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Integrate Facebook with Blackboard for Mobile Learning

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Abstract:

Facebook introduced by Mark Zuckerberg and his roommates in 2006 is a social networking website with 400 million users worldwide that enables any person organize their relationships with friends.

The elegance of using Facebook is not only due to its popularity, but also the support of Facebook by various devices. Facebook is primitively a web application that can be accessed via any web browser. Many mobile phones are equipped with web browsers such as Opera Mini and some are even equipped with dedicated software solely for accessing Facebook, such as Apple iPhone and Android mobile devices. The support of Facebook by these mobile devices is an advantage of using Facebook for education purposes.

The use of Facebook for showing presentation slides enable students adding comments that facilitates the discussions among teachers and students. Furthermore, most mobile devices can be used to view Facebook albums and hence presentation slides, and they can use them to add comments as well.

Furthermore, Facebook enables software developers to develop dedicate applications to be used on Facebook. Besides, some existing Facebook applications are available for teaching staff for various purposes, such as a survey generation application that enables teaching staff to prepare a quiz for assessment purposes.

On the other hand, Blackboard has been the de facto education facilitating platform for schools throughout the world. It is a single point of access for various aspects of teaching and learning. Besides, other teaching related activities can be management through Blackboard. Even though, Blackboard is an all-round platform for education, it is not a user-friendly application to most teaching staff and students.

Therefore, it is highly desirable that the schools can take advantages of the benefits of the two platforms for facilitating teaching and learning, namely, Facebook for its popularity and user-friendliness, whereas Blackboard for its mature and rich features as the backend. However, these two platforms are isolated and there is a missing module that bridges the two systems. As a result, it is a necessity to develop an integration module that can synchronize the information on the two platforms, which is the system proposed by this project.