

REcult::Wedding::Concepts02

MAP



CONCEPT I:: **iCan** THE LOCAL SERVICE EXCHANGE

The idea of iCan starts from the assumption that every individual owns not only certain material properties but also distinct non-physical assets such as abilities, skills and knowledge which are potentially interesting for others. For instance, a retired janitor is still able to fix a clogged sink. A young hip hop fan can probably teach you some basic breakdance steps. Or the Turkish housewife with only little contact to neighbor families because of language difficulties might know a set of interesting cooking recipes from her home country. The concept of iCan aims at creating an infrastructure that enables and encourages people to share their skills and knowledge in order to help others and - in return - to benefit from their specific abilities as well.

We live in a service-oriented society, but service as we know it is almost always related to financial reward. In order to obtain a certain service such as the cleaning one's house, a cooking class or a language course we have to pay money. In contrast to this, iCan applies a common idea of social behavior where individuals of a certain group such as a family, a house community or a circle of friends provide quick and uncomplicated assistance and in return might receive a favour at some other time. If we confine the range of offerings of certain services such as babysitting, language classes, repairs, moving help or assistance in dealing with official paper work to a local scale there could be a similar form of reward. Our application could provide the foundation for an exchange where people can barter service and material goods against each other.

As one of the most striking results from our research we found out that Wedding is a mobile media-saturated place. Cell phones are widely used by people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. Our concept builds on WiFi-enabled mobile phones along with an open WiFi network that is accessible for free, but only within the range of a local area and only connecting to a local server or LAN. Here, a central database stores information about people offering their abilities. To this end, they “tag” themselves with keywords describing their abilities or experiences they are able to offer. At the same time it is possible for everyone to apply queries in this database in order to find out if somebody with certain abilities is available. The following use-case scenario describes the basic steps of using iCan:

1. Yussef is a carpenting apprentice with only a little income. He sends a message of his nickname along with his phone number and the ability tags “carpentering, furniture, wood work” to iCan.
2. Some weeks later, Petra moves into a new flat and needs a kitchen table. She’s not too handy to build one by herself but don’t have much money either to buy a table at IKEA, so she sends a request message with the keyword “carpenter” to iCan. As a search result she gets one hit from the database. She will not see the actual name or phone number of the respective person but has the option to directly connect to the person’s phone by VoIP.
3. Petra selects “Connect”, and a couple of seconds later talks to Yussef. It turns out that during her moving she sorted out a lot of things she doesn’t need anymore. She and Yussef agree upon meeting the day after tomorrow to build the table. In turn, Yussef takes a pack of blank CDs from Petra’s moving remainings he can use for the next recording session at his breakdance studio.

CONCEPT II:: **COMMUNITY BOARD**

The idea of the Community Board aims at the lack of communication between people in Wedding, especially across cultural or language borders. Community Board is intended as a compact digital application running on WiFi-enabled mobile phones offering local people several community services directly on their cell phones. These services would be divided into four main categories: Announcements will provide local news and event listings, Offers serves as a kind of classified ad collection for jobs, goods and services. The category Profiles enables people to express opinions and to find users according to certain criteria, and a Create function lets the user send messages, attach multimedia content and post own comments in one of the previous categories.

Since the system is based on open and wide-spread technologies such as WiFi and mobile phones, the inhibition threshold for potential users is low. Regarding the contents, possibilities for use are endless and new ideas will be created by the community itself. The application itself will be distributed for free as a plugin for mobile phones. It consists of an easy-to-use interface that allows to access any kind of information within a maximum of three steps.

CONCEPT III:: **COMMUNITY RADIO**

This concept deals with the reanimation of physical local spaces that used to serve as places of exchange and communication in the past. It aims at connecting residents closer to each other by using media infrastructures that are already available. To this end, an open radio station could serve as a pivot point for the creation of relationships between local people and as a foundation for resident's self-identification with their neighborhood. People are invited and encouraged to participate in the production of broadcast contents, whereat a textual variety of different music styles, program formats etc. reflects the district's cultural and social diversity. Especially for young people such a place could serve as a place to go and spend their spare-time after school.

Possible locations for a community radio station are numerous: Many smaller streets in the residential areas of Wedding are spotted with premises of former grocery stores, kiosks etc. that were shut down years ago. These places used to serve as common places; places where the community of a neighborhood or street could come together occasionally and thus create subtle relationships between each other. With a community space open to the public situated in one of these shop locations it could be possible to reanimate those physical local meeting places. The idea is to confine the range of impact to a local scale, such as a part of the district. In turn, the target area would be a local one as well, so that for instance a low-range radio transmitter could be sufficient in order to reach a community of several ten thousands of residents of Wedding district.

Another transmission technology could be the use of open distributed WiFi networks that could stream radio contents to laptop computers and cellphones, or make them online accesible as a podcast.

Considering long-term effects, such an open community space would not only serve for the benefit of Wedding's local re-sidents who will actually be encouraged to actively deal with their own living environment but could possibly also help to raise the district's general reputation and disprove people's prejudices about Wedding.

CONCEPT IV:: THE VIDEO TERMINAL

How to help people in Wedding to give their opinion to community life, and share their cultural character to a broader audience?

This concept uses abandoned shops, and equip them with media technology. Both a video capturing tool and a big screen are combined in each location. The community is encouraged to give comments or special announcements in speech and person. These comments are recorded and sent to other places, which are connected to the network as well. It is sort of a speaking corner that can intrude daily life.

Young persons can for example tape their interpretation of their newest rap song or break dance act, social workers can spread their offers, Koran schools can promote their lectures or the Christian churches can invite to their services. People of different ethnic groups are invited to present their cultural backgrounds making their direct neighborhood more conscious about it.

Every message is connected to persons. The community is getting aware of personal responsibility. Big digital displays should be placed at the main road or directly at the location of different parallel societies, like old German corner pubs or the Islamic cultural centers, next to the apartment houses. Parents can point out the bad conditions of schools or can promote the next celebration in the neighborhood.

Big displays show the collected contents per random (controlled by a responsible person); contents can also be chosen by a direct audience in smaller displays (simple interface). The younger generation is inspired to show the use to persons who are not into technology, but a main goal is to have an easy handling as possible; just a monitor where the person can check itself in action and a button to start and stop the taping. People will have access to media and learn how they work, that they have possibilities to participate. People of other districts can convince themselves of the community life in Wedding, of a culture where also minorities are represented, youth of other districts can take part of Wedding's youth life.

For all citizens

YOUSSEF

age:: 17

sex:: male

origin nationality:: Lebanon

living in Wedding:: 14 years

reason:: family lives here

occupation:: pupil

leisure:: rap music, breakdance,
Youthclub Badstraße



Youssef's day starts at eight o'clock to prepare himself reluctantly for school. Although his homework he hasn't done yet weighs on his mind, the possibility to see Fatma gives him a smile, though he knows he will not speak to her again (shyness). He dreams of Fatma very often but cannot give his dream action, because he shares his room with his older brother. For breakfast he eats the traditional meal prepared by his mother, his father is already at work. In the bathroom mirror he examines the newest breakdance move before he puts on his sneakers, checking them every five minutes. He wears a necklace showing the cedar as national symbol of origin. At the street he meets Vitali; without him he is never seen on the street. Listening to the latest Berlin rap song they go to school. He knows everybody of the neighborhood, his friends are here. He talks to Vitali about the cars they like to have and that he is in need of a new stereo. During the sport lesson he relies on the physical abilities of Vitali. After school they meet up their gang to stroll around Wedding, knowing the district like the back of their hand. If somebody he doesn't like crosses his way, he insults him with his gang behind him. Some of the guys carry a tincan around as they mark the district. He is aware not to get too close to the working place of his father as he always asks about school. Youssef and his friends meet up at the playground to hang around sometimes smoking a spliff, or go to one of his friends who has his own room with a TV set, and watch music videos. In the evening they check out the youth club at Badstraße.

SEDAR

age:: 42

sex:: male

origin nationality:: **Turkish**

living in Wedding:: **20 years**

reason:: **worked at AEG before it
closed at 1986**

occupation:: **opened a grocery store**

leisure/cultural life::

Koran school, Folk music and dancing at Turkish Community Center

need of:: **jobs, apprenticeships**



Getting up at six o'clock to receive the fresh goods for his grocery store, Sedar is taking his breakfast at seven, including strong coffee, cigarettes and some of the leftover pastries. As usual, his wife has been preparing everything. His youngest daughter and her brother who's one year older are quarreling in the bathroom, and he hates the noise they make. As he wants to shout furiously he is calmed by his wife with an angry look. With his father this wouldn't have been possible he thinks. Watching his wife he thinks how beautiful she looked at their wedding; the photo of this event is the one he likes most. His family and his wife are the persons who made it possible to endure the hard times after the AEG factory shut down in 1986. Down in the shop he is peering out of the door, watching the street life he likes. In order to relax himself he is playing with his prayer chain or is cracking sunflower seeds, his best method to reduce smoking. When there are no customers in the store he goes over to Achmed at the doner kebab restaurant next door, and chats about the last results of Galatasaray Istanbul. At 11 o'clock he goes to the newspaper shop, leaving the store to his oldest son who is unemployed at the moment. He is in sorrow about him. Why he is getting up that late? He always told the boy to finish school, not to hang around with this guy If there is nobody looking at him in the newspaper store he is browsing in the Men's Health Magazine with the firm intent to do some physical exercise, but as soon as the shop owner appears he grabs the Anatolia News. Going back to his store he meets some men from the koran school, talking about everyday life. After lunch and diner during which his oldest son takes care of the shop, he takes his car and drive with his wife to their best friend. On the way home they stop at the telephone shop of his nephew to call his old mother back home, and he tells her how he misses his village, but after the last visit there one year ago he was lucky to be back at Berlin.

KÄTE

age:: 76

sex:: **female**

origin nationality:: **German**

living in Wedding:: **all her life**

reason:: **her parents were
born in the district**

occupation:: **retired**

leisure/cultural life::
have a walk in allotment gardens

need of:: **elevator**



How she likes to get up early, to watch the sun rising in the backyard. On the small balcony above her's, her old neighbour Karla prepares the breakfast for herself and her husband. She greets her with a smile, but inside she detests her her passionatley. She is nnot really jealous or anything, but... she wonders why Karla's husband is still alive, why she has always had it easier in her life. She looks around, the window of the couple which was that noisy last night is still open, she can see some bottles on the kitchen table. For Käte a tidy apartment is important. It's a personal statement. But this doesn't mean she doesn't know how to enjoy life – back in the days, when her husband was still alive, the celebrations organized by his labour union had been big events and went on with him and his friends in their apartment. Now she likes to spend her time with walking around the allotments or by having coffee parties for her few friends, with cake and a glass of sweet liquor or perhaps two... At nine o'clock she purchases the goods she needs for the next days. It seems as if it takes more and more time every day. But she likes to buy some sweets for Eva, her grandchild, at the Kaisers supermarket. Every time she notices that more and more of those little businesses run by Germans shut down. Arriving at her apartment house she waits for one of her neighbours to carry her groceries upstairs. Many of her neighbors are immigrants but Käte has a good relationship to them, and although Wedding is said to become rougher she still feels at home here. The afternoon she calls her stepdaughter on the phone to talk about Eva. Käte tries to give her some advice on her grandchild's education but she doesn't think her stepdaughter is really listening to her. But wasn't it her, Käte, who had to bring up two little children during the war?, she thinks while preparing her meal for diner: potatoes with curd and parsley, along with Spreewald cucumbers and jam – just like back in the days when she grew up here, just a couple of blocks away.

GINA

age:: 27

sex:: **female**

origin nationality:: **Ghana**

living in Wedding:: **for four years**

reason:: **better living condition for her and her child**

occupation:: **unemployed**

leisure/cultural life::
meet outside for talking and making music

need of:: **proper playground**



She gets up at eleven o'clock - last night has been hard. Lisbeth was crying all night long but since she lives with her best friend Kita she must take care that Lisbeth is not too noisy. She prepares a bottle of milk for her. After feeding and caring her she looks to the playground in front of their apartment. Often she is angry, because litter gathers everywhere around; witness of the youth hanging around at this place. Not an area she wants Lisbeth playing, if she is ones old enough. After her own breakfast she is searching the newspaper for jobs and cheap housings. She listen to radio, to radio Multi-Culti. She is preparing herself and Lisbeth for a walk outside, to meet her friends. She sends them SMS to confine the place. After she fetches Kita from her working place, bringing along some arranged dishes.

She tries to cook like in Ghana, but here the fitting vegetables are not available.

They walk to the park, where they meet their friends. Sitting their, enjoying the rhythm of African music, chatting and feeling the last rays of sun. It is a wonderful moment for her. She forgets about the job she is in need of; the problems with the language. She feels back in Ghana where she talked Portuguese and French with her family, she missed this personal contact much. Not even telecommunication can replace it. But she is looking forward, anyway she met a really nice guy two days ago. When she looks in the mirror she feels herself very attractive, the looks of the men in her age confirm this.

VERONICA

age:: 38

sex:: **female**

origin nationality:: **German**

living in Wedding:: **for three years**

reason:: **cheap housing**

occupation:: **cleaning woman**
with one daughter

leisure/cultural life::
active member of a
protestant congregation

need of:: **better schools**



Petra gets up at 11.00 o'clock in the morning. She totally missed that her daughter had breakfast at 7.30. That's quite normal. She prepared herself a coffee. She sits in front of the television, She channel-hops through the channels, but doesn't find something interesting. She has a hurting back from her job as a cleaning woman. A sign for her to change to another job, she has already tried many. She never had had a job longer than a year. Most of them she quited herself. Because there is no milk left in the fridge she goes down to the grocery shop in her personal favorite dress: the bathrobe. She eats a bowl of cereals and prepares lunch for her daughter. She cooks one of best loved dishes of her: pancake with mushrooms. After changing her clothing, she and her daughter take lunch together. She helps her daughter with the homework, supervising if everything is done well. She sends her out to play with her friends, giving Tipps for her diner. With a kiss she says goodbye, looking if her girl has the key around the neck. She takes the plan of protestant congregation, looking over if she must help in the community next evening. She makes herself ready to work, She goes there by foot. She knows that after work she will ones again watch "Titanic" as video, with a lovely package of potato chips and a glass of sweet red wine. But there is still 7 hours of work. During the work she dreams of her last holiday in Cuba, humming the last song of "die Ärzte". As she returns by bus at 0.00 o'clock her back is singing its painful song.