Semantic Web Technologies to Reconcile Privacy and Context Awareness

Norman M. Sadeh, Associate Professor, ISRI - School of Computer Science, CMU

Abstract:
Increasingly, application developers are looking for ways to provide users with higher levels of personalization that capture different elements of a user’s operating context, such as her location, the task that she is currently engaged in, who her colleagues are, etc. While there are many sources of contextual information, they tend to vary from one user to another and also over time. Different users may rely on different location tracking functionality provided by different cell phone operators; they may use different calendar systems, etc. I will discuss work on a Semantic e-Wallet aimed at supporting automated identification and access of personal resources, each represented as a Semantic Web Service. A key objective is to provide a Semantic Web environment for open access to a user's contextual resources, thereby reducing the costs associated with the development and maintenance of context-aware applications. A second objective is, through Semantic Web technologies, to empower users to selectively control who has access to their contextual information and under which conditions. This work has been carried out in the context of myCampus, a context-aware environment aimed at enhancing everyday campus life. Empirical results obtained on Carnegie Mellon's campus will be discussed.

Norman M. Sadeh is an Associate Professor in the School of Computer Science’s Institute for Software Research, International. He directs CMU’s Mobile Commerce Laboratory and its e-Supply Chain Management Laboratory. Norman is also co-Director of the Privacy Technology Center and of the newly established PhD program in Computation, Organizations and Society. His research interests include Supply Chain Management, Agent Technologies, Automated Negotiation, the Semantic Web, Mobile Commerce, Internet Privacy and Security. He is also interested in the broader business, social and policy implications associated with the emerging Information Society.

Norman has been on the faculty at CMU since 1991. In the late nineties, he worked as program manager with the European Commission’s ESPRIT research program, prior to serving for two years as Chief Scientist of the $650M European Commission’s R&D initiative in ”New Methods of Work and eCommerce”.

Norman received his Ph.D. in Computer Science at CMU with a minor in Operations Research and Operations Management. He has authored well over 100 scientific publications and serves on the editorial board of several journals, including Autonomous Agents and Multi-agent Systems (AAMAS) and Electronic Commerce Research Applications (ECRA). Norman is also the author of “m-Commerce: Technologies, Services and Business Models”, a book published by Wiley in April 2002, and recently served as General Chair of the 2003 International Conference on Electronic Commerce (ICEC’03).