Deep Linking with Lyf

Link Types & Behaviour

There are multiple deep link types supported in Lyf, and they will behave in different ways depending on where they are clicked and the state of the app installation on the phone.

Deep Link Type	Example	Desktop click	Phone Click		Notes
			App NOT installed*	App installed *	
Custom Scheme	`lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=36094`	not clickable	not clickable	Opens desired content in app	This is added as it is required by Branch for some links
Universal Link	`https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=36094`	Opens Lyf homepage	Sends user to Apple App Store / Google Play Store	Opens desired content in app	This is the standard deep linking supported by Android & iOS
Branch Link	`https://lyfapp.app.link/seeing_a_married_man`	Opens Lyf homepage	Takes user to App Store / Play Store. After app has installed, takes user to desired content in app (deferred deep linking)	Opens desired content in app	Requires links to be generated on Branch service including metadata containing the desired *Universal Link*

* The installed version of the app must be able to handle deep-links. Previous versions of Lyf which do not handle deep-linking will have the same behaviour as not having the app installed at all.

Our Universal Links

Our universal links will open specific content in the app. These links must conform to a certain format to work in the app.

The format is: `https://www.lyfapp.com/``{action}``?``{parameter1}` `&{parameter2}` i.e. `https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=36094` will open the beat with id=36094 in a `JourneyDetailController`.

Link Action:

- `beat`
- `filter`
- `lyfsupport`
- `createbeat`

Parameters:

- For a **BEAT** link:
    - Must specify the JourneyId with `id={journeyIdNumber}`
    - Can optionally specify a starting post with `post={postNumber}`
- For a **FILTER** link:

    Must specify the filter type with `filter=`. Possible values are:
    - `filter=all`
    - `filter=following`
    - `filter=new`
    - `filter=welcome`
    - `filter=categories`
- For a **LYFSUPPORT** link:
    - No parameters required
- For a **CREATEBEAT** link:
    - No parameters required

If it's a `categories` filter, a second parameter must specify the category name with `category={name}`:
- `filter=categories&category=relationships`

The category name must be an exact match to one of the categories listed in the app (but lowercase).
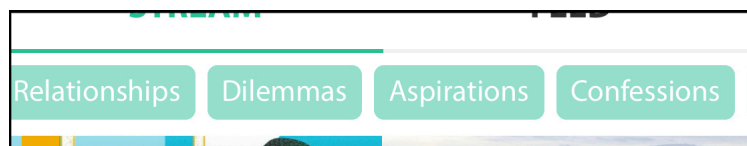
For example, `relationships` is correct, but `relationship` will not work

Putting it together

[Putting parameters together](#) -- Parameters start with a '?'. Multiple parameters are separated by an '&'

So, putting it all together: `https://www.lyfapp.com/`{action}`?`{parameter1} `&`{parameter2}

For examples, see the test cases below.

Some Test Cases for Universal Links (metadata for Branch Links)

Test case	Link
Go to certain beat	`www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=1234`
Go to certain post in a beat	`www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=1234&post=2`
Beat does not exist	`www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=12384646544`
Post does not exist	`www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=1234&post=76855335189654`
Select 'all' filter on 'Stream' tab of Home	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=all`
Select 'following' filter on 'Stream' tab of Home	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=following`
Select 'new' filter on 'Stream' tab of Home	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=new`
Select 'welcome' filter on 'Stream' tab of Home. Upcoming feature, not yet supported	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=welcome`
Select 'Relationships' filter on whatever tab ('Stream' or 'Feed') is active	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=categories&category=relationships`
Select category filter that does not exist	`www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=categories&category=nonexistant`
Open Lyf Support controller	`www.lyfapp.com/lyfsupport`
Select category filter that does not exist	`www.lyfapp.com/createbeat`

Suggested in our [GitLab issue ticket](#)

1. `www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=32930` **Losing it ain't easy.**
2. `www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=36094` **Seeing a Married Man**
3. `www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=77278` **Tales of the warrior**

4. www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=103620 *Becoming eco friendly**

5. www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=93026 *Fathering the Flock**

6. www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=110145 *Healing from emotional wounds**

7. www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=95406 *Ramped Anxiety...lotsa reasons**

8. www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=104100 *Therapy diary**

* not available on Demo API

Deferred Deep Linking with Branch

Using the Branch deep linking service, we can send a user to specific content within the app, whether they have the app installed or not! For this to work, the links must be created within the Branch service. This is typically done through the Branch Dashboard (but can also be done through their API).

Branch Link Creation - Step 1

Select the correct environment for link creation, either **TEST** or **LIVE**. The **LIVE** environment should only contain links used in the production environment to avoid inadvertent linking
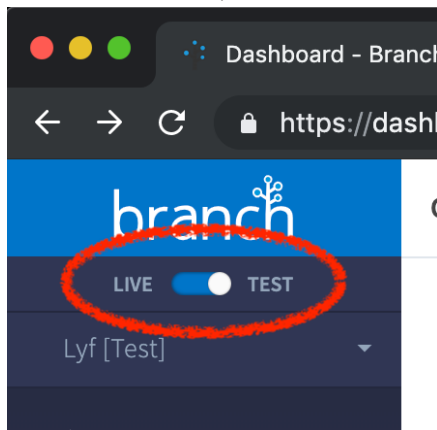
The following steps are reached through the following menu options:
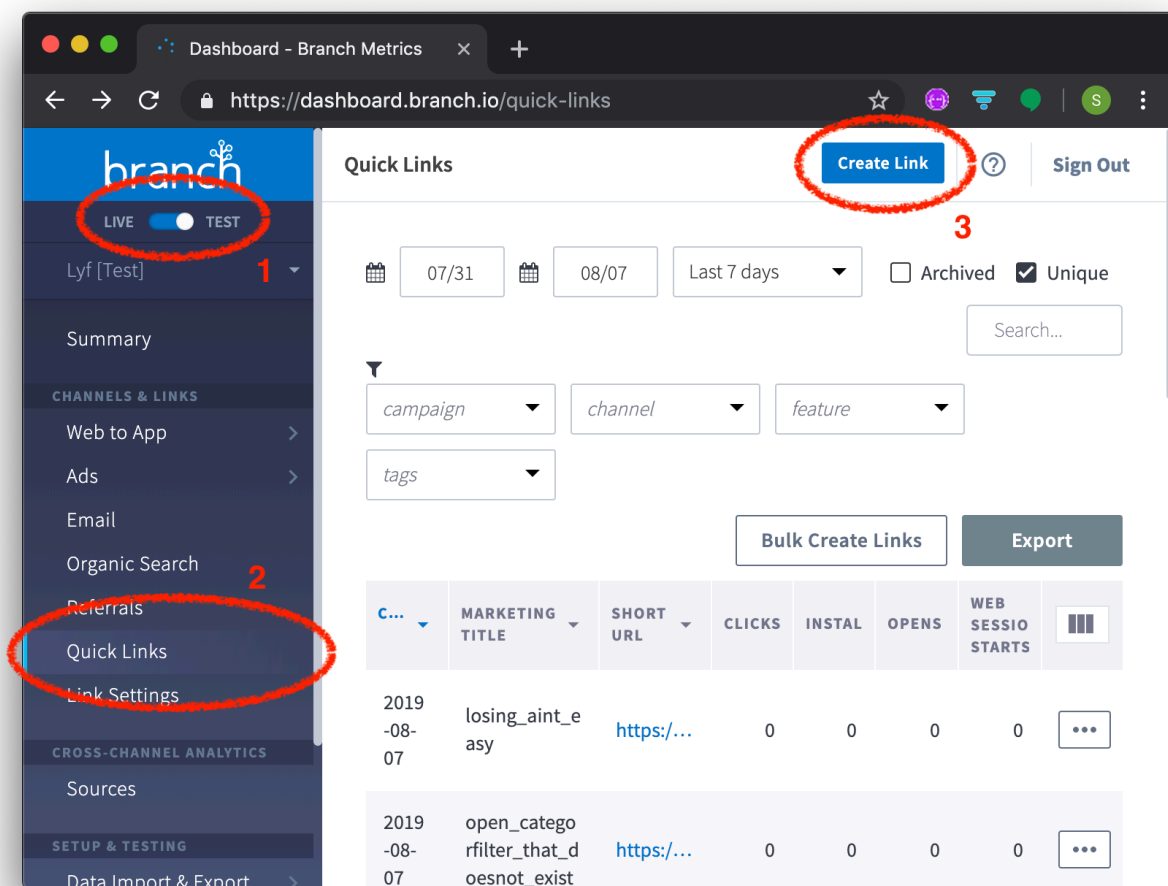
Branch Link Creation - Step 2

- **Name** of the link will appear on the Branch website when the user follows the link on desktop.
- **Web URL** is the Universal Link as defined below. The main element to get correct is: `/{action}?{parameter}` part (in this case `/beat?id=36094`).
- **utm_source** this can be used to track campaign type (email, Facebook, Instagram) if desired.
- **utm_campaign** can be used to track a campaign by name

Branch Link Creation - Step 3

- **Link name** The link name can be changed to anything you want here! Something related to the content for example.

- **Data** - Add an extra field with Key = `$deeplink_path` and Value = `{action}?{parameter}` the same as in the `$canonical_url`. The App will preferentially use this field first and use the `$canonical_url` as a fallback.

- `$og_type` is populated here by default. This is the Facebook *OpenGraph* **type** and can just as well be deleted, or changed to *applink*

Custom Scheme URLs

The app also supports a custom URI Schema `lyfapp://` which would look like: `lyfapp://{any host}/{action}?{parameter}` There needs to be some sort of made up host name, I suggest `li.nk`.

i.e. `lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=36094` would open beat 36094 in the app

Testing Deep Links

For iOS, the suggested method is to create a note (in the app "Notes") of links to tap.
For our purposes, emailing this list to your iOS test device is a better test.
For Android, emailing a list of links to your test device works well

A table of links for testing is given below:

Description	Universal Link	Branch Link	Custom Scheme
Open Beat "Losing Ain't Easy"	https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=32930	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/losingAintEasy-test	lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=32930
Open Beat "Losing Ain't Easy" to post 2	https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=32930&post=2	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/losing_it_aint_easy_post_two	lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=32930&post=2
Open a Beat that does not exist	https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=12384646544	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_beat_that_does_not_exist	lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=12384646544
Open Beat "Losing Ain't Easy" to a post that doesn't exist	https://www.lyfapp.com/beat?id=32930&post=76855335189654	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_32930beat_to_post_does_not_exist	lyfapp://li.nk/beat?id=32930&post=76855335189654
Open with `all` filter	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=all	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_all_filter	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=all
Open with `following` filter	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=following	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_following_filter	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=following
Open with `new` filter	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=new	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_new_filter	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=new
Open with `welcome` filter. This filter doesn't exist in current build	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=welcome	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_welcome_filter	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=welcome
Open with `relationships` category filter	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=categories&category=relationships	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_relationships_category	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=categories&category=relationships
Open with category filter that doesn't exist	https://www.lyfapp.com/filter?filter=categories&category=nonexistant	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_categoryfilter_that_doesnot_exist	lyfapp://li.nk/filter?filter=categories&category=nonexistant
Open to Lyf Support	https://www.lyfapp.com/lyfsupport	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/open_lyfsupport	lyfapp://li.nk/lyfsupport
Open to Start New Beat	https://www.lyfapp.com/createbeat	https://lyfapp.test-app.link/start_new_beat	lyfapp://li.nk/createbeat