Integrating Situated Interaction with Mobile Awareness

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Office doors

- Office is focus of meetings between teachers/learners, lecturers/students, staff/staff, etc.
- BUT If lecturer not in office
- Door is closed
- How to communicate?
Problems

• Lecturer running late (traffic, previous appointments) needs to let students waiting know what’s happening

• Students wanting to leave message need to know messages will get through

• Need to be able to send confidential information
Situated Interaction

- Office door is locus of interaction
  - Portal to meeting space (if person in)
  - Use as link to person when absent too
- Designed system to allow lecturer-student interaction using PDA on office door as interaction device
Mobile enabled

- Door display communicates with owner’s mobile device via wireless, GPRS or SMS
- Can check whether lecturer online in building, or out and about
Lecturer functionality

• Can leave page to show whereabouts, timetable, etc.
• Can text message into system to update display (‘please grab a coffee, going to be 10 minutes late’)
• Can receive information from system via SMS or email
Student functionality

• Can send private messages to lecturer
  – System routes them via email or SMS depending on location of lecturer
• Can see where lecturer is
• System provides communication channel without either party having to give out private information (e.g. mobile numbers)
Other interfaces

• PDA interface is the most critical
  – Situated nature ties together the two parties
• But other functionality needed…
• Web-based interface
  – Allows lecturers to manage system
  – View all messages
Informal evaluation

• Tested with students and staff against design goals
• Supports informal communication between staff and student
  – Students reported better ‘connection’ with staff, more sense of being valued
  – Lecturers able be less stressed about running late/being absent
Conclusions

• Situated interaction very useful
• Simple way of maintaining ongoing learning, retaining office door as portal
• Mobile awareness an important aspect
• Aids staff-student communication
Questions?