

Social network Path announces more ways to share

November 30 2011, By BROOKE DONALD , Associated Press

If Facebook is like hanging out at a banquet with a large buffet to feast on, then social network Path is an intimate dinner with close friends. Path is now getting new silverware and table decorations, so to speak, with the release of updated software.

CEO Dave Morin, a Facebook alum, says the dinner-party philosophy remains but users can now share their comings and goings with up to 150 friends, up from the original 50.

With the new version available this week, a year after its debut, Path aims to be more than a sharing application. It wants to be a digital journal that documents your days with a push of a button.

Morin describes it as "a slightly [social experience](#)." You're not just updating it to share your day with others; you're recording your life for yourself.

"The idea has always been to give you a trusted place to share with your close friends and family," Morin said. "Now that the (mobile phone) is the accessory you have in your hand all the time, it's become a journal."

Path began as an [iPhone](#) application for [sharing photos](#) and videos. Users later got the ability to add one of five [emoticons](#) to their friends' photos.

The new version lets users post music and tell everyone where they are, with whom and whether they are awake or asleep. It's also compatible

with Android-running phones for the first time. And, it includes technology that allows the application to make updates on its own, as long as the user agrees to it, or opts in.

For example, if you fly to Minneapolis, the application can track you with GPS and post this when you land: "Arrived in Minneapolis, it's 6:06 p.m. Mostly cloudy and 50 degrees." The location updates are neighborhood and city specific but will not pin an actual location.

Morin says the auto-updates make it easier for users to share richer content without much effort. And, while the details may seem personal, your network is only of [close friends](#) and family.

The update retains strict [privacy controls](#), which Morin says is key to making people comfortable with sharing, especially in the wake of high-profile debates over privacy issues at Facebook.

On Tuesday, the government announced a proposed settlement with Facebook over "unfair and deceptive" business practices. The pact requires the company to get people's approval before changing how it shares their data.

The new version of Path integrates larger social networks Facebook, Twitter and Foursquare, allowing status updates to those sites from the Path application.

Morin says the San Francisco-based startup has enough funding for its next stage and just hired its 20th employee. Path has more than 1 million users.

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