Near2me: Off The Beaten Track
Media-based Recommender for Travel Destinations

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Objectives

Near2Me-OTBT should...

• integrate and merge technologies and algorithms developed within PetaMedia

• be suitable for evaluating the PetaMedia Triple Synergy (i.e., multimedia content analysis, user annotations, and social network structures) from a user-centric perspective
# PetaMedia Technologies in use

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Conceptual design (by Luz Caballero)
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Demo of current prototype
User-centered Evaluation
Evaluation goals

- The **user satisfaction** with the performance of the implemented PetaMedia technologies.

- The **interaction with the system**: the recommendation process is effortless and agreeable, it is an enjoyable activity in itself; prompts the user to engage in active exploratory behavior.
Methodology - Phase 1

- 12 participants
- 6 females
- Age from 23 to 31
- Conditions:
  - People who like to travel outside mainstream tourism, visiting places that match their personal interests and
  - they are familiar with the use of web applications (beyond very basic ones, like email or search engines), and
  - they have ever visited London.
Methodology - Phase 2
General Results

- Users were very enthusiastic about the concept and proposed potential applications
- Recommendations were perceived as personalized and authentic
- Users appreciate the strong visual approach of Near2me
- All the users found their way through the interface
- Many users liked the possibility of discovering by exploring
General Results

- Users would like to have more contextual information about the pictures
- Difference between landmark and location
- Tags should be meaningful
- Personal information about the authorities
Main insights derived from user studies

- Participants are interested in three perspectives, i.e., locations, topics, and experts.

- Participants want to:
  - explore these perspectives independently from each other
  - investigate how the interplay of these perspectives adds authenticity and personalization to their perception of the system
  - distinguish which locations, topics, and experts to choose from
  - understand why they were given specific recommendations by the system
Thank you for listening! Q & A