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PROJECT STATUS TRACKING VIA INTEGRATED INTERFACE

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In various settings, one or more users of a cloud-based content platform may work together as members of a project group in order to achieve a project goal. The group members may utilize a variety of online applications of the platform in order to complete a variety of tasks associated with the project goal. For example, group members may utilize a document application (i.e., a word processing application, a spreadsheet application, a presentation application, etc.) to generate and/or edit documents associated with the project goal, an electronic messaging application to transmit and receive electronic mail (e-mail) from other group members, a cloud storage application to store and share documents with other group members, a task management application to organize a list of tasks to be completed by each group member, etc. Often, members of the project group wish to provide status updates for other group members to communicate the progression of the group in achieving the project goal. However, generating and transmitting a status update each time a task is completed is a time intensive process that distracts a group member from performing his or her assigned tasks.

During the progress of a project, multiple documents may be created and stored using the platform applications by various members of the project group. For example, project group members may generate a word document using a word processing application and store and share the word document with other project group members using a cloud storage application. Often, group members have a difficult time keeping track of the storage location of each document and whether a given document is the latest version of the document.

As such, a new feature is proposed for assisting members of a project group in managing a project through a content platform. The platform may be hosted by a server, where the server is included, along with a data store, as part of a cloud-based environment. The cloud-based environment may be connected to a user device via a network. The new feature can be

implemented by a project assistant service as a plug-in software to an applicable online application (e.g., a document application, a cloud storage application, a task management application, etc.) provided by the platform. An intelligent synchronization component of the project assistant service may detect when a platform user performs an action associated with a project group, generate a status update reflecting the performed action, and provide the status update to other platform users associated with the project group. A platform user herein refers to a person having a user account associated with the platform and communicating with the platform using a user device over a network. Some examples of the user device include desktop computers, laptop computers, tablet computers, mobile phones (e.g., smartphones), or any suitable computing device. Thus, any communication to and from a user described herein necessarily involves communication to the user device and the respective user.

Members of a project group may access and interact with applicable platform applications via a graphical user interface (GUI). The GUI may be provided as a web page rendered by a web browser or a mobile or desktop application. A project status feed may be provided by the synchronization component as a GUI component with the application GUI. In some embodiments, the application and the synchronization component may be accessible via an integrated GUI that includes a first portion that provides the platform application interface and a second portion that provides the project status feed. A project group member may interact with the platform application via the first portion of the integrated GUI to perform actions associated with a project goal (i.e., create/edit a document, create a task, e-mail another group member, etc.). The synchronization component may detect the performed action in the first portion of the integrated GUI and generate a status update reflecting the action and including information regarding the action. For example, if a group member, Member A, edits a word document

associated with the project group, Document X, via a word processing application in the first portion of the integrated GUI, the synchronization component may generate a status update that "Member A edited Document X." In some examples, additional information regarding the action may be included in the status update, such as the section of Document X that was edited or the date and/or time Document X was edited. The synchronization component may publish the status update to all project group members via the project status feed.

A project group may be created, by the synchronization component, including at least one user of the platform. In some embodiments, the project group may be manually created by a platform user. The platform user may identify one or more additional platform users to be included as members of the project group. Additionally, the platform user may identify one or more documents from the cloud storage application to be associated with the project group. Each document associated with the project group may be accessible and/or editable by each member of the project group. In some embodiments, the project group may be manually created by the platform user interacting with a GUI element of the second portion of the integrated GUI.

In another embodiment, the synchronization component may create a project group based on receiving an indication that one or more platform users are performing actions consistent with members of a project group. For example, the synchronization component may observe that a common group of platform users are associated with a set of documents of the cloud storage application. In another example, the synchronization component may detect that a platform user has created a set of tasks via a task management application and has assigned one or more additional platform users to complete a task of the set of tasks. Responsive to detecting that one or more platform users are performing actions consistent with members of a project group, the synchronization component may provide a notification to one or more members of the suspected

project group inquiring whether the one or more users are members of a project group. In some embodiments, the notification may be provided via a third portion of the integrated GUI. Responsive to receiving the notification, the one or more members may generate and transmit a response to the notification that one or more members are part of the project group, or are not members of the project group.

Responsive to initiating an application of the platform, the project status feed may be provided via the second portion of the integrated GUI. The project status feed may include a status update for each project group the platform user is included as a member. In some embodiments, the platform user may be provided with an option to remove the project status feed from the integrated GUI such that only the platform application of the first portion of the integrated GUI is provided. Similarly, the platform user may be provided with an option to include the project status feed in the second portion of the integrated GUI, such that both the first portion and the second portion of the integrated GUI are provided.

In some embodiments, a platform user may be a member of more than one project groups. In such embodiments, a set of status updates may be published to the project status feed of the second portion of the integrated GUI for each project group a platform user is a member of. The platform user may be provided with an option to filter status updates displayed in the project status feed based on each project group. For example, a platform user that is a member of project group A and project group B may be provided with an option to only view status updates associated with project group A and hide the status updates associated with project group B.

The following description uses a document application, a storage application, and a task management application as example applications to which the proposed technique can be applied. It should be noted, however, that the proposed technique can be applied to various other

types of platform applications, including, for example, presentation applications, calendar applications, messaging applications, etc.

Figure 1 illustrates a flow diagram method for assisting members of a project group in managing a project through a platform. First, at block 110, a synchronization component may detect that an action associated with the project group has been performed. An action may be associated with the project group if the action is performed by a member of the project group or the action is performed by a platform user that is consistent with achieving a goal of the project group. In one embodiment, the synchronization component may observe that a project group action has been performed when a project group member uses an applicable platform application, such as uploading a document to a cloud storage application. In another embodiment, the synchronization component may observe that a project group action has been performed when a platform user (who may or may not be a group member) performs an action with respect to a project group document. For example, a platform user may edit a document that is associated with the project group. In another embodiment, the synchronization component may observe that an action has been performed when a project group member performs an action involving other members of the project group. For example, a member of the project group may create a set of tasks, using a task management application, to be performed in achieving a project goal, where other members of the project group are assigned to complete the created task.

At block 120, the synchronization component may generate a status update that reflects the performed action. The status update may include information regarding the performed action and additional details about the action (i.e., the group member that performed the action, the date and/or time the action was performed, etc.). For example, if a project group member uploaded a document to a cloud storage application, a status update may be generated that indicates the

name of the document uploaded to the cloud storage application and the member of the project group that uploaded the document. In addition, an electronic address (i.e., a link) to access the document via the cloud storage application may also be included in the status update. In some examples, the included link may be an accessible link, where a project group member may select the link and the first portion of the integrated GUI may be modified to provide the document via a document application. In another example, if a platform user edited a document associated with the project group, a status update may be generated that indicates the name of the document that was edited and the platform user that edited the document. An accessible link to the document may also be provide in the status update. In another example, if a project group member creates a task to be performed in achieving the project goal, and assigns one or more members of the project group to complete the created task, a status update may be generated to indicate the task that is to be completed, the project group member that created the task, and/or the project group member(s) that are to complete the task.

In some embodiments, a data store of the platform may maintain a log of each status update detected by the synchronization component. For example, the data store may maintain a data structure, such as a list or a table, that includes each generated status update and information regarding each status update (i.e., the group member that caused the status update, the date and/or time the status update was generated). Responsive to generating a status update, the synchronization component may store the generated status update in the data structure.

At block 130, the status update may be published to the project status feed of the second portion of the integrated GUI. In some embodiments, a notification may be provided, to the project group member that performed the action reflected in the status update, requesting that the status update be published to the project status feed via a third portion of the integrated GUI. The

group member that performed the action may interact with a GUI element included with the notification to generate and transmit a response to the request, indicating that the status update may be published, or may not to be published, to the project status feed. In additional embodiments, the member may be provided with an option to edit the status update before the status update is published to the project status feed. In other embodiments, a notification may not be provided to the group member that performed the action reflected in the status update and the status update may be automatically published to the project feed responsive to the status updated being generated.

In some embodiments, the status update published to the project status feed may be customized based on the group member that performed the action. For example, if Member A edited a word document, Document X, associated with a project group using a document application, the synchronization component may detect that the word processing document has been edited. A status update may be generated to provide "Member A edited Document X," which may be published to the project status feed of the other members of the project group. The status update may be published to the project status feed of Member A, however, the status update may instead provide "You edited Document X."

The project status feed of the second portion of the integrated GUI may remain visible to each group member as he or she interacts with the platform application via the first portion of the integrated GUI. In one embodiment, a project group member may utilize one or more platform applications in performing a project task and may switch between accessing these applications. In another embodiment, a project group member may select a link, provided via a status update, to access a document via document application in the first portion of the integrated GUI. In such embodiments, the project status feed may be provided via the second portion of the integrated

GUI regardless of whether a different platform application is accessed, thereby providing the project group member with consistent access to the project status feed.

In some embodiments, the project status feed may provide every status update associated with a project, along with newly generated status updates. Responsive to initiating an applicable platform application, the project status feed may be provided via the second portion of the integrated UI. The synchronization component may retrieve, from the data structure, the log of status updates associated with the project group. Responsive to retrieving the log of status updates, the synchronization component may publish each status update from the log of status updates to the project status feed. In some embodiments, the log of status updates may be published in chronological order, such that the most recent status update may be the last status update published to the project status feed.

By providing a project status feed via the second portion of the integrated GUI, where status updates are published to the project status feed responsive to the synchronization component detecting an action associated with the project group, each member of a project group may be alerted when a task has been completed by a project group member in accordance with a project goal, without having to manually generate and transmit a status update after completing each project task. Additionally, by providing an active link to a document associated with the project group, via a status update, as the document is created, uploaded and/or edited, project group members may easily access the latest version of each document and identify the member of the project group contributed to the latest version of the document.

ABSTRACT

A technique is proposed for assisting members of a project group in managing a project through a cloud-based content platform. A project synchronization service may detect an action associated with a project group has been performed using an applicable platform application. A status update reflecting the performed action may be generated. The status update may be published to a project feed, where the project feed is accessible to each user of the project group.

Keywords: project group assistant; intelligent synchronization component; integrated user interface

START

Detect an action associated with the project group has been performed 110

Generate a status update reflecting the performed action 120

Publish the status update to a project feed accessible to each user of the project group 130

END