Link: Toward Building Your Own Social Network

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1. Introduction

Today we have moved towards a more socially connected society [2]. The usage of Social Media today is growing faster than any before. It's spanning from socializing with friends to an involvement between the persons inside the companies and institutions [3]. Social Media is a powerful tool for user engagement [6]. Social Media has been used for service evaluation and understanding the user need. In addition, it used by many companies to get their customer feedback and suggestions to build a better product or service, or for improving on some product and services [6]. Furthermore, many companies today use Social Media to enhance the communication and collaboration between their employees who geographically distributed.

Public Social Media such as Facebook, Google and Twitter become the primary way to user involvement. However, **there is still a privacy concern with these public Social Media services**. Public Social Network today have more power than any government. They can know everything about us, what we like, dislike, our secret conversation, how we feel, what we, and who we talk [1].

Link is a social network that facilitates your community conversation, and enable them to engage. It allows them to interact, socialize, share and consume information, thoughts and ideas. In addition, it is grouping of individuals into specific groups like a neighborhood subdivision. Link provides an opportunity for the community such as high school, universities, institutions, governments, non-government institution and others to engage. It is also contains many features used to facilitate user interaction and collaboration. Some of these features include: posting, comment on the post, real-time chat session, voting, user profile, and focusing groups.

2. Link and Usability

From the usability side, **Link contains many characteristics See Fig.1**:

User-Friendly	Easy to understand and simple forms	No need for plugins
Well-Structured	Intuitive and Predictable	Clear Navigation
Number of steps to perform a task is minimum as possible	logically organized and predictable	Consistent format
	Effective and efficient search functionality	

Fig.1 Link and Usability

3. Link Features

Link is a **cross platform** social network website. Built on web 2.0 technologies. It developed with latest and advanced technology. Moreover, it is cross-platform. Link has a set of features (See Fig.1). These features can help users to communicate and collaborate from any place and at any time, and when users are geographically distributed. **These features as following**:
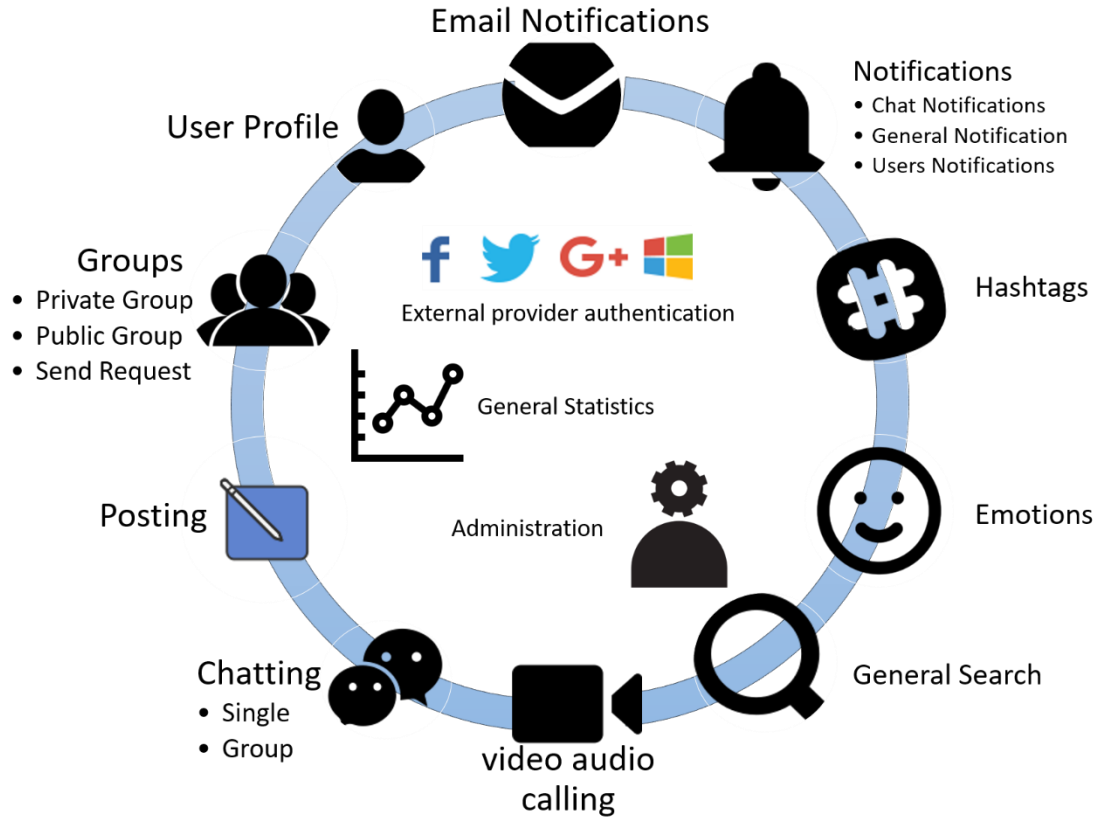
Fig.1 Link Main Features

1. **Main Wall**: This section contains a list of posts for people and the group you are following.
2. **User Profile**: It's a personal information associated with a specific user, which includes: User Image, User name, email, title, Skills and contact information. ..etc.
3. **Posting**: it represents the post that user need submit to the Posts wall. So that can show by other users.
4. **Comment on post**: It's a reply to a specific post.
5. **Voting:** It an action can be created by users to show their feelings about the post(s) or comment(s).
6. **Chatting**: It is a real-time chat that allows users to send and receive text, photos, videos and documents as well.
7. **Video and audio calling**: It is a peer to peer real-time video and audio calling that allows users to call their contact even if they're in another country.
8. **Groups**: A set of users need to share some type of information. There are two types of groups:

- ○ **Public**: Anyone can view the group posts and members.
- ○ **Private**: Only members can see group members and their posts.
9. **Notifications**: Are updates about the activity. There are a three types of notifications:
    - ○ **General Notifications**: when someone adds a new post to a specific, or reply some comment/post, vote on some comment/post relate to a group or user profile. The other user will receive a notification about that.
    - ○ **Chat notification**: when someone adds a new comment on the chat session, Link will send notification about that to other users in the group.
    - ○ **User notification**: when someone follow another user in the network.
10. **Email Notifications**: Notify users by email for password recovery, or for registration, activation, or for group user request.
11. **Emotions**: Link allows users to select an emotion faces to describe their feeling(s) about some post of comment for example: happy, sad.
12. **Hashtag:** Link support Hashtag feature to allow users to classify and tag their own posts and comments. In addition, when a user clicks on the specific Hashtag Link will view all posts and comments that contain the Hashtag.
13. **Search content**: Link has a search engine, which allows the users to search for all posts (i.e. post who authorized to see) content by date, member, post and comment content.
14. **Reset Password**: When a user needs to change his/her password to a new one.
15. **Manage Group**: Link allows the administrator group to manage group information.
16. **Registration**: Allows a user to create a new user profile, in order to join the Link social network.
17. **Request to join Group**: Link allows users to request another member to join specific group.
18. **Explore People**: Link allows users to see follower or discover new users.
19. **Explore Friends**: Link allows users to see all connected friends.
20. **Explore groups**: Link allows the user to see their groups or discover a new group.
21. **Active/Inactive Status**: Link allows users to see the other friends' status. If they are active (i.e. they log into their account) or they are Inactive (i.e. logged off from their accounts).
22. **Administration View**: Link has an administration level view which allows admin user to see information about link group, user, and comments.
    - ○ **Current Login User**: Link allows admin user to see all logged in user's history.

- ○ **Explore all user profile**: Link allows admin user to see all users profile information.
- ○ **Explore all Group**: Link allows admin user to see all groups' information.
- ○ **Explore all Comments**: Link allows admin user to see the user/group's comments.
- ○ **General Statistics**: Link allow admin user to see some of statistical information such as: number of user profile, number of group, top n group, user login per time, as another statistic information.

23. Link has a responsive user interface that supports smart phones, tablets and desktop screens.

4. Why should you have Link Social Network?

Fig.2 Why Link

- **Contain the main Social Media features**: Link contains the main features which are exist in the public Social Network such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and others. These features can help users to geographical involved.
- **You are the Data Owner:** You are Link data owner. Your data is not shared with third parties, and no one can manipulate or exploited for other purposes.
- **No Privacy Concern**: There is no privacy concern by using Link. There is no centralized entity can monitor your private interaction and communication.
- **No Policies Restrictions**: There is no one can restrict you to follow certain policies, which can adversely affect your community goals.
- **No Annoying Ads**: No ads, no promotions, no inappropriate content. You don't need to waste your time with public Social Media Ads. You should focus on your goals.
- **You can customize it**: After you get the Link platform, you will get it with full source code and library. So, you can customize it by choosing your own colors', fonts, layouts, and brand or by adding / deleting features, to be appropriate to your goals.
- **Geographically User Involvements**:   Link built on web 2.0 technologies. It allows globally, users to interact, socialize, share information with one another.

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