XING Applications Platform
Production Process and Basic Concept Paper Guidelines

Version: 1.0
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Date: 28.09.2009

Content

1. Introduction

1.1. Scope of this document

This document describes the general production process and the concept requirements for partner applications on XING.

Please note that this document is XING confidential.

1.2. General process for partner applications

If you have an excellent idea for a new XING application that you would like to implement and bring to the platform, these are the steps to go:

1. Create a basic product concept

Write a concept that clearly states the scope and functionality of the application that you have in mind, as well as the value that it would bring to XING users. We learned that it is helpful for us and our partners to put some thoughts into these points right at the beginning to avoid misunderstandings and actions out of scope later on.

The requirements for this concept will be given later in this document.

In addition, please make yourself familiar with the OpenSocial standard and the XING OpenSocial Partner Specification (available in the Downloads section of the XING OpenSocial Partner Community). Note that XING is not able to provide any additional interfaces than those described in that document.

2. Send your documents to XING and wait for approval

Send an e-mail to opensocial@xing.com, containing both your concept and the mockups you created. XING will review your proposal and come back to you within one month. Upon acceptance, XING will invite you to discuss your proposal in a personal meeting or telephone conference.

3. Discuss and improve your product proposal together with XING

Together with the XING product team, discuss and further improve your product concept. XING may request you to change your proposal according to technical requirements or the current portfolio of applications available on the platform.

4. Sign a mutual non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with XING

Once you concept has been approved, XING will ask you to sign a (mutual) non-disclosure agreement (NDA). This is required, so that confidential information can be exchanged between all parties involved.

5. Get access to XING OpenSocial sandbox

As soon as the NDA is executed, XING will provide you with access to the OpenSocial sandbox environment. In advance, please provide XING with the URL of the sandbox version of your gadget XML (this maybe a simple "Hello World" example in the beginning).

6a. Negotiate a standard contract with XING

XING has prepared a standard contractual agreement for OpenSocial partners that covers, among other items, the use of personal data that your application will have access to in the future. Moreover, XING will ask you to work on the appendix which will contain a short functional description of your application.

6b. Design your user interface

Read the XING Applications UX Guidelines to learn about design requirements. If you prefer to have your user interface approved by XING before beginning with the actual implementation of your app, provide XING with the final screens for home, canvas, and profile view.

6c. Implement the application

In the sandbox, implement the application according to the final product concept created in step 3. Adhere to the XING Applications Coding Guidelines, and use the Tech Talk Forum to discuss any issues that you experience during development with other XING application developers.

7a. Submit the final sandbox version for UX Review

Once your app is design-complete, XING will perform a UX Review of your application and provide you with a list of change requests.

Please note that you may hand in the screens created in step 6b before starting the actual implementation to avoid major change requests at this time.

7b. Submit final sandbox version for Code Review

Once your app is code-complete, XING will perform a code check to see whether there is room for code improvements. A list of change requests will be provided to you.

8. Revise and test your application

Implement the change requirements from steps 7a and 7b and re-submit your changes (iterative process). Make sure that you thoroughly test your application and check for cross-browser issues. Note that XING applications need to support all current browsers, including Firefox 2 and Internet Explorer 6.

9. Move to XING production (xing.com)

Once your application is revised an fully tested from your side, send XING the URL of the production version of your gadget. Note that this URL (as well as the logic referenced from the XML file) need to be different from the sandbox version (which will be requirement for continuous development in the future).

On production, your gadget will in the beginning be visible for a dedicated test users only. Please provide XING a list with the user profile names that need to access the production version of your application for testing.

Note that the move production requires the contract negotiated in step 6a to be executed by both parties.

10. Submit final production version for XING QA and Security Review

Once you are confident that your application is running smoothly on XING production, XING will initiate the final approval process which will include QA smoke tests, automated performance tests as well as a security review.

11. Revise, test and launch your application

XING will approach you with a list of change requests resulting from step 10. Again, note that this in an iterative process. As soon as all change requirements are implemented, the application is ready to go live.

2. Application concept

2.1. Objectives

Please describe briefly what main objectives you want to achieve with the application, as well as the XING users you want to reach and the value that the application would bring to those users. It is often convenient to write this section as a list of bullet points.

2.1.1. Main goals

- What are the overall goals (e.g. business goals) of the application?
- What are the benefits, you as a XING partner hope to get?
- What are benefits for XING?
- How will the application generate activity and virality (we learned, that activity and virality are two factors that have a huge impact on the success of an application)?
- Are there any features that are planned that are available for Premium users only?
- Will the application be stand-alone or does it need an existing platform on the Web to provide its functionality? Do users have to register somewhere else to use (parts of) the app?

2.1.2. Target group

- What are the target users for the application?
- What are user needs that will be fulfilled with the application?
- How will those needs be fulfilled by the application (compared to the other functions currently available on XING)?

2.2. Scope

2.2.1. Main use cases

Please list the significant usage scenarios, and how users are expected to interact with this feature.

2.2.2. Functionality

Please describe the planned feature set as well as the content elements that you want to offer in the application.

- What functions will be offered?
- What content / information will be shown?
- How will activity be enforced?
- What messages will be sent by the application?
- What settings will be available?

2.3. Structure

Please specify how the application will behave in respond to the user's action and how the different content elements will be arranged within the information space.

- How will the content be structured (e.g. described in a sitemap-diagram)?

- How will the different functions work (e.g. described verbally or in flow diagrams)?

When describing the functionality and basic user workflows of your application, please differentiate between:

- Functionality of the canvas view

- Functionality of the home view

- Information provided in the profile view (owner view vs. visitor view)

2.4. Mockups / wireframes

For each view of you application, please describe and visualize the functionality of the proposed application.

- What navigation elements will be offered?

- How will the different pages be laid out?

- What page elements will be offered?

- How will information be presented?

Please provide at least some mockups / wireframes for the canvas view, as well as for the home and profile view (if your app will support these). As a basis, please use the design templates available in the Downloads section.

From your mockups / wireframes, the XING team should be able to clearly see the workflow of the application and the value to the XING user who installs the application.