Miraveo: mobile networks as social networks

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"There is no better way to find friends around you when you are out", said Joel, from the Californian city of Santa Barbara. Joel was speaking about Miraveo software.

Miraveo was founded just over a year ago with the support of the Universitat Politčcnica de Catalunya (UPC), which is one of the shareholders. The company has already taken its first strides within the technology sector and is optimistic about the future. Jorge García Vidal, lecturer at the UPC's Barcelona School of Informatics, is head of the project in Barcelona: "We have developed software that can be used with different applications, that is, a spontaneous proximity network that can be used to link different mobile devices using Wi-Fi technology." Wi-Fi is a system of sending data between computer networks that uses radio waves and does not require cables.

Miraveo came up with the idea of using the freedom and ubiquity of Wi-Fi to facilitate a social network for any user with a mobile device. Anybody who has a mobile phone, a laptop or another similar device can connect with any other person around them. This gives the concept of mobility another dimension, with the added value that users know which people are around them at all times, and can connect with whoever they want, exchange photos and videos, make arrangements with friends and family, and so on. By way of example, a group of people with mobile phones or laptops on which the Miraveo software is running can spontaneously, at any time or in any place, make an arrangement to go to a concert, see a film, or have a coffee. Consequently, this represents a new way of interacting socially with the people around you.

"We provide the platform on which other companies can create the applications that their users require", he added. "The idea is similar to that of a mobile phone detecting the Bluetooth devices that are around it", he qualified. The Miraveo software will be available for purchase online or through other Wi-Fi devices.

How did the company start up? "In the initial stages, the project received a lot of help from the Innova programme, particularly on how to patent technology and how to run a fledgling company", explained the Catalan head of Miraveo. Once the company had been established, García Vidal got in touch with Mario Nemirovsky, a renowned entrepreneur from Silicon Valley and the current executive director of the group. "He has set up many technology companies and is an expert. We discussed the idea and began to work on it immediately", explained García Vidal. Currently, the company has nine employees, including one in Palo Alto, California. "The USA is the centre of the technology sector and you need to be there", he stated. However, most of the company is based in the 22@ district of Barcelona.

The first version of this new software was presented during the GSMA Mobile World Congress that was held last February in Barcelona. "We are now working to launch the software commercially and in September we expect the definitive version to be on the market", stated García Vidal. "We are looking for funding to launch the product worldwide", he added.

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