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Nanomatic Gets Social with Location App

Posted In: Mobile Content | Near Field Communication

By Monica Allevan

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New on the U.S. mobile social networking scene is Nanomatic, which is just now announcing its arrival in the U.S. market.

Nanomatic is launching a new mobile social location application called nanonavi that allows Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Hi5 and Orkut members to find and engage with one another. The basic idea formed around 2004, when the company's founders saw the success of social networks like MySpace and Facebook. The company has specialized in mapping and GPS, so the idea was to marry LBS with social networks on mobile devices.

That sounds a lot like another mobile LBS company, Loopt, but Nanomatic representatives say it offers a lot more than Loopt or Gypsi, such as data caching and a location logger.

The basic idea is to consolidate the various social networks on a mobile platform and add mapping so people can find their friends as they move around. "The major part is we consolidate different social networks, which is very important," said CEO August Schnabel.

That's not all Nanomatic has to offer. Nanonavi also connects with nanoFinders, little devices that allow consumers to find things and people. NanoFinders can synch with the nanonavi applications on phones for real-time location information.

The nanoFinder family of products includes a FriendFinder, CarFinder and devices with GPS receivers that can be attached to a collar to track a pet. The technology uses IP and WLAN and will look for the lowest-cost connection, Schnabel said. It's GSM-only and not for CDMA.

The company is in talks with carriers to get its technology into the family plan mix, so such plans for people would be expanded to add pets, cars, boats or other possessions. The company hasn't announced any deals with U.S. carriers, however.

Nanonavi runs on major smartphones, including those from Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Samsung and phones based on Windows Mobile. The social networking application currently is free for download on Facebook, MySpace, BeBo, Hi5 and Orkut.

The company is financed through its founders and some private investors, but it is looking for institutional investors. The company was founded in London and has R&D headquarters in Hong Kong. Its U.S. presence is in Silicon Valley.



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