Serendipity as a Service
Had my first experience with @Meetgatsby this morning, and was really surprised with the quality conversation and tips that were shared.

“My very first experience with Gatsby was like something out of a romantic comedy”

“Crazy location-based serendipity today. @meetgatsby got founders of @geoloqi and @Localmind together. Good times were had.”

“Proof of the meetgatsby concept: The first time I ever answered one of their texts, I met Shorty Awards founder”
Serendipity as a Service

1. What is engineered serendipity and why is it important now?
2. How does Meet Gatsby engineer serendipity?
3. What is the future of serendipity as a service?
Serendipity

‣ Serendipity is finding what you weren’t looking for (at the moment).

‣ Horace Walpole: “Stumbling on things by chance and sagacity.”

‣ Thor Muller (Get Lucky): “Serendipity is chance interacting with creativity.”

‣ My favorite: “When you look for a needle in a haystack and come out with the farmer’s daughter.”
Serendipity is a Method of Discovery

Latent Goal ↔ Immediate Goal

Serendipity Notification
Browse Search

General Goal ↔ Specific Goal
Engineering Serendipity

- Serendipity is when events help accomplish latent goals.
- We value it because search won’t get you all the way.
- We already have many constructs that foster serendipity. Events, places, culture and communication.
Engineering Serendipity

- Software can engineer serendipity!
- Serendipity is useful for certain, but not all, goals.
- Triggering serendipity without context will likely fail.
- We’re just starting to gain access to the contextual signals we need.
- People discovery is the breakout use case.
Gatsby’s Techniques

- Ingredients appear simple: meeting new people through proximity and commonalities.
- Context (proximity) is complex.
- Goals (commonalities) are complex.
- We combine context and goals to engineer serendipity through push notifications.
Gatsby’s Techniques

- Location vs. availability
- Active vs. passive location
- Adding value in a social context
- A light touch
- Usage history
- Measuring success
Where are we going?

- Increasing contextual awareness
- Independent software agents
- Software impacting the real world
- Active architecture
- The paradox of planned serendipity
Thank you!