



Shopping Beacons

Overview



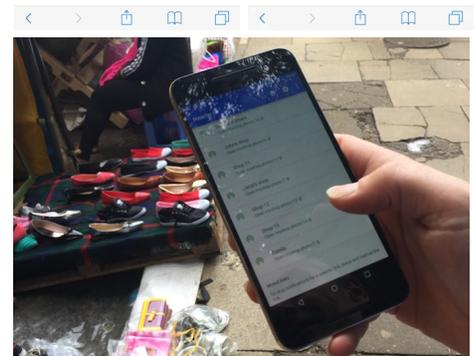
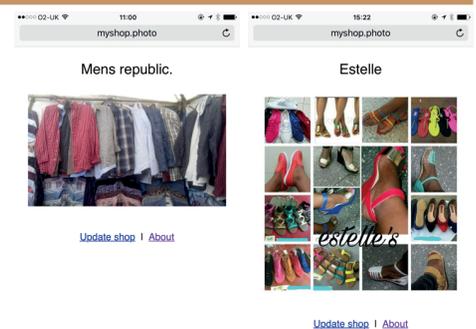
Shopping Beacons give small businesses the ability to quickly create a simple online presence and broadcast it digitally to the local environment with the hope of attracting potential customers.

The Physical Web platform enables fast, wireless and app-less access to small chunks of digital information using Bluetooth Low Energy beacons (left). Beacons are discreet and compact, with a short-range signal (typically up to 50m) and long battery life (upwards of two years) that can broadcast up to three URLs (amongst other data) to their immediate environment. We identified an opportunity to use the Physical Web to enable emergent-user businesses to quickly create and update an online presence with timely, location sensitive information that customers and passers-by could then interact with when they were nearby the market and stores.

Scenario

Duma is a local trader who has recently acquired a Physical Web beacon to help him promote his business. He wants to broadcast the details of his shop to the local area via the beacon to give potential customers more information. He takes out his phone and pulls down the notification bar to reveal all the beacons visible to him. Amongst the list is his beacon, which he selects, taking him to his webpage, which currently displays a blank update form. After typing in his PIN, Duma is able to change the title of his page and add a single photograph to promote his shop. He takes a photo of his physical business card, which then uploads automatically to his local webpage.

Walking down a busy shopping street, Tia is keen to find a trader who sells swimwear. The market is a bustling area full of people, making it difficult for her to see what wares each stall has on offer. So, she takes out her phone and checks for Physical Web beacons nearby. From here she can see a list of nearby vendors, and quickly notices a stall named "Duma's Swimwear". Clicking on the link, she is taken to Duma's webpage, which displays his business card. On this card are photos of his products and his phone number, which Tia calls to get directions and find her way to the stall.



This tool is part of the Digital Inclusion and Participation Toolkit. For more information see: digitalinclusiontoolkit.org



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