First of all, I liked the idea of describing email as a habitat. To me, I check emails very frequently due to the work and the school materials. Whenever I woke up, the first thing is to check my email. Also, it is a crucial method for communications within my friends and colleagues. It is much efficient than text messaging and can send to anyone I want who has an email address.

Categorizing email within the range of time, social relationship and topic can be a very effective way to see the email types and patterns for the users. I liked Time Store due to the idea of categorizing the email into people and other and time. It would be really interesting and yet effective to see the trend of my email by sorting them in time sequence. However, it would be also interesting to see from the senders side rather than just receiving. Sometimes, due to the work, I have to send email to multiple people within my lab group. By sending multiple email with the same content, people respond very fast or they just see and say “ok.” However, one thing to notice is that, it is most likely that we receive email a lot by sending emails to others. I tend to receive more emails if I send emails frequently to my colleagues rather than just waiting. By analyzing the “Re:” and see who start the email thread and to whom the person sent the email might be an effective way to analyze the social pattern of email of one user.

I also liked the idea of Post-History, where the application visualizes the email conversations based on calendar and one’s contacts. It would be very interesting to actually see an email application where it shows to whom I have been sending emails frequently and to whom not. I think if the email clients have such a feature to actually show the frequent contact, like the bookmark, it might be easier for users to send an email to frequent users. For me, I tend to memorize the email contact to whom I send email frequently. Because since I write to that person frequently, it just makes me memorize his/her email. But by just looking at the words of list of email contacts, it would be much better if there is a way to visualize the contact based on to whom the user sends the email frequently and the time range. It will be much easier to use email clients.

If there is one thing to improve on both of these visualization might be the “forward” message and the “attachment” of the email. We tend to attach files and forward the received message to others. But “forwarding” tend to be sent to the person who the original sender is not aware of and actually do not know if the receiver tells them. Analyzing this effect might be something interesting. Because we can see the trend of what kind of message and to whom the message has been forwarded and does the original sender aware of the forward message would be interesting to see. Moreover, analyzing what kinds of files are attached to the email would be somewhat interesting to see. I tend to attach files that are related to work and school. But people have different styles. By looking at who attaches what kind of file for what kind of purpose would be interesting visualization to see how people think about attachment and what kind of files are being traded amongst the sender and the receiver.
Public displays of connection

I agree with of verifying personal identity within the social networking websites. In real-world, it takes a lot of resource to deceive someone with their own identity. However, in the virtual space, it is rather very easy and yet some people do it for fun to deceive their identity to somebody else. It is somewhat frustrating and yet untrustworthy if we find out about the user who is not actually himself. Also just in case of online messenger such as MSN messenger, it is very frustrating when someone I spoke to is not the person I know of. Sometimes, just for fun, other people use different ID to act like the person of that ID. Even though there are serious conversations going on through instant messaging, there are people from the receiver side to is actually watching the conversation and later expose that conversation to others. These kinds of activity can’t happen in real-world because we see the real-person and talk to them while we are together. However, with social networking or instant messaging applications, it is somewhat happens frequently because we are not staying with the real-person in real-place. Creating a mechanism to actually identify the real-person in online would be a very reliable way to communicate with others.

I think there are tradeoffs for creating a public display of connections. As the author of the paper mentioned, through the social networking websites, it is possible to see all kind of information that the user post in the website such as wealth, list of friends, and etc. To see the trend, when the social networking website was start to boom, people tend to put all kinds of information to let the others see. Also, the users tend to make long lists of friends even though they are not sure of that person in the real-world. However, I believe this trend has been changed. For example, in Korea where the website called “cyworld,” the users tend to be neighbors to each other, which is a similar term as the friends in “facebook” or “orkut.” However, nowadays, after some period of time, the users tend to not be friends of people that they are not sure of. Also in the past, the users tend to display the list of friends in their small cyberspace. This also changed. Nowadays, it is very hard to see a user who actually display the list of friends. Also, if the user receives an message, in the bottom of the message, there is a quote that says be careful to not click any websites or send your information to people that you are unaware of. Also the change I noticed in the facebook was it was easy to see the profile of the person in the same network. However, nowadays, even though you are in the same network with multiple of users, you can’t see the person’s profile unless you are friend with the different user.

One thing that I noticed while I was reading this paper was there should be a mechanism to actually to control the list of friends. In the real-world, it takes time to actually to become a friend. But in the social network website, it is rather very easy by just clicking the button. Devising a method to actually to control the list of friends and displaying personal information is crucial.

Just one thing that I got in mind by reading this paper was, even though people tend to be deceptive of their own identity and use others information for their own benefit, I believe that it’s the user’s responsibility to actually control the information that they place in the social network website. If the user do not put anything or control the information by placing just a limited information, it would be the best way to control the problem with using those information in wrong ways. Also cautious to make list of friends, rather than person you do not know, use the social network website as an extension of the real-world, where you enjoy the virtual space with your real-world friends.
The Image of the City

It was interesting to see how the city itself can be a source for the visualization. For me, even though we can see the shape of the cities through the images from Google Earth, or the regular map, I never have thought of how we can consider city itself as a source for visualization.

What I thought interesting to read was about the Jersey City, NJ. It was interesting to read how author described the essential part of the city such as the shopping center, and the important areas as one sector that stops at the barrier of the rail-road-industrial-dock area on the Hudson River. Moreover, compare the Jersey City with other cities in the city planning perspective. To me, whenever I visit other cities, I compare that city’s building structure from the places I have been. I never thought of comparing the city as a whole with the other cities. It was interesting to see the overall visualization of the city and compare those visualizations with the other cities.

While I was reading the paper, it reminds me of the shape of Brasilia, Brazil. The whole city of Brasilia resembles a shape of an airplane. Also by naming the sectors, for the part of that resembles the shape of the airplane wing, they even name that sector as “Asa Sul” and “Asa Norte” which means “South Wing” and “North Wing.” Plus, there is an artificial lake outside shape of the the passengers sit in the airplane, where they name that sector as “Lago Sul” and “Lago Norte” which means “South Lake” and “North Lake.” I think it would be really interesting to see how the author views this city as a whole and compare it with the rest of the cities in the world.

While I was reading about the city form, it reminds me of the Rome in Italy. While I was visiting in Rome during last winter, I was surprised at the museum of Italian independence. All the roads from Rome were connected to the circular road that goes around the museum. The Romans architect Rome to have all the roads connected into one circular road. Even today, except that the road is built in stone, I could see why Italian government still uses the stone-paved roads that were constructed during the Roman Empire.

While I was reading “design of other elements,” somehow it might not be related, but it reminds me of Venice, Italy. Since the city itself is almost covered by water, it was interesting to see how Italians use the waterway for to transport people. Instead of tram or bus, the city employed water bus to transport people and tourist and small boat taxi as the regular taxis that we could see in other cities. Since, the city doesn’t have enough landscape for major road transportation; even though the author mentioned about the forms of city, but in somehow, Venice reminds me of some sort of element of the city where humans can’t decide the shape but the nature decided the shape.
One thing that I liked about this visualization was that the names for all of the people appeared in a circular form where it resembles earth from the space view. It gives more friendly view and also it really seems like the social network of the people around the world. I really liked the idea of displaying the name in the circular form which resembles earth.

I also liked the idea of the attraction spring which is only operating based on the tied relationship amongst the users. Sometimes we refer to people who are becoming close to each other by using the expression they are close or there is a connection. Having a functionality of actually attracting the nodes which indicate the person and visualize that would be easier for novice users to understand the concept easily.

But if there is one thing that I wasn’t sure of was data input evaluation. According to the paper, the authors evaluate the relationship of people based on time/date/sender/receiver, in some sense it would be enough data to actually see the relationship. However, I was thinking of case, if some people know each other but they aren’t sure about one’s address or hasn’t communicated via email. Then in that case, in email, it looks unrelated, but in real-life these type of people can be related to each other.

Another question that I got in mind, was the categorizing the tie. For example, knowledge ties, where if A sends a message to B that A knows B. But in case of working environment, where we have to send out emails to others, sometimes even though we don’t know the person personally or haven’t met, we have to communicate with them through email. I think one of the more effective way is to categorize also inside the ties so that it can be more accurate and distinguishable.

I think displaying the name more accurately and easily should be the improvement. Due to the extensive amounts of name, it is rather hard to see the name unless you zoom-in. But users might just want to see the name while in the zoom-out range. It would be much better if there is a mechanism to actually see the name easily rather than having the names overlapped with each other.