sharing apps available. There are many apps that include location sharing as a feature, but the three apps this paper will be focusing on are Life360, Glympse, and Swarm. These apps were selected because they focus primarily on location sharing, rather than having it as a secondary feature.

The first app that will be compared to Where2Next is Life360 [1]. Life360 is a location sharing app with a focus on family safety. In contrast to Where2Next, Life360 offers features that alert you when members of your group visit a predefined location, or encounter a health threatening accident. The location statistics shared by the app is in real time, and continues to be sent from a user's device as long as the app is installed on their device. To some people this may raise a privacy concern. For this reason, Where2Next only shares a location when an individual consents to sharing with other people. Furthermore, Where2Next allows individuals to share context about what they did at the location. The two apps may differ in terms of their treatment of privacy, but they are similar in their range of use. Both applications are mobile applications that are functional internationally. This allows users to utilize the app regardless of where they travel.

The second app that will be compared with Where2Next is Glympse [2]. Glympse is a location sharing app that attempts to remedy the privacy concerns of life360 by giving others a "glimpse" or short window where real time location data is shared. This feature allows Glympse to be a community focused app that helps coordinate meetups, and events. Where2Next differs from Glympse in how community meetup's function. In the Where2Next app, meetups are limited to sharing the current individual location, and not the current progress toward a location like in the Glympse App. This prevents any possible privacy concerns that may result from an individual forgetting to turn off location sharing in the Glympse App. Where2Next is similar to Glympse in its use of tags to identify related events. Yet Glympse is limited in the scope of its tag. Glympse tags are limited to small towns, or areas in order to effectively coordinate events. The locations found by Where2Next tags may be expanded to include the entire city, or state.

The third app that will be compared with Where2Next is Swarm. Swarm is a location sharing app made by Foursquare in order to share locations with friends while traveling. Out of the three apps, Swarm is the most similar app to Where2Next. Like Where2Next, Swarm focuses on the social aspect of location sharing. Both apps detect when a user visits a location, and records it into a log. Furthermore, both apps allow the user to add activities done at a location into the comment section of a post, and share the post with friends. Yet Swarm differs to Where2Next in its implementation of social networking. In the swarm app, social media is built into the app as a feature. In the Where2next app, the app relies on sharing to external social media sites. By relying on external social media sites, the app reduces the number of resources that are necessary in order to support those services.

In conclusion although there are many location-based sharing apps available, Where2Next is distinct from its competitors through its implementation of privacy-based location sharing, wide search range, and utilization of external social media platforms. These features help create a smooth functioning app that ensures the users privacy.

Citation

- [1] “What does Life360 do?: Family safety app features,” Life360 Family Locator App, <https://www.life360.com/learn/what-does-life360-do/> (accessed Nov. 8, 2023).
- [2] “Glympse app,” Glympse Real-Time Geo-Location Technology, <https://corp.glympse.com/glympse-app/> (accessed Nov. 8, 2023).
- [3] E. Moreau, “What is the Swarm app and how are you supposed to use it?,” Lifewire, <https://www.lifewire.com/foursquares-swarm-app-3485804> (accessed Nov. 8, 2023).