

MicroFormats in the Cloud

Users Guide

V. 1.0

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MicroFormats In The Cloud

Data makes the Web. Many users publish their contacts and preferences on web pages and social networks. MicroFormats offer a way to make this information machine-readable. This way, restaurants found via local.yahoo.com can be published directly on the personal homepage – if the food was good. Articles bought via Amazon or in real life can be passed on to friends as easily and conveniently as the music you like to listen to. “MicroFormats in the Cloud” allows you to test this new approach. All data found can be stored and published on Windows Azure; friends and acquaintances can find them there and transfer them with a simple mouseclick.

1 Introduction

“MicroFormats in the Cloud“ consists of two components: a plugin for the FireFox browser and a Windows Azure application. The plugin detects embedded MicroFormats in the currently selected webpage and displays them. The user may select some or all of this data, tag and save it. Saving is done by sending the data to a web service within the Windows Azure application. This service authenticates the user, validates the data and saves it in the Azure table storage. The stored MicroFormats are publicly visible via a webpage generated by the windows Azure application. The MicroFormats displayed this way are again detectable via the FireFox plugin and transferred to other users’ accounts.

2 MicroFormats FireFox Plugin

2.1 Integration in the Status Bar

The MicroFormats plugin embeds itself in the status bar of the FireFox browser and displays a MicroFormats icon. This icon is active if MicroFormats have been found within the currently selected webpage and displays a tooltip with the number of MicroFormats found. The icon is grayed out if the page contains no MicroFormats.

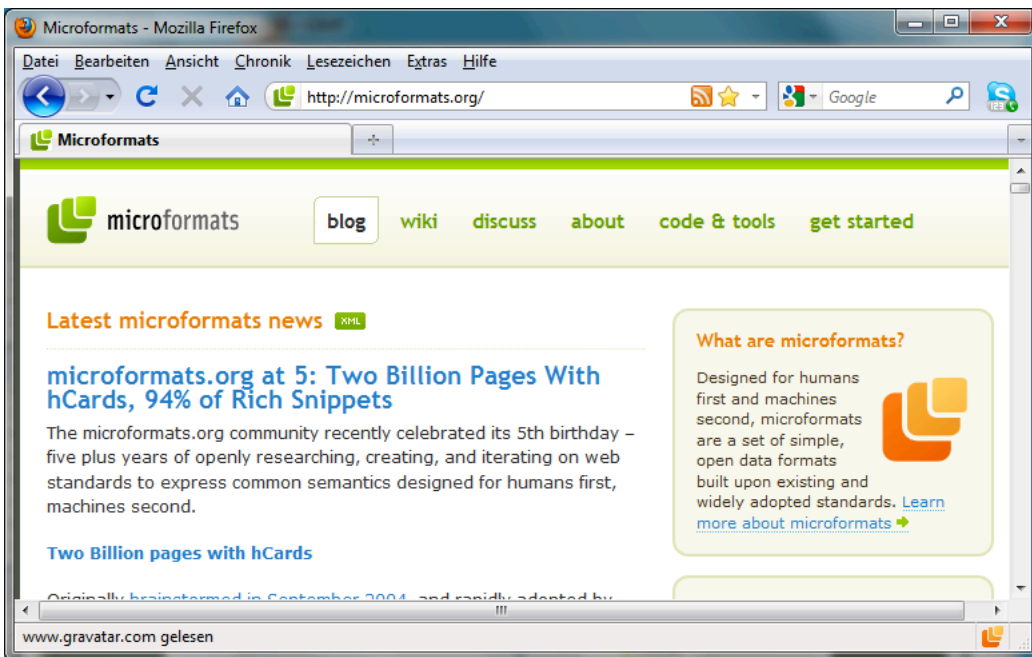


Figure 1: MicroFormats icon in the status bar

2.2 Plugin Window

A mouse-click on the icon opens the plugin window and displays all MicroFormats found on the current web page in a tree, sorted by type (hCard, hCalendar) and name. The data of the currently selected MicroFormat is shown in detail beside the tree view. MicroFormats can be selected for saving by checking them (all checked by default). To put the saved data into context you may enter the URL where the data has been found (default is the URL of the current webpage) and arbitrary tags (separated by colon).

A mouse-click on the “Remember” button will save the selected MicroFormats. If the user hasn’t already authenticated a popup dialog will prompt for username and password. The data will then be sent to the Windows Azure application. The “Browse” button will open a new tab with the user’s page in the Windows Azure application.

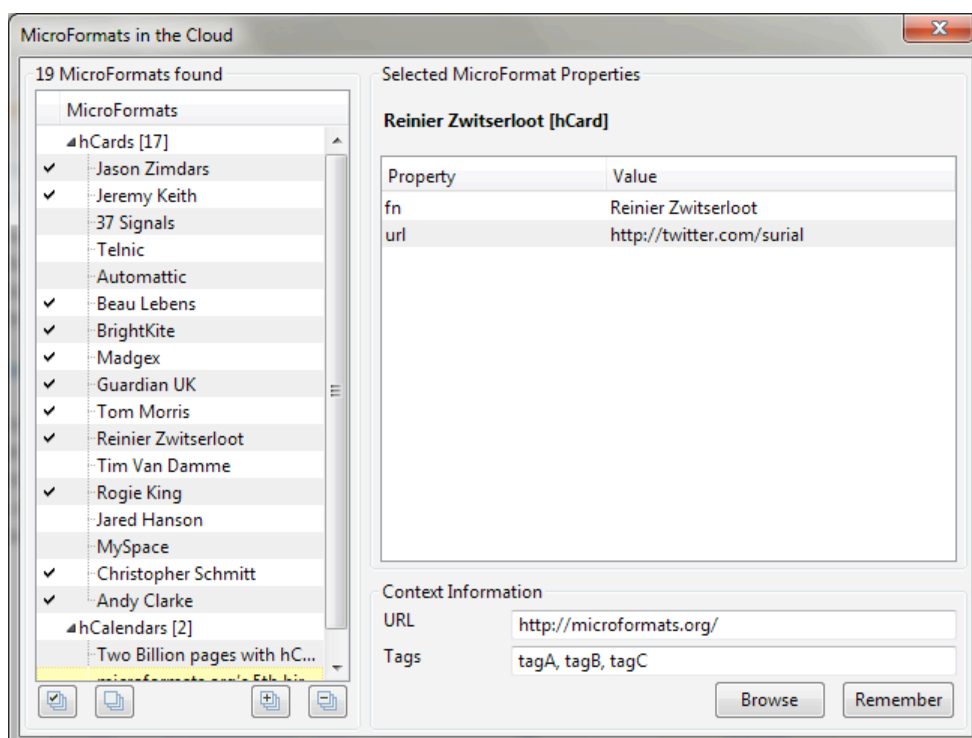


Figure 2: MicroFormats plugin window

2.3 Note on Saving MicroFormats

On saving the selected MicroFormats, the application checks if a MicroFormat with the same content has been saved before. In this case it won't be saved again but simply re-tagged. This way, multiple saving (and tagging) of a MicroFormat is possible without causing problems.

3 MicroFormats Azure Application

3.1 Welcome Page (<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/>)

The MicroFormats Azure application provides a web frontend to manage MicroFormats stored in the Windows Azure cloud. The user may select to view stored MicroFormats of other users (identified by username), to register as a new user or log into his account to edit his own stored MicroFormats. The latest version of the MicroFormats plugin may also be downloaded from this page.

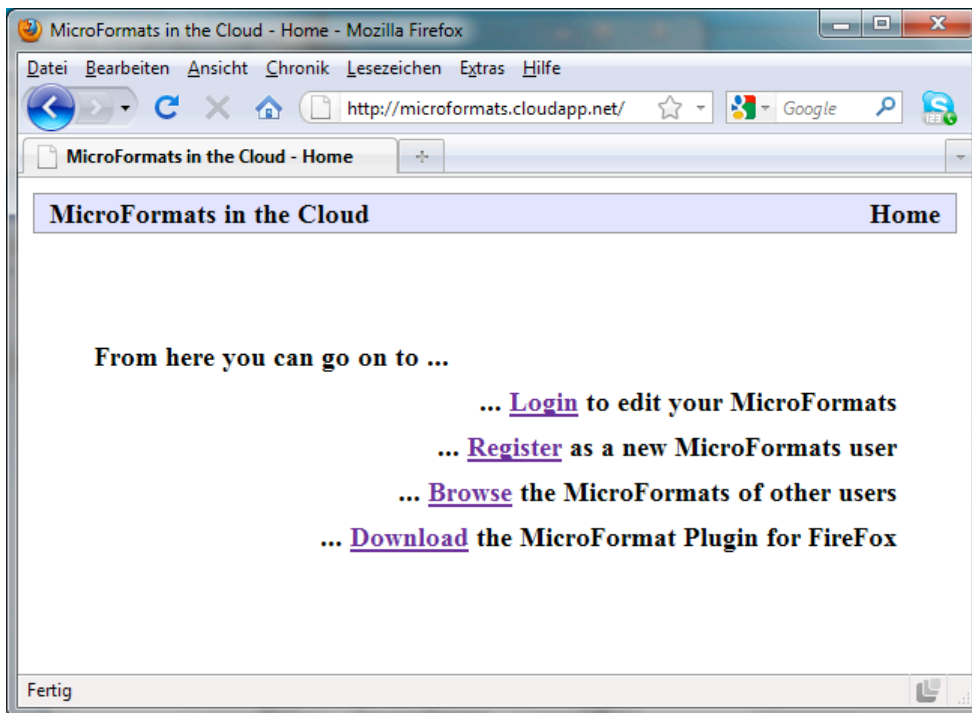


Figure 3: MicroFormats Azure App – Welcome Page

3.2 Browsing Page (<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/Browse.aspx>)

The Browsing page displays a list of all tags on the left side, the MicroFormats stored to the selected tag in the middle and details of the selected MicroFormat to the right. The details also show a list of all tags a MicroFormat has been given by the user. These can be opened directly by mouse-click.

Pages from different users can be opened by giving the username in the appropriate input field of the page header. The generated URL contains both the username (user=X) and the selected tag (tag=Y). This way, interesting collections of other users can be easily bookmarked in the browser.

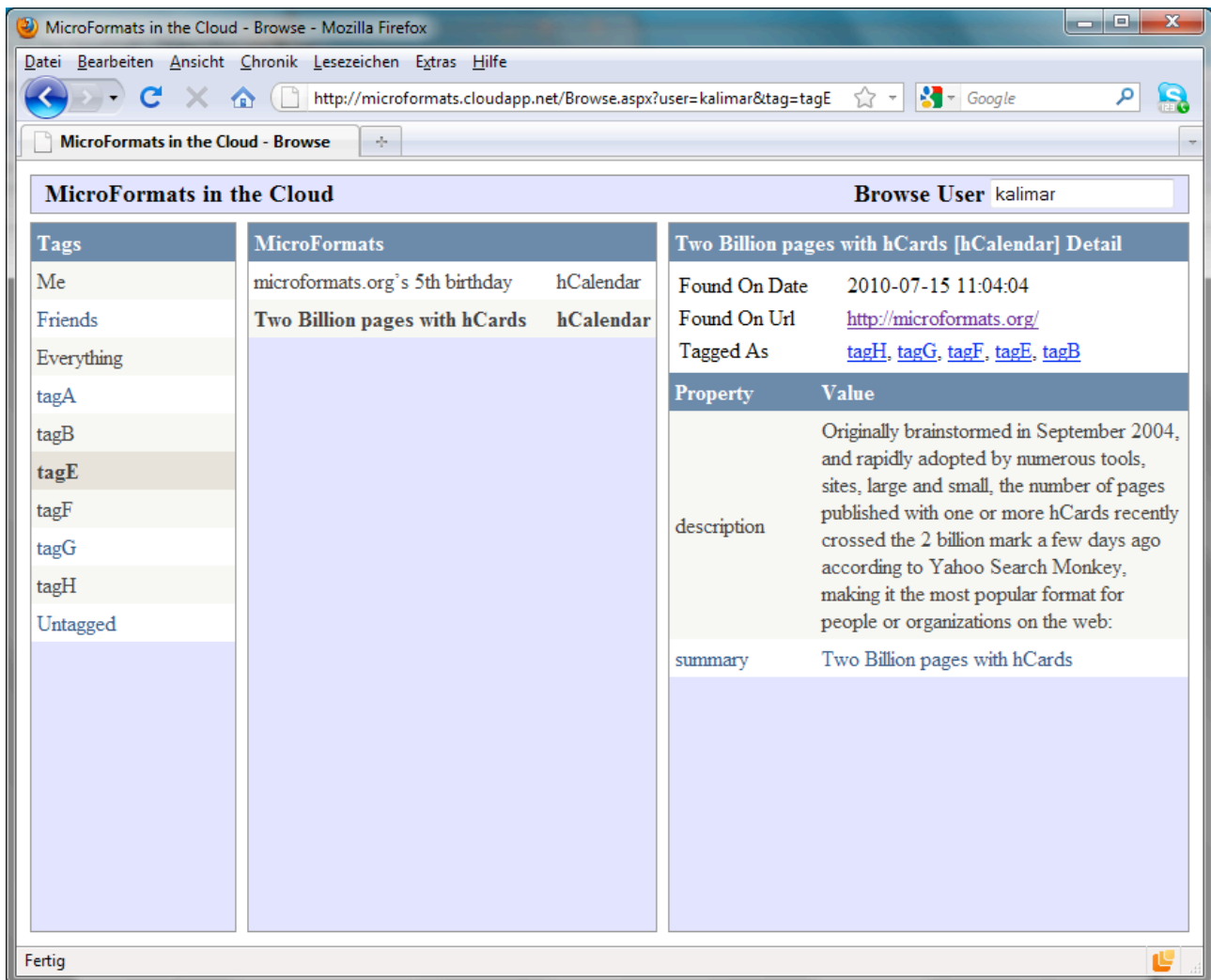


Figure 4: MicroFormats Azure App – Browsing a user page

After successful login, the page header shows the logged in user who may then edit his stored MicroFormats. To delete an entry, a simple click on the trash can icon is sufficient. A tag is deleted automatically once no more MicroFormats are associated with it.

MicroFormats in the Cloud Logged in as rkltest New Card Browse User rkltest

Tags	MicroFormats	Big Wong [hCard] Detail
Me	Big Wong hCard Edit	Found On Date 2010-11-15 13:31:05
Friends	Chinatown Chinese Restaurant hCard Edit	Found On Url http://local.yahoo.com/results: ylt=AoIodTDIGzp8q9SAbTcJmsGGNcIF: ylv=3?p=Chinese&csz=New_York%2C.NY
Everything	Foo King Chinese Kitchen hCard Edit	Tagged As Chinese Food
Chinese Food	Fu Kee Chinese Restaurant hCard Edit	Property Value
Untagged	Hana Japanese & Chinese hCard Edit	fn Big Wong
	Ma Ma Buddha Chinese Restaurant hCard Edit	locality New York
	Noodle Corner hCard Edit	org Big Wong
	Ollie's Noodle Shop & Grille hCard Edit	region NY
	Six Happiness Chinese Rstrnt hCard Edit	tel (212) 964-0540
	Sung Chu Mei Chinese Restaurnt hCard Edit	title Big Wong

Figure 5: MicroFormats Azure App – Editing MicroFormats

3.3 Editing MicroFormats (<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/Edit.aspx>)

This page enables the editing or creating of a new hCard-MicroFormat. All attributes of the hCard will be shown and are editable.

MicroFormats in the Cloud Logged in as rkltest

Big Wong [hCard] Detail

Found On Date 2010-11-15 13:31:05

Found On Url http://local.yahoo.com/results: ylt=AoIodTDIGzp8q9SAbTcJmsGGNcIF: ylv=3?p=Chinese&csz=New_York%2C.NY

Tagged As

Fixed Tags:

Property	Value
fn	<input type="text" value="Big Wong"/>
family-name	<input type="text"/>
given-name	<input type="text"/>
additional-name	<input type="text"/>
honorific-prefix	<input type="text"/>
honorific_suffix	<input type="text"/>
url	<input type="text"/>
email	<input type="text"/>
bday	<input type="text"/>
adr	<input type="text"/>
post-office-box	<input type="text"/>
extended-address	<input type="text"/>
street-address	<input type="text"/>
locality	<input type="text" value="New York"/>
region	<input type="text" value="NY"/>
postal-code	<input type="text"/>
country-name	<input type="text"/>

3.4 Register Page (<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/Register.aspx>)

This page allows new users to register with “MicroFormats in the Cloud”. In addition to username and password a small hCard MicroFormat describes this user to others and is automatically tagged as “Me” on this user’s page.

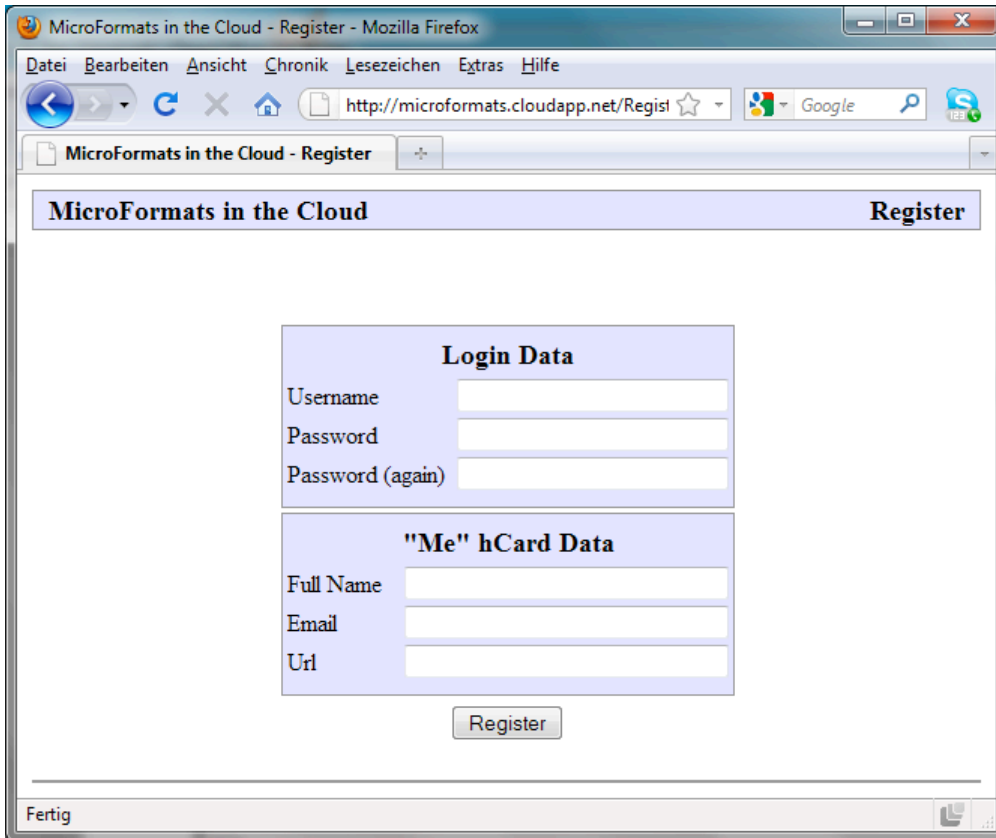


Figure 6: MicroFormats Azure App – Registering a new user

4 OData (<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc>)

MicroFormats also provide an implementation of the OData-protocol. This service enables queries versus the stored data. The resulting feed is an xml file. Queries can be defined in the usual Odata style.

4.1 User

The Users of the MicroFormatsservice can be queried by the tag “User”. The full URL would be:

<http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc/Users>

which returns all known users. To get more information about one user, include the name in brackets and quotes (aka ‘Users(“testuser”)’).

4.2 MicroFormats

With this tag, you can gather all the MicroFormats for a given user:

[http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc/User\('testuser'\)/Microformats](http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc/User('testuser')/Microformats)

4.3 MicroFormat Properties

After getting the id of a MicroFormat, the user can get the MicroFormat properties with this URL:

[http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc/User\('testuser'\)/Microformats\('microformatid'\)/MicroformatProperties](http://microformats.cloudapp.net/OData/microformats.svc/User('testuser')/Microformats('microformatid')/MicroformatProperties)

5 Tips and Tricks

5.1 Networking with other Users

The MicroFormats displayed on a user's page are themselves embedded in the page and can be found via the plugin. This makes it easy for a user to transfer interesting MicroFormats of other users to his own page. Every user page has a special "Me" tag describing the user of that page via an hCard MicroFormat. The predefined "Friends" tag is for storing these and networking with other users.

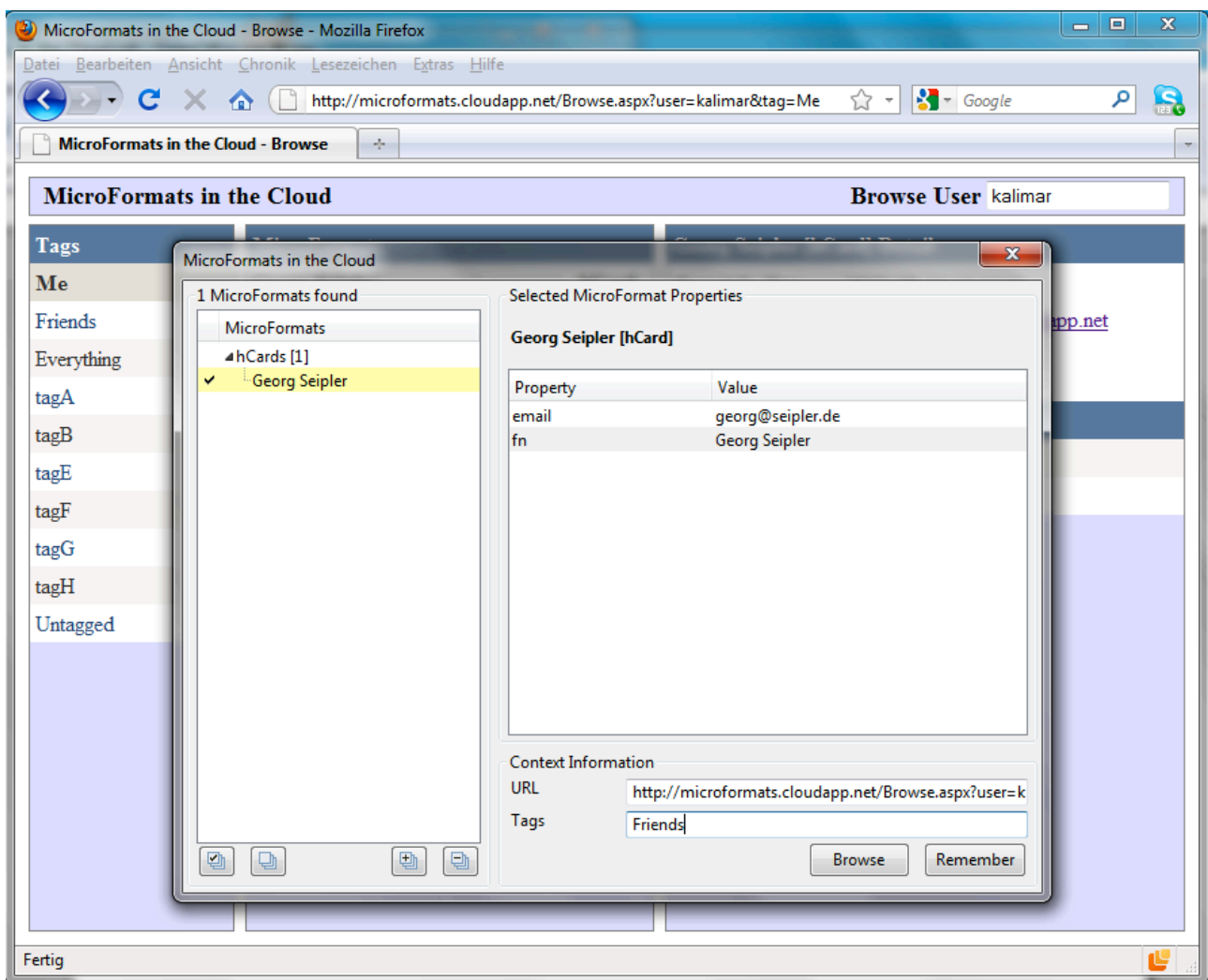


Figure 7: MicroFormats Azure App: Networking with other users

5.2 Renaming Tags and Moving MicroFormats between Tags

Within the application there is no direct way to rename tags or move MicroFormats between tags. Using the method described in “Networking with other users” above, both are possible however. To do so, the user opens the original tag and saves the contained MicroFormats with a new tag name via the plugin. After that, he may delete the entries of the original tag, which is automatically removed after the last association is deleted. Via the plugin, this way tags may easily copied or moved around.