

Position Paper for UXTV Social TV Workshop

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(Apologies for the informality of the document, I did not have time to format this in the ACM 2-column format)

Bio:

I have been an interaction designer at TiVo for over 3 years, where I have lead the design efforts for many currently shipping products including Rhapsody on TiVo, Amazon Unbox Downloads, and the YouTube on TiVo application. In previous roles I have worked extensively in the intranet web application design space at SGI, as well as 3D interaction design and “World Building” at Cosmo Software.

Abstract:

The recent rise in the popularity of Social Network web sites such as Facebook and Friendster has generated a lot of excitement as to how the concepts behind these sites can be applied to other media. It is my belief that the Social Network website is an enabling technology for allowing viewers to share their opinions on Television Shows, and make recommendations to others in their circle of friends. This kind of interaction allows for more tailored suggestions, based not only on a user’s expressed likes and dislikes, but on what people who know that person think they might like.

TiVo has created a Facebook application which allows users to share reviews and recommendations with their circle of friends. By tying this service directly into the Online Scheduling component of our TiVo.com website we could allow users of the application to set up recordings directly on their TiVo DVR without having to leave the context of the social networking web site.

Position:

I am excited about the possibility of creating closer ties between our existing Facebook application and the functionality on our DVR platforms. Currently our Facebook application allows users to create, read and share reviews of shows and episodes with their friends on Facebook. The addition of scheduling a recording of that show on the TiVo DVR directly from Facebook would create a powerful platform for finding new content that the user would enjoy. This is an exciting possibility; however, other scenarios are possible, such as finding people outside your network to make new friends based on your personal tastes in TV shows or movies, or interest groups forming around certain TV shows or movies.

Another possibility is to feed these friend recommendations into our back-end suggestion engine on our servers, and use the correlation data to improve individual suggestions on a TiVo DVR. This way, even people who do not use Social Network sites can benefit from the collective wisdom of the social web.

As the collection of reviews and opinions on the social web application grows, it will become more and more useful, eventually providing a robust source of highly correlate-able program opinion data, which could be used in many ways to improve the TiVo DVR service.