TILBURG ◆ UNIVERSITY

# where the rubber meets the road

## privacy & sociability in Social Network Sites

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# outline

- **problem space**
  - **Social Network Sites**
  - **the issues**
- **explanation and requirements**
  - **a Faustian dilemma: the social dynamics of SNSs**
  - **identity requires audience segregation**
- **solutions**
  - **implementing audience segregation in SNS**

# Social Network Sites

web-based services that allow individuals to

1. construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,

2. articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and

3. view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

**(boyd and Ellison, 2008: 211)**

# issues

- ## issues on 3 levels:
  - ### users, platform providers, rest of the world

# how many do you need?

## identity & relationship

1. Social convergence
2. Sociability paradox
3. Unawareness of potential audience
4. False sense of security
5. Eagerness to connect
6. Unauthorised access
7. The user as data controller
8. Instability of social norms
9. Surveillance
10. Simplistic relationship models
11. Denigration
12. Living on the edge
13. Permeability
14. Persistence of identity
15. Stalking

## platform provider

16. Panoptic providers
17. Secondary data collection
18. Permeability

## transparency

19. It's not what it seems

## interoperability

20. Profile non-portability

## other

21. Implicit information leaks
22. Advanced monitoring
23. SNS spam
24. SN aggregators
25. Social engineering attacks
26. Bullying
27. Corporate espionage
28. Profile-squatting and reputation slander through ID theft

see http://www.primelife.eu/images/stories/deliverables/h1.2.5-requirements_selective_access_control-public.pdf for sources

# underlying issues

1. no link between audience & physical space

2. persistence of information

3. intersections of multiple physical and virtual spaces

4. judgement based on representations

# partial explanations

- **users are ignorant of the risks**

  - awarenss is growing, some studies point at fairly high awareness

- **they are not talking to you!**

  - teens address their friends and claim privacy in public space

- **they have no choice**

  - social dynamics - you have to be in - social capital

  - lock in effects + mechanisms to stimulate disclosure
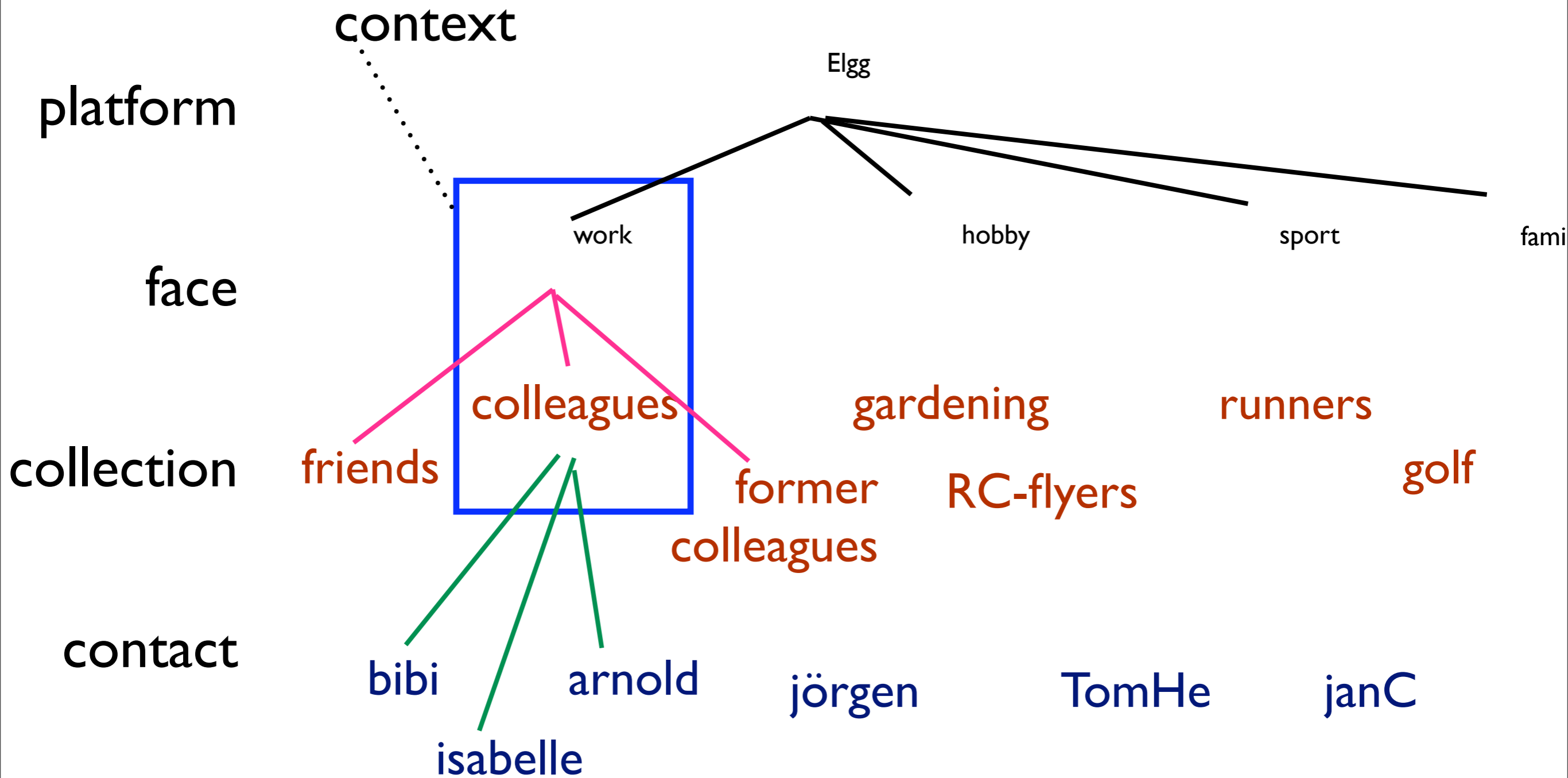
# requirements

- **identity**
  - **people perform roles with context based rules to achieve particular goals**
    - strategic interaction + pubic validation
  - **coherent & consistent face requires possibility to segregate audiences (partial identities)**
  - **otherwise: social convergence**
    - flat characters who reveal what is appropriate in all contexts

# solutions

- **Firefox plug in for transparent group based encryption of contributions**

    - **prevents platform provider from observing data contributed by (SNS) users**

    - **only the designated group of users can decrypt**

- **audience segregation in Elgg SNS platform**

    - **access control based on policies (incorporating collections and individual connections)**

# terminology

context

platform — Elgg

work     hobby     sport     fami

face

collection

colleagues     gardening     runners

friends     former colleagues     RC-flyers     golf

contact

bibi     arnold     jörgen     TomHe     janC

isabelle

# http://www.primelife.eu/



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# small print

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