**Code Saw**

Alexae Stone

The Code Saw is a product that allows users to see their development patterns within something like open source projects. I personally have never used these kinds of mediums but it seems like it would be interesting to see, as I have coded within groups before. The idea is that you can see your development patterns on a timeline and at the same time see your communication level you were having with others during this development. You can also compare two users by putting one over the other. I like the idea of colors blending to create a combination of the two. It gives you a different view than one color just covering the other, giving the wrong idea that one user maybe be talking a lot more than the other.

I found one part of the project idea confusing. The idea that a user could see what kind of emails were sent between the two was strange. It seems like you highlight the area of time when you want to see an email and from there the text will pop up. But I was not sure how you can tell what part of the code they were working on. I assume that it is the same idea as the email, but I just was not for sure. I feel like that is good information to know, but it doesn’t feel like it is portrayed in the best manner. I think I would like to know, with the communication who they have been contacting. I think users like to know who they have been talking with and getting that social aspect of things.

I think one thing they did cover well was an understanding of who is doing what with the code. I think its like the users said, it’s a sense of community. This is great for things where people don’t get outside recognition – these people are doing it for fun. But within their community, others can recognize someone’s efforts, where they might be able to without this visualization. I think it is very similar to the article on Wikipedia. They both allowed their users to recognize or at least see other people’s efforts. I think here is where you get people who want to protect their work and stand up for it. It keeps out the bad people posting garbage. Like the other users said, this area could be improved by creating a page like Wikipedia, advertising those doing the best with their projects and stuff like that. Maybe like they said, creating a page with top developers or those who have been putting forth a lot of effort to a certain project.

I love the idea that you can see who has been assisting you on writing your code. I am interested to see if this creates outside relationships. I think if they could somehow incorporate this visualization into a social networking site, that could further create the bonds they have made through their code. Maybe it could further allow them to work on more open source projects in the future.
Bridging the Gap: A Genre Analysis of Weblogs

Alexae Stone

This article seems to be a study of what is kind of different blogs are out there. I think the idea that women and teens are interested in more of a personal journal makes sense. Men don’t usually like to talk about feelings or emotions, where women and young people like to be social, share what is going on in their lives and want to interact more with others about feelings. However, men are interested in filter blogs.

I agree with the article in the fact that Blood’s initial ideas of blogs have now changed. It is not used for just links but people use it to share feelings. I know people who write their daily and just enjoy sharing their lives with others. It is treated just as their journal. I think it is true that livejournal is similar to regular web pages. It is kind of a place where you post information and it doesn’t get too many comments on each page. It is more so a place where you are feeding the information to others. However, the community websites I agree are like newsgroups. It is more of a constant posting, people interacting more so with their other internet users.

The article hits on a big point that the Internet today allows people to not understand code but to still be able to post to the world. These pages we are creating will benefit the world to a great extent. It allows us to hear from others who may not have been able to create their own page and can now use these sites created by others.

I think it is interesting how the blog entries don’t contain images. I guess the idea is that blogs contain mostly texts and other means are used to portray pictures. There are so many places to store your pictures and share them with others that a blog poses as a different use. I could see in the future these kinds of places combining. I guess facebook kind of does this, but writing notes in facebook is not quite the same thing as blogging on a site like livejournal.

I’m glad the personal web pages are somewhat disappearing with these kind of social devices. It is a good way to see everyone’s sort of personal page, but within a site that has everyone else’s site too. It’s a good way for users to find out about each other.
Flash Forums and ForumReader: Navigating a New Kind of Large-scale Online Discussion

Alexae Stone

I think this article was one of the more interesting papers this week. I love the discussion of all the different kinds of interfaces, what they think worked and what didn’t.

All of the old interfaces they discussed I think were great too. The one with the thumbnails reminds me of the project presented in class where the student documented their life for a year through these pictures. It has inspired me and I hope to do something similar for my final project. Also, I think discussion spaces still need to be in work on finding a design that really works well for large spaces. I think it is just a lot of data to represent in one screen. It gives us something to look forward to in the future.

I am a little confused on the design on for the thumbnail page. I feel like their explanation was a little non-descriptive. They said it was supposed to wrap around like a conversation, but I don’t see the wrapping in the picture. I did like the idea of giving the user the choice of what their highlighting option should represent. I didn’t like the idea that if a conversation was too long, it would be made to scroll. I think that is something that we as computer scientists try to avoid. No user wants to scroll down, let alone to the right.

The search feature seems great! I love when you can click on a word and it highlights the other words that are the same (unless I’m just clicking around, then it’s not so good). Also, to have the thumbnails represent the search is good. Users can see a wide view of any post that they may be interested in, without having to search through each individual posting.

I also like the idea that they implemented in Slashdot. People enjoy being able to find out histories, even if it is as simple as what they have been looking at within a page. I think as a user I would like to see maybe a summary at the end of what I have actually read. I think that this would be interesting to see if what I was actually looking for is what I spent most of my time trying to find.

I was shocked to see that users didn’t like to see information about other subjects. I feel like users normally want to know what others are doing. Apparently that is not the concern in these forums.