Students Create Online Planetary Improvement Network

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BOURNEMOUTH, UK (RPRN) 04/04/14 — Students from Oxford and Harvard, in cooperation with the World Mind Network,Peer to Peer Media Group, and the Creative Commons Initiative, are building a new social network dedicated to using common Web and Smart Phone apps to build planetary improvement projects in a few hours which achieve goals in social change, academic research, environmental improvement, education, cultural preservation, and worldwide online discussion of important issues. According to World Mind Network Co-Director Sarah Mendel, many of the students were attendees at events sponsored by HSMBB (The Harvard Society for Mind, Brain, and Behavior). Other participants include Dr. Javier Ogembo of the Harvard Medical School and Irina Higgins of the Oxford Foundation for Theoretical Neuroscience and Artificial Intelligence.

A typical protocol, created in less than three hours, is this one for Disaster Relief, which the network used during the 20ll Fukushima earthquake and tsunami in Japan, as well as more recent floods in Thailand and the Philippines:

1. Create a landing page on Google sites with RSS feeds of latest news, including links to on-site organizations which need help
2. Use search engines to find and rank current Twitter trackers for affected area

3. Do the same for Facebook post monitors
4. Do the same for SMS (texting) monitors
5. Collate trackers on a Bing map so that rescuers can be connected with victims in real time
6. publicize site with online press releases

"Students armed with nothing but their cell phones can do things which governments, corporations, and NGOs are either unable or unwilling to do", says Mendel. "The key is in finding and combining the best uses of social networking, microblogging, and Internet video to concentrate on specific problems."

Protocols exist for cloud-based research projects, cultural preservation programs, Fair Trade social enterprises, crowd-sourced experiments, worldwide philosophical discussions, knowledge matrices, artistic collaborations, and environmental improvement projects. Each can be created in a few hours, and further streamlining is an ongoing process.

Those who complete projects with existing protocols are offered a seat on the network's Board of Trustees, which includes six Nobel Laureates. This, in turn, authorizes them to add others of their choosing to the Board, thus constantly bringing in fresh thinking and innovative ideas.

Texting, tweeting, Facebooking, microblogging, online video and cell phone apps are not new to students. What is new is the efficient use of all their capabilities in combination to reach important aims in a few hours which the traditional brick-and-mortar academic world would take months or years to accomplish. The goal is that by next year student-created apps for Android and iPhones will so efficiently link a given student's Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Skype, Google, and smart phone accounts that projects can be set up and working within minutes.

The key is the creation of protocols which serve as formulae for easily setting

up Internet based projects which achieve well-defined goals, are infinitely replicable, grow by themselves through social networks, and enable each student to carve out a Web niche which serves as the Internet's focal point for the student's chosen issue. In practice, this means that each student is experimenting with making their work more public, and yet more personal, at the same time.

Says WMN advisor Wolfram Ruisdael "The cloud of knowledge, creativity, innovation, and even wisdom represented by the Internet is now incomprehensively vast. Its power to solve both traditional and new human problems is almost infinite, but until now Humanity has not really demanded the efficient use of it to refine theories instantly, generate new ideas, build communities, and get innovative thinking from where it originates to where it is needed. Students, because of their familiarity with these technologies, are the natural creators of the new change-making networks."

Other student participants have come from Cambridge, Scripps College, Caltech, Rutgers, the Ecole Polytechnique in France, Beijing and Tsinghua Universities in China, the University of Delhi,
the Federal University of Parana in Brazil, and the University of Witwatersrand.

Crucial to many of the new protocols are programs like Apple's Siri artificial intelligence app for the iPhone 6s, Facebook's Timeline, Google +, Pinterest, and msnNOW.

Among other programs, students have participated in projects which:

Aid Stanford physicists in predicting sunspot cycles;

Created the world's largest collection of pre-1900 archival French audio recordings and preserved them with iTunes and Windows Media files;

Explore the new PS3 video game 'Journey' as an art therapy tool

Advised legislators in Nepal who are re-framing the national constitution;

Built the world's largest online crowd-sourced environmental investigation which discovered several causes for a sudden fish die-off in Taal Lake in the Philippines, and suggested treatments which were successfully implemented.

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