Friend Similarities

In order to create our visualization, we needed a way to convert all the data Facebook gives us into what is displayed on the screen. One aspect of the visualization is your “active” points and the other is your location on the visualization.

Active points

The more active points you have between the two of you, the deeper your color gets. It begins as the rgb color red 200, green 200 and blue 250. To make this idea clear to the user, we will have the legend (FIGURE 1) included on the visual. The color will be changed according to the following rules:

• Wall Posts – For every 2 wall posts you have made on your friends wall and vice versa, your color will be brought down by 2 red values, 2 green and 1 blue. If you reach the darkest color value, it will quit subtracting. This will be after 100 wall posts, which we assumed to be one of the largest amounts 2 people could have. If this assumption is incorrect, maybe every 3 wall posts could result in a darkening of the square. The data will be held from the previous year, and all other data will not be visualized. Maybe future plans could include creating a visual way to show the past.

• Pictures – For every picture that they have tagged of you or you of them, again your square would be darkened by 2 red, 2 green and 1 blue. If this darkening, plus that occurring with a wall post, is making all squares too dark, we could simply create a multiplier to reduce the darkening.

• Events attended – For every time you attend the same event, your color would be reduced 2 times as much as for a wall post, as it may be less common.

• Messages – For every message, the color would be darkened the same as a wall post. They seem similar in nature, messages may be a little more personal.

Square Location

In order to place the squares, we need to take into account the 4 categories – applications, friends, profile, and groups. This idea is similar to before. To make the following estimations more exact we could conduct a study on several Facebooks and see what the ratio of apps to friends is, etc. Each category will have some certain point value (described below) and using some math, they will be

• Applications – For each app you have in common, it could be given about 15 points. People don’t have very many apps, thus the point value.

• Friends – This will be determined by the number of friends you have in common. Each friend will be 1 point.

• Profile – Each item in common on your info page will be compared in this portion and be worth 2 points, as it may be less common than friends. The data will have to be extracted and compared. Some kind of compare algorithm may need to be used for people who use different phrases to describe the same thing. For instance, “running” and “jogging” would be considered as something you have in common.
Groups – Each group you have in common will be worth 5 points. Again, this data can be parsed from your groups page and compared.

In FIGURE 2, from observations done on Fernanda’s profile, it seems as if she has a lot of friends that mainly have friends in common with her. These Facebook friends are mostly people from her high school that she doesn’t ever talk to. Fernanda has only a few applications, and the ones she has are the popular ones, such as Bumper Stickers, Gifts, and Food Frenzy. Because of this, a lot of people have apps in common with her. Another observation is that she has about 4 people that she is really “good” Facebook friends with. They are pretty active on each other’s profile and have very similar interests.