

From ex-Facebooker, a new 'Path' to sharing

November 15 2010, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- A new service aims to help you share the hundreds of photos you take with your camera phone with the people you trust the most - be it of moments as forgettable as a late-night McRib sandwich or as memorable as a new engagement ring.

Path, as it's called, comes from Dave Morin, who played a crucial role in developing Facebook before he left the company in January. Unlike Facebook, which encourages people to expand their circles of contacts, Path is focused on sharing with just your closest friends - and, for now, just photos.

Launched Monday, Path is a free iPhone app that lets you share photos taken with the phone with up to 50 people. Versions for other phones are coming.

Though there are other sites that let you share photos, Path sets itself apart by keeping things simple and only between friends. To start, Path will ask you to set up an account using your e-mail address and phone number, the latter so that people who have it can find you on the service.

Once you're set, tapping a green camera icon on the bottom of your [iPhone](#) screen will bring up the gadget's camera function, so you can snap your picture. Rather than adding a caption, you can add three types of tags - people, places or things. If you tag a person, Path will give you the option of sharing the photo with just that person. Otherwise, you're sharing it with all the people you've preselected.

Sharing on Path is asymmetrical, so in that sense it's more like [Twitter](#) than Facebook. Just because you're sharing with someone it doesn't mean that person has to share with you.

Tagging things can be as whimsical or as boring as you want it to be. Tag your socks, your morning cup of coffee, your pet hamster. And you can tag places, such as the restaurant you're sitting in or the office building you're about to enter.

Why would anyone want to do such a thing?

Morin, 30, who says he's a big believer in the mobile market, noticed that people have a lot of photos on their phones that they don't do anything with. Have a phone long enough, and it's a unique insight into your life. Not a lot of people do anything with these photos, he says, so creating a platform to share them made sense.

Path's founders picked 50 as the highest number of people you can share with because they wanted to create a "personal network" that's of a higher quality than the hodgepodge of co-workers, schoolmates and acquaintances that people have collected on [Facebook](#) and other social hubs over the years.

Napster creator Shawn Fanning is among Path's other co-founders.

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