

INSTANT MESSAGING GROUP MANAGEMENT METHOD AND APPARATUS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present application relates to the field of communications technologies,
5 and in particular, to an instant messaging group management method and apparatus.

BACKGROUND

[0002] With extensive development of Internet technologies, instant messaging
technologies bring much convenience to people's work and life. From the early ICQ
and OICQ (widely used messaging tool QQ today) to the new generation of WeChat,
10 Ding Talk, etc., the instant messaging technologies evolve towards a more
user-friendly direction.

[0003] Most instant messaging supports group chat technologies in most cases.
The group chat technology can allow users in the same group in real life to exchange
and share information together, for example, a classmate group, and a company group.
15 In a current group chat application, some simple multi-party chats often appear, for
example, several colleagues are temporarily dragged to a group to talk about a key
problem. However, such groups are not likely to be used subsequently. As a result, a
server end needs to maintain many "zombie groups", complexity of group
management is increased, and errors can easily occur.

20 SUMMARY

[0004] In view of this, the present application provides an instant messaging
group management method and apparatus.

[0005] Specifically, the present application is implemented by using the following
technical solutions.

25 [0006] An instant messaging group management method is provided, where the
method includes: determining a mandatory read message in group session messages;

determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message; and dissolving a group based on a predetermined policy if the group dissolution condition is satisfied.

[0007] An instant messaging group management apparatus is provided, where the apparatus includes: a mandatory read message determination unit, configured to determine a mandatory read message in group session messages; a condition determination unit, configured to determine whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message; and a group dissolution unit, configured to dissolve a group based on a predetermined policy if the group dissolution condition is satisfied.

[0008] It can be seen from the previous description that, in the present application, whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied can be determined based on a reading status of a mandatory read message in a group, and when the group dissolution condition is satisfied, the group is dissolved based on a predetermined policy, thereby dissolving a large quantity of "zombie groups", reducing complexity of group management, and releasing storage resources, processing resources, etc. at a server end.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a schematic flowchart illustrating an instant messaging group management method, according to an example implementation of the present application;

[0010] FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram illustrating a group session interface, according to an implementation of the present application;

[0011] FIG. 3 is a schematic flowchart illustrating group dissolution performed based on a predetermined policy, according to an implementation of the present application;

[0012] FIG. 4 is a structural diagram illustrating an instant messaging group management apparatus, according to an example implementation of the present application; and

[0013] FIG. 5 is a block diagram illustrating an instant messaging group management apparatus, according to an example implementation of the present application.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTATIONS

[0014] Example implementations are described in detail here, and examples of the example implementations are presented in the accompanying drawings. When the following description relates to the accompanying drawings, unless specified
5 otherwise, the same numbers in different accompanying drawings represent same or similar elements. Implementations described in the following example implementations do not represent all implementations consistent with the present application. On the contrary, the implementations are only examples of apparatuses and methods consistent with some aspects of the present application that are described
10 in detail in the appended claims.

[0015] The terms used in the present application are merely for illustrating specific implementations, and are not intended to limit the present application. The terms "a" and "the" of singular forms used in the present application and the appended claims are also intended to include plural forms, unless otherwise specified in the
15 context clearly. It should be further understood that the term "and/or" used in the present specification indicates and includes any or all possible combinations of one or more associated listed items.

[0016] It should be understood that although terms "first", "second", "third", etc. may be used in the present application to describe various types of information, the
20 information is not limited to these terms. These terms are only used to differentiate information of the same type. For example, without departing from the scope of the present application, the first information also can be referred to as the second information, and similarly, the second information also can be referred to as the first information. Depending on the context, for example, the word "if" used here can be
25 explained as "while", "when", or "in response to determining".

[0017] FIG. 1 is a schematic flowchart illustrating an instant messaging group management method, according to an example implementation of the present application.

[0018] Referring to FIG. 1, the instant messaging group management method can
30 be applied to an instant messaging server end, and includes the following steps.

[0019] Step 101: Determine a mandatory read message in group session messages.

[0020] In the present implementation, because many groups such as a "company

group" and a "classmate group" are long-standing groups, and there is no need to dissolve these groups, a mandatory read message can be determined and a subsequent dissolution procedure can be performed for only a temporary group in the present application. When creating a group, a group creator can select a type of the group
 5 such as a "fixed group" or a "temporary group". In addition, for a created fixed group, a group owner or an administrator can also modify the type of the fixed group to a temporary group by using a setting option. Certainly, for a created temporary group, the group owner or the administrator can also modify the type of the temporary group to a fixed group by using a setting option.

10 **[0021]** In the present implementation, the mandatory read message is usually marked by an authorized group member such as a group owner or an administrator. Referring to an example in FIG. 2, after publishing a group session message by using client device, a group owner can trigger marking on a mandatory read message by using a tap operation, a double tap operation, a touch and hold operation, etc. For
 15 example, the group owner can mark a message that is expected to be read by all group members as the mandatory read message. After the group owner marks a message as the mandatory read message, the client device of the group owner can send the marking event to a server end. For example, a marking event that includes a group session message identifier can be sent to the server end, and the server end can
 20 determine a corresponding group session message as the mandatory read message based on the received marking event.

[0022] Certainly, in practice, the mandatory read message can also be marked in other ways. For example, after a group session message is edited, the group session message can be marked as the mandatory read message in a message editing box
 25 before being sent. As such, client device can send a mark of the mandatory read message to a server end together with the group session message, and there is no need to send a marking event subsequently. Implementations are not limited in the present application.

[0023] Step 102: Determine whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied
 30 based on a reading status of the mandatory read message.

[0024] In the present implementation, the server end can collect statistics about the reading status of the mandatory read message, and the reading status usually includes read or unread. The server end can detect a reading status of the mandatory read message by each group member, and then determine whether the group

dissolution condition is satisfied based on the reading status of the mandatory read message in group members. The detection of the reading status can be implemented by using an implementation solution in related technologies. Details are omitted in the present application.

5 **[0025]** In the present implementation, the group dissolution condition can be a default condition, or can be personalized by the group owner or the administrator based on needs.

[0026] Step 103: If the group dissolution condition is satisfied, dissolve a group based on a predetermined policy.

10 **[0027]** It can be seen from the previous description that, in the present application, whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied can be determined based on a reading status of a mandatory read message in a group, and when the group dissolution condition is satisfied, the group is dissolved based on a predetermined policy, thereby dissolving a large quantity of "zombie groups", reducing complexity
15 of group management, and releasing storage resources, processing resources, etc. at a server end.

[0028] The following describes an implementation process of the present application in detail by using a temporary group as an example.

[0029] In the present implementation, an authorized group member such as a
20 group owner or an administrator can set an upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages based on needs. For example, assume that user A establishes a temporary group to publish an important message to group members, and user A can set the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages to 1. After sending the important message, user A marks the important message as a mandatory read message. It is
25 worthwhile to note that the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages in the present application is not fixed. Before the temporary group is dissolved, user A can modify the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages based on actual needs. Implementations are not limited in the present application.

[0030] In the present implementation, a server end can detect a reading status of
30 the mandatory read message by each group member based on a marking event performed by user A.

[0031] For example, when determining that the mandatory read message is read by all the group members, the server end can determine that the temporary group satisfies a group dissolution condition, and can further dissolve the temporary group

based on a predetermined policy.

[0032] For another example, when the server end determines that the mandatory read message is read by all the group members, and publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches a first duration, the server end can determine that the temporary group satisfies a group dissolution condition, and can further dissolve the temporary group based on a predetermined policy. The first duration can be predetermined by user A, or can be a default value, for example, one day or three days. For example, the first duration is one day. When the server end determines that the mandatory read message is read by all the group members, and the publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches 24 hours, the server end can dissolve the temporary group based on the predetermined policy. In such an implementation, before the publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the first duration, the group members can further perform related discussion in the temporary group, or user A can reset the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages based on needs, so that implementation is more flexible, and user experience is better.

[0033] For another example, when the server end determines that the mandatory read message is not read by all the group members, but publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches a second duration, the server end can determine that the temporary group satisfies a group dissolution condition, and can further dissolve the temporary group based on a predetermined policy. The second duration can be predetermined by user A, or can be a default value, for example, 15 days or 30 days. The second duration is usually longer than the first duration. For example, the second duration is 15 days. When the server end determines that the mandatory read message is not read by all the group members, but the publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches 15 days, the server end can dissolve the temporary group based on the predetermined policy. In other words, when the publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches 15 days, even if there is a group member who has not read the mandatory read message, the server end can also dissolve the temporary group based on the predetermined policy. In the present implementation, a problem that a temporary group cannot be dissolved because an individual group member does not read a mandatory read message can be effectively avoided.

[0034] For another example, when determining that a quantity of group members that read the mandatory read message accounts for a predetermined proportion, the server end can determine that the temporary group satisfies a group dissolution

condition, and can further dissolve the temporary group based on a predetermined policy. The predetermined proportion also can be set by user A, for example, 80% or 90%. For example, assume that the temporary group includes a total of 10 group members. After determining that eight members read the mandatory read message, the server end can dissolve the temporary group based on the predetermined policy. In practice, such an implementation can also be combined with the first duration and the second duration, to obtain a determination criterion of the group dissolution condition.

[0035] For another example, if the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages that is set by user A is a value greater than 1, when determining that a quantity of mandatory read messages in the temporary group reaches the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages, the server end can determine whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of all the mandatory read messages.

[0036] For example, assume that user A sets the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages in the temporary group to 3. When determining that the quantity of mandatory read messages in the temporary group reaches three, the server end can perform determining based on the group dissolution condition. For example, if all the three mandatory read messages are read by all the group members, it can be determined that the temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition. If all the three mandatory read messages are read by all the group members, and publishing duration of a mandatory read message with the latest publishing time reaches 24 hours, it can be determined that the temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition. If at least one of the three mandatory read messages is not read by all the group members, and publishing duration of a mandatory read message with the latest publishing time reaches 15 days, it can be determined that the temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition. Details are omitted in the present application.

[0037] In the present implementation, when it is determined that the previous temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition, the group can be dissolved based on the predetermined policy. The predetermined policy can be set by a developer.

[0038] For example, the server end can immediately dissolve the temporary group. Specifically, all stored information related to the temporary group such as a group identifier, information about the group members, and group session messages can be deleted.

[0039] For another example, a buffer time can be reserved for a user before the temporary group is dissolved. Referring to FIG. 3, the dissolving a group based on a predetermined policy can include the following steps.

[0040] Step 301: Send a hiding notification to client device, so that the client
5 device hides the group in a group list.

[0041] In the present implementation, when determining that the previous temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition, the server end can first send a hiding notification to the client device. After receiving the hiding notification, the client device can hide the temporary group in a group list. As such, a group member in
10 the temporary group cannot see the temporary group in a group list, and interference to the user from the temporary group that is no longer used is avoided.

[0042] Step 302: When hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration, dissolve the group.

[0043] In the present implementation, the server end can dissolve the temporary
15 group when determining that hidden duration of the temporary group reaches the third duration. The third duration can be set by a developer, for example, 20 days or 30 days.

[0044] For example, assume that the server end determines, at 18: 00 on March 1, 2017, that the previous temporary group satisfies the group dissolution condition, the
20 server end can first send the hiding notification to client device of each group member in the temporary group, and the client device can hide the temporary group in a group list. For example, the third duration is 20 days, and the server end can dissolve the temporary group at 18: 00 on March 21, 2017.

[0045] Further, before the hidden duration of the temporary group reaches the
25 third duration, if a query instruction is received from user A, client device of user A can be instructed to display the temporary group, and if it is determined that a new mandatory read message appears in the temporary group, dissolution of the temporary group is canceled.

[0046] The previous example is still used. Before 18: 00 on March 21, 2017, if
30 user A still wants to publish a mandatory read message to the group members in the temporary group, user A can query the temporary group by using a query instruction. For example, user A can enter the group name of the temporary group for querying. The server end instructs the client device of user A to display the temporary group. Based on the identified temporary group, user A can send a mandatory read message

again, and can further modify the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages. For example, if the server end determines that a new mandatory read message appears in the temporary group, dissolution of the temporary group can be canceled. When a quantity of mandatory read messages in the temporary group reaches an upper limit

5 quantity of mandatory read messages subsequently, it is determined whether the temporary group satisfies a group dissolution condition based on a reading status of all the mandatory read messages. Details are omitted in the present application.

[0047] In the present application, a certain buffer time can be reserved for a user before the group that satisfies the group dissolution condition is dissolved, so that

10 flexibility is higher.

[0048] Corresponding to the previous implementation of the instant messaging group management method, the present application further provides an implementation of an instant messaging group management apparatus.

[0049] The implementation of the instant messaging group management apparatus

15 in the present application can be applied to a server or a server cluster deployed by a service provider. The apparatus implementation can be implemented by software, hardware, or a combination of hardware and software. Software implementation is used as an example. As a logical apparatus, the apparatus is formed by reading a corresponding computer program instruction in a non-volatile memory and running

20 the instruction in the memory by a processor in a server in which the apparatus is located. From a perspective of hardware, FIG. 4 is a structural diagram illustrating hardware of a server in which an instant messaging group management apparatus is located, according to the present application. In addition to a processor, a memory, a network interface, and a non-volatile memory shown in FIG. 4, the server in which

25 the apparatus in the present implementation is located can usually include other hardware based on an actual function of the server. Details are not omitted here for simplicity.

[0050] FIG. 5 is a block diagram illustrating an instant messaging group management apparatus, according to an example implementation of the present

30 application.

[0051] Referring to FIG. 5, the instant messaging group management apparatus 400 can be applied to the server shown in FIG. 4, and includes a mandatory read message determination unit 401, a condition determination unit 402, and a group dissolution unit 403.

[0052] The mandatory read message determination unit 401 is configured to determine a mandatory read message in group session messages.

[0053] The condition determination unit 402 is configured to determine whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message.

[0054] The group dissolution unit 403 is configured to dissolve a group based on a predetermined policy if the group dissolution condition is satisfied.

[0055] Optionally, the condition determination unit 402 is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied when the mandatory read message is read by all group members.

[0056] Optionally, the condition determination unit 402 is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied when the mandatory read message is read by all group members and publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the first duration.

[0057] Optionally, the condition determination unit 402 is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied when the mandatory read message is not read by all group members but publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the second duration.

[0058] Optionally, the condition determination unit 402 is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied when a quantity of group members that read the mandatory read message accounts for a predetermined proportion.

[0059] Optionally, the condition determination unit 402 is further configured to obtain a predetermined upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages, and determine whether the group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of all mandatory read messages when a quantity of mandatory read messages in the group session messages reaches the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages.

[0060] Optionally, the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages is set by a group owner or an administrator.

[0061] Optionally, the group dissolution unit 403 is configured to send a hiding notification to client device, so that the client device hides the group in a group list; and dissolve the group when hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration.

[0062] Optionally, the group dissolution unit 403 is further configured to instruct the client device to display the group if a query instruction is received from a group

owner or an administrator before the hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration, and cancel dissolution of the group if it is determined that a new mandatory read message appears in the group.

[0063] Optionally, the group is a temporary group.

5 **[0064]** Optionally, the mandatory read message is marked by a group owner or an administrator.

[0065] For an implementation process of functions and roles of each unit in the apparatus, references can be made to an implementation process of corresponding steps in the previous method. Details are omitted here for simplicity.

10 **[0066]** Because an apparatus implementation basically corresponds to a method implementation, for related parts, references can be made to related descriptions in the method implementation. The previously described apparatus implementation is merely an example. The units described as separate parts may or may not be physically separate, and parts displayed as units may or may not be physical units, can
15 be located in one position, or can be distributed on a plurality of network units. Some or all of the modules can be selected based on actual needs to achieve the objectives of the solutions in the present application. A person of ordinary skill in the art can understand and implement the implementations of the present application without creative efforts.

20 **[0067]** The system, apparatus, module, or unit illustrated in the previous implementations can be implemented by using a computer chip or an entity, or can be implemented by using a product having a certain function. A typical implementation device is a computer, and the computer can be a personal computer, a laptop computer, a cellular phone, a camera phone, a smartphone, a personal digital assistant, a media
25 player, a navigation device, an email receiving and sending device, a game console, a tablet computer, a wearable device, or any combination of these devices.

[0068] The previous descriptions are merely examples of implementations of the present application, but are not intended to limit the present application. Any modification, equivalent replacement, or improvement made without departing from
30 the spirit and principle of the present application should fall within the protection scope of the present application.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An instant messaging group management method, wherein the method comprises:

- 5 determining a mandatory read message in group session messages;
 determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message; and
 dissolving a group based on a predetermined policy in response to determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied.

10

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message comprises:

- determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to
 15 determining that the mandatory read message is read by all group members.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message comprises:

- 20 determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that the mandatory read message is read by all group members and publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the first duration.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determining whether a group
 25 dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message comprises:

- determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that the mandatory read message is not read by all group members but publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the second duration.

30

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read

message comprises:

determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that a quantity of group members that read the mandatory read message accounts for a predetermined proportion.

5

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the method further comprises:

obtaining a predetermined upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages; and

wherein the determining whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message comprises:

10

determining whether the group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of all mandatory read messages in response to determining that a quantity of mandatory read messages in the group session messages reaches the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages.

15

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein

the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages is set by a group owner or an administrator.

20

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the dissolving a group based on a predetermined policy comprises:

sending a hiding notification to client device, so that the client device hides the group in a group list; and

dissolving the group in response to determining that a hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration.

25

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the method further comprises:

instructing the client device to display the group in response to determining that a query instruction is received from a group owner or an administrator before the hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration; and

30

canceling dissolution of the group in response to determining that a new mandatory read message appears in the group.

10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the group is a temporary group.

11. The method according to claim 1, wherein the mandatory read message is marked by a group owner or an administrator.

5 12. An instant messaging group management apparatus, wherein the method comprises:

a mandatory read message determination unit, configured to determine a mandatory read message in group session messages;

10 a condition determination unit, configured to determine whether a group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading status of the mandatory read message; and

a group dissolution unit, configured to dissolve a group based on a predetermined policy in response to determining that the group dissolution condition is satisfied.

15 13. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the condition determination unit is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that the mandatory read message is read by all group members.

20 14. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the condition determination unit is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that the mandatory read message is read by all group members and publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the first duration.

25 15. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the condition determination unit is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that the mandatory read message is not read by all group members but publishing duration of the mandatory read message reaches the second duration.

30

16. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the condition determination unit is configured to determine that the group dissolution condition is satisfied in response to determining that a quantity of group

members that read the mandatory read message accounts for a predetermined proportion.

17. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the condition determination
5 unit is further configured to:

obtain a predetermined upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages; and

determine whether the group dissolution condition is satisfied based on a reading
status of all mandatory read messages in response to determining that a quantity of
mandatory read messages in the group session messages reaches the upper limit
10 quantity of mandatory read messages.

18. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein

the upper limit quantity of mandatory read messages is set by a group owner or
an administrator.

19. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the group dissolution unit is
configured to:

send a hiding notification to client device, so that the client device hides the
group in a group list; and

20 dissolve the group in response to determining that a hidden duration of the group
reaches the third duration.

20. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the group dissolution unit is
further configured to:

25 instruct the client device to display the group in response to determining that a
query instruction is received from a group owner or an administrator before the
hidden duration of the group reaches the third duration; and

cancel dissolution of the group in response to determining that a new mandatory
read message appears in the group.

21. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the group is a temporary
group.

22. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the mandatory read message is

marked by a group owner or an administrator.