Action Streams

This is a blue-sky treatment on action streams, presented here as an evolutionary step from activity streams. Action streams would not only share status/activity update meta data but also permit updates to function as actions. For example, an invitation update posted in twitter could be accepted in Buzz. The vision for action streams thus involves a distributed and decentralized ecosystem of coupled action posts, rendered by third party stream clients and within participating social networks.

What it is

- A next generation twitter
- A posting system that is distributed
- Enables social analytics of posts and responses
- Enables posts to be rendered with action buttons
- Allows posts to be thematic social actions (invitations, gifts, offers, etc) with the responses common to those social actions

Why

- The current state of the art is the individual activity update or post, with some associated attributes provided by activity streams schema
- Individual posts are isolated, distributed, aggregated and re-aggregated, but remain isolated
- Social updates are a communication system
- Coupling posts and enabling responses to posts is the next logical step in the architecture's evolution
- Distributed social actions would be a powerful improvement of the individual posting environment we have today
- Is a step in the direction of individual posts becoming transactions in a marketplace of social exchanges

Marketplace applications

- Brand messaging
- Offers and discounts
- Direct and distributable sales
- Tickets and events
- Invitations
- Recommendations and short reviews
- Activity scheduling
- Games

- Branded interactives
- Interactive ads
- Polls and quizzes
- Interactive commenting
- Viral ads

Rollout

- Challenge: protocol adoption at same time as success with the service
- First as a marketplace-ready application, then by adoption
- As social marketing
- With analytics
- As social gaming

Activity streams

- Activity streams schema describes individual activity posts and updates
- Attributes included in the schema are used to help render posts shared across networks
- Attributes relate to the activity referred to by the individual post

Action streams

- Action streams schema would describe social actions
- Action streams allow posts to refer to one another
- Action streams allow posting activity to become social action
- Social action can be distributed across networks
- Action stream schema allow networks to render the action post with the action's specific action attributes

Examples

For example, one type might be the invitation. Action stream schema would define button types to be rendered by clients with invitation action stream posts. Where the activity stream schema allows a network to render an update as an invitation, the action stream schema would allow the network to provide "accept" "decline" and "maybe" buttons

Where the activity stream schema allows a network to render an update as a game move, the action stream schema would allow games to be played by connected moves distributed across networks

Where the activity stream schema allows a network to render an update as a review with rating, the action stream schema would allow users to add their own rating

Where the activity stream schema allows a network to render an update as a ticket offer, the action stream schema would allow users to purchase the ticket

Seesmic and Tweetdeck desktop apps would render invitations with "accept," "decline," and "maybe" UI buttons

Echo comments would include action posts
Buzz would similarly render posts with UI buttons per action format type

Requirements

- Adoption by third party clients on protocols and post redistribution
- Open source enhancements to schema
- Ability to couple posts to one another
- Ability to chain posts in a series
- Ability to describe actions
- Ability to re-distribute responses to posts as distributed action
- Separation of post from actions on the post
- Differentiated thematic schema for themed actions: games, invitations, gifting, sharing, rating, etc
- Collective adoption of an action streams schema by networks and third party clients

Challenges and Issues

- Identifying the user
- Spam and commercial abuse
- Adoption
- Keying actions to interaction series
- Tracking realtime state of distributed social actions
- No distribution if the client doesn't subscribe to a hub

What it might look like

- Twitter with tabbed post types
- Twitter with icons used for selecting the action post type
- Current Facebook updates (with their options for attaching objects)

How it works

- Message is posted from a_network
  - Message is rendered with buttons on networks
  - User b clicks button
  - Message and button value are posted
- Updated message is rendered on a_network

Overall Schema

The action update isn't saved to user's profile or anywhere

- The action update would need to be posted and a separate file created to capture aggregated actions
- The actions if used in socnets wouldn't be preserved there
- A distributed action framework would still seem to need a company to store results as well as provide the applications – another widget company – or a common and shared data center
- Communication paradigm is impossible unless communication and action schema exist

Action update

- Subject (actor)
- Verb
- Object
- Action
- Object
- Audience (actors)
- Target (object)

- Status?
- Confirmation/response?

Action streams formats

Invite

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Review

- Message
- Outbound

- Responses

Recommendation

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Tickets

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Offer

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Advertisement

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Game

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Social bookmark

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Favorite

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Slideshare

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Youtube

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Last.fm

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Blog post

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Foursquare

- Message
- Outbound
- Responses

Questionable

- Fan page
- Facebook group