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Copenhagen (DK) – 30/07/09

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FROM FOLDERS TO VISUAL TAGS

Are Folders Old-Fashioned? A Europe-Based Startup Proposes a Dynamic and Colorful Alternative.

Anyone who has not been living inside an ice cave in Antarctica, knows well what "searching for a file" can mean and is well acquainted with how painful file organization can be. Neither should be unknown the feeling coming from "…this new product we're launching doesn't really fit any category … I need to rearrange my folder structure".

At some point in our career or in our life, we all yelled "I can't believe I have that many files!". Such a state of mind is typically connected with the high fat-burning activity know as *file-hunt*. Unlike a treasure-hunt, a file-hunt is typically less fun and more hysterical, especially when performed in proximity of a deadline. Plus, while in a treasure-hunt there is always a prize, in a file-hunt the file one's looking for might not be there at all, if it does the odds of finding it are often discouragingly low.

"At my old job I was working on some marketing material and keeping my files organized was a nightmare - says Andrea D'Intino (AD), co-founder of Yellow blue soft - and at some point I realized that no matter how structured I was, at some point the whole folder structure I created so patiently would inevitably collapse".

Modern operative systems still store the user's data relying on a data structure that was first conceived in the late 70's, when the first floppy disks made their appearance in the world of "microcomputers". Back in the days the ground breaking magnetic supports could contain as little as 64KB of data, which was good back then, still there was little need for an elaborate system to store files and organize them. At that time, a hierarchical file system was good enough to keep the most hard-core PC user's files in good order.

"What I realized - follows up AD - was that most of the time I needed a file to be in several folders at the same time… I didn't need a copy of the file, just that one file. So I started searching the internet, looking for a piece of software to get this simple job done, but with my great surprise I couldn't find anything like that...and that's where Tabbles begins".

But what does "tabble" stand for?. The tabbles are tag-bubbles, something between a virtual folder and visual tag. For the not-so-geeks, a tabble can be explained as a sort of magic container, which can be used as a folder but doesn't hold the same limitations as a traditional folder does. Anyone who has not spent the last 20 years in jungle has probably experienced facing the dilemma of placing

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a file in the folder A or in the folder B. If you wanted to have the same file in two traditional folders, you would have no choice but making copies or shortcut. But making a copy is not the same as having the same file in two different folders. Having the same file in more folders would mean more chances of finding the file when I need it, as well as less hard-disk space needed for copies.

AD explains: "The user interaction with a tabble doesn't differ a lot from the interaction with a normal folder, with one difference: you can place the same files in as many tabbles as you want, without duplicating. A side-benefit is that you don't need to worry about finding the latest version of that file…because there would be just one file" .

But there is more, the more interesting feature in Tabbles is the Combine function: using the Combine features you can sort group of files contained in several tabbles within very few clicks. You can for instance find all the files that belong to the tabbles 'Product X, Customer Y, invoices, 2008'…. you're actually "querying a database as you would use a pocket calculator".

Yellow blue soft is an independent software developer founded in 2009. Yellow blue soft presents "Tabbles in July 2009. Found out more at www.tabbles.net

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