



SOCIAL NETWORKING SWEDEN – A PROJECT PROPOSAL: DRAFT

please note, this is a first draft document and does not necessarily reflect the views of all parties mentioned. Nothing here is set, it is merely a collection of thoughts and ideas by the author

introduction

Sweden has one of the worlds most advanced societies with one of the highest Internet usage recorded per capita. Approximately 1.2 million Swedish youth use Internet based "communities" for between 1 and 13 hours a day *** need to check this ***. They typically hang out and chat with friends and surf profiles and pictures.

These communities are operated by companies for profit. These companies typically gather statistics from youth and use that data for target advertising to them. This is clearly a business model as supposed to a social model. Their obligations are to their owners and not to the education, health and wellbeing of the youth they advertise to. These "communities" place huge pressure on youth (fit in, look good, own cool stuff) meanwhile disengagement, racism and anorexia are increasing within the youth sector of Swedish society - hardly a success story for furthering society through the use of Internet technologies.

As members of society we are obliged to further society using resources such as the Internet. We must ensure that we give people the tools they need to gain access to education, share knowledge and gain the chance to be part of and contribute towards information society, economic growth and a self sustainable future.

This proposal outlines a strategy to give Swedish residents (citizens) an Internet based community in which they have ownership, a community in which they can further their education, share knowledge and contribute towards society - A community that encourages and facilitates activities aimed at furthering our society.

partners

When taking society onto the Internet one can draw parallels with a town. You need an infrastructure to provide services. The group of people living in that town share those services and thus become a community. This community along with other communities within Sweden debate, create policy, law and agree upon a common set of rules by which to live through electoral representation. We can break this down into infrastructure, services and citizens, all of which have to be provided for in an Internet society.

Infrastructure

Stockholm University computer club (<http://www.sigma.su.se/>) will provide us with hosting for our project. They will maintain the servers and the availability of the project to the Internet.

Services

Barnraiser (<http://www.barnraiser.org/>) supplies the services (the software itself) and training required by the citizens. Its role is to develop those services based upon the requirements of the citizens.

Citizens

*** requires agreement with Urix on exact role definition and involvement ***

URIX (<http://www.urix.se/>) links together organisations to create content and debate within the community. There role is to create activity within the community and to work with Barnraiser to ensure that policy reflects the wishes of the community.

Any usage of the word "we" in this document denotes the three partner organisations.

free as in freedom

We need a community and that involves using software. Ownership is a key issue when empowering a community, so who owns it?

Barnraiser addresses this in two ways.

- The software under a free (as in freedom) license.
- The software is developed in public and anyone can contribute to that development process.

Barnraiser have created an Internet community platform (software) called 'aroundme'. The platform includes:

- Social networking tools that allow people to create networks of people around them.
- Group membership and management tools encourages people to create groups where members can share knowledge, discussion and opinion. Each group has a structure that ensures elected representation and administration.
- Publishing tools allow individuals and groups to contribute towards community wide discussion and polls.
- Event and activity management tools ensures that groups of people can collaborate around events ensuring that the knowledge gained from within the platform is returned to society.

The software today is valued at over 2.5 million SEK, yet has been developed by a growing volunteer development network spanning the world. It has been developed without any funding and is free to any person anywhere to download and use. We can therefore conclude that the software and therefore the platform upon which the community thrives is equally owned by every member of that community.

the project

Think of Sweden as a number of towns and villages linked by roads. Each town or village has a community and those communities are linked by roads. These collective communities live together within a society. We wish to create a network of localised Internet based communities throughout Sweden. Each community is called a 'node' and when linked together as a 'network' they represent Sweden's Internet society. Any community member can move throughout the network from community to community in the same way as someone would move from town to town to see friends or attend an event or activity in another town.

Our goal is to create this Internet society and use it as a platform to address some of the more sensitive issues within these communities (AIDS, Anorexia, racism etc) through collaboration and knowledge sharing.

*** what are the top issues facing Swedish youth today? ***

prerequisites

There are a number of prerequisites that are agreed upon prior to the project starting:

- the electoral process will be maintained throughout the community – one citizen one vote.
- no person living in Sweden will be excluded from the community.
- the administration of the community will strive to maintain a gender and ethnic minority balance that reflects that of the population of Sweden.
- The community will be administered openly and fairly according to a charter.
- Personal issues such as the reporting of abuse will be dealt with swiftly and confidentially.

community structure

'Aroundme' supports both hidden and open groups. Hidden groups can be created. No one can see them except those invited in by the group administrator. A typical use of a closed group would be to arrange a party with friends. Open groups can be seen by the community.

Each and every open group has a set of rules (articles of group) which define the rules within the group. Each group must have an electoral process to annually elect a group council of at least 2 members.

Each group council member can stand for node council election every 2 years. 10 are elected bi-annually and form a committee to oversee the community. Each must stand down after 2 years.

A team of experts shall be available to that committee to support them. *** Barnraiser, legal, social working, urix, sigma plus ?? ***

phase one - goals and objectives

Every society starts somewhere. We want to start by creating a single node in Stockholm. Stockholm was selected by default as it is the home of all three partner organisations. The phase one project will last for one year.

We have a number of goals we wish to achieve with this project:

- We wish to create more active youth and for them to spend less time on passive inactivity.
- We wish to improve the education, health and wellbeing of community members.
- We wish to create an environment where people can access high quality information on issues that affect them (AIDS, eating disorders, leadership, teamwork).
- We wish to encourage people to share knowledge and work together towards common goals
- We wish to create a platform for debate

We have a number of objectives we wish to fulfill:

- We will launch the community.
- We will introduce 9 [see appendix A] of Sweden's youth organisations and support them in administrating their own groups and activities.
*** I would like to increase this to about 20 ***
- We will train administrators and run a series of workshops for organisations.
- We will extend the software to facilitate the requests of those organisations
- We will invite 1000 youth into the network.
- We will work with an appropriate organisation to create awareness educational material on XXX ***
number 1 youth/UNIX issue - drugs, smoking, AIDS, eating disorders??? ***
- Barnraiser wishes to introduce an "activity CV" so that people can build up an activity attendance and contribution personal CV.

time line

If we act quickly we can capitalise on the Sweden's seasonal weather. We wish to populate the platform with groups over the winter. We wish to introduce members to the community in the spring in preparation for activities and events happening throughout the summer. This will maximise uptake in activity participation.

1st quarter 2005

project employ administrator(s)

switch on single node in Stockholm

training weekend

introduce organisations and create content

2nd quarter 2005

- role out to youth
- create full summer activity program
- review feedback and act upon

3rd quarter 2004

- research usage and gather poll statistics
- create awareness educational material

4th quarter 2004

- launch awareness educational material
- prepare for phase 2 (creating and linking other communities)

phase one budget

Each partners budget is listed separately and are combined as the project budget. Initially we require full donor support, however our objective is to work with a donor corporate partnership in which each party finances 50% of the project. We believe this can be achieved for phase two.

The following budget is for phase one only.

Phase one requires one administrator and one editor/coordinator project employee. The administrators role is to ensure the membership are supported and that the electoral process is upheld. The editors/coordinators role is to coordinate youth group activities within the community and to create editorial content. Each will cover the other in the event of holiday or sickness.

We require seating for three within a larger organisation that can supply office services.

General costs

- project administrator
- project editor and coordinator
- office space
- economy
- computers
- legal
- training facilities and meeting space

User interface and content graphical design

Swedes are familiar with a high level of graphics design and profiling. We will need to invest in a new user interface design if we are going to reach the widest audience possible.

*** We should put this out to tender. Proposing Mårten (<http://www.marten.nu/>) ***

Barnraiser

The long term goal of Barnraiser is to create a membership of corporate partners and donors. We believe Barnraiser will become self sufficient by 2008. Barnraiser and its volunteer network have made an in kind investment of 2.5 million SEK in this project.

We will train and support the project team and ensure the software and support is in place. Will will be available to organisations and employees to consult at all times.

one project consultant for one year (50% time)
??

Urix

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Stockholm University Computer Club (sigma)

Whilst sigma is prepared to host the project for free we should upgrade some of their equipment to cover increased usage:

Server upgrade: 5000 SEK
Extra disk space: 2500 SEK
network: 4500 SEK

sigma have asked for an administration fee of 100 SEK per month:

Infrastructure administration: 1200 SEK

Please note: an uptake of over 5000 registered members may require additional investment. Phase two will require an additional server (LDAP server).

further information

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document history

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appendix A

The following organisations have expressed a wish to be part of the project:

Svenska FN-förbundet (UN)
kfuk-kfum
sverigesungdomsråd
svensk scouting
RKUF (Swedish red cross youth)
peacequest
arbetarnas bildningsförbund (ABF)
ungmedia

The following organisations support the aims of the project:

Landsrådet för sveriges ungdomsorganisationer (LSU)