ICT - The WhereWot Project

The aim of the project is to develop a web based travel and trip planner that will make it easier to plan what to do where, as well as how to get there, and when to be there.

It will be of value to travellers because it will solve the where when how questions in a user friendly way, allowing them to plan and discover more easily. It will add to Google and other data by putting it into a personalised when and how dimension. The program will replace A4 brochures found at airports and improve information delivery in the tourism, hospitality, and leisure industries. It will in this way go way beyond programs like tripadvisor and agfg. It will collect data from users such as time required for a particular attraction or activity, but not be yet another rating program. User preferences will relate to the frequency a venue or activity is included in an itinerary not ratings by a biased aggrieved person or paid user.

The software will initially be implemented in Tasmania where it would greatly assist a depressed tourism industry and then be expanded to other states and maybe the world. A very primitive early version of the program is to be found at http://www.watersideaccommodation.com/attractions.php and it was the popularity of this page that gave us the idea that we could do so much more.

Information from a number of sources will be mined, stored in our server side database and used to guide the user through the planning process.

Sources may include for example:

- Web services (e.g. Google)
- User input i.e. search criteria and preferences
- Paid information upload

The information will be presented to the user in multiple windows covering the when where and how dimensions. Where and how are expected to be on a map. The when dimension in chronological order similar to a classic itinerary. The what dimension may be as simple as scrolling the mouse over the map with anything close by popping up and the ability to drill down for more information which would appear in yet another window or drag across to an evolving itinerary.

The work will include designing the interfaces and working back to the design of the databases and data collection schema behind them. Once a plan is developed the system will provide the user with both on- and off-line reference material they can use to make their trip more enjoyable.

The main functional areas of the program will be:

- Obtaining and organising data
- Optimise what where when how from the data
- Making recommendations

The project will involve the design of the database, data mining systems such as interfaces with Google etc. It is likely to utilise Java technologies including ActiveMQ, Maven, Tomcat, Eclipse IDE, Google Web Toolkit, Hibernate (JPA), OSGi and the Spring Framework and scalability and flexibility will be a key design goal.

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