

CES: Other Interesting Stuff I've Seen

by CARLO LONGINO on 10. JAN, 2009 in CES

Overall, I think this installment of CES has been quiet — both in terms of mobile and overall. There are a lot of companies going the route of not having space on the exhibition floor, and just meeting with people elsewhere or showing their stuff at some of the smaller satellite events. Even with that, though, I have to imagine attendance is way down. Traffic hasn't been an issue, the show floor wasn't nearly as mad as it was last year, and the Strip doesn't really seem all that busy.

That said, I've seen a few other interesting things:

– **INQ Mobile**, which makes social networking-centric handsets. They're owned by Hutchison and have launched already on 3 in the UK and Australia, and are working to get operator deals in the US. This is the direction many handsets will be going: tightly integrated with social-networking sites like Facebook and communications channels like MSN and Skype, and making easy access to them a top priority.

– **Zhiing**: As I sat talking to a couple of guys from this company this morning, after several minutes, I thought I had to be missing something, because "all" they're doing is sending locations to phones. So if we're having a meeting, I can Zhiing you, and you'll get a message that calls up the location in a mapping program and gives you directions (or, if your phone can't handle that, you can get an SMS with directions). I scratched my head for a minute, then I sort of realized that even though that seems pretty simple, it's actually quite difficult. For instance, if I want to send an address to my phone, I still have to manually enter that address in a mapping program to see it on a map and get directions. Zhiing automates that, making it much simpler. For instance, they offer a Firefox plugin that recognizes addresses on web pages you visit, and allows you to easily send them to your phone.

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But what's also cool is that Zhiing wants to create a standard for sending location information around for mobiles, both to and from them. One possibility could be, say, a taxi-ordering application that sends a Zhiing to a cab company's dispatch with your location, which then sends another one down to a cab, where it generates a position on a map and directions on how to get there. Stay tuned for more on Zhiing, I'm sure I'll write more about them in the future.

– **Nanonavi**: combines a friend-finder type of service with social networks and some neat mobile mapping features, as well as asset tracking. While friend finders are old hat, I wonder if combining more privacy features with social networks like Facebook make it more compelling.

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Taymar Pixley 2 years ago

Thanks for the interesting write up, especially on zhiing. You are right on that it seems like something you could do with other programs, which you can, it just takes out like five steps.

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T.S. Elliott 2 years ago

I have used zhiing and I love it - I am trying to get more people to understand how great and useful this app really is. I am confused by some of the other ones, but I love trying new things!!! Thanks Carlo!!!

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