
Instructions for EFF Cover Your Tracks Activity

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This document contains written instructions on how to complete the in-class activities described in the videos of the second module of the course.

In this activity our goal is to get an indepth look at what is being collected by first party trackers.

It will also explain some of the terminology more thoroughly compared to the instruction videos for readers with very limited experience with computers.

EFF Cover Your Tracks website

Motivation

The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) is an non-profit organization that fights for peoples digital rights and privacy. They have created a website which allows you to see what kind of information can be collected from your browser. With this activity you should realize how much can be discovered about you without you even noticing it happen.

The activity

Tell students to either go to this website: <https://coveryourtracks.eff.org> or to search in Google “EFF Cover your tracks” and find the website through there. On the webpage you will see a big button that says “TEST YOUR BROWSER”. After clicking it, you will need to wait for a while as the website is testing what information can be gathered.

Once the testing is finished, you will be redirected to a page that first explains how to understand the report and gives you suggestions on how to become more anonymous.

By scrolling down on the page you will start to see the different pieces of information that they found out about you. Examples include your Timezone, what type of a computer you are using and so on.

Cover your tracks web site not only shows you what data is collected, but also information on how it is used. **Encourage the students to explore the web site and read further on how this information is collected and used.**

All these can be used to create an unique profile of you just based on your information available through the browser that you use. This profile is important for marketers so that they can combine information from as many sources as possible to establish behavioral profiles for you.

Discussion

- Were the results accurate, or in other words did it correctly determine things like your timezone and operating system?
- What other information about you do you think they can derive from the ones that they received?
- How do students feel about this information being collected?
- What dangers they see in this type of information being collected?
- What is beneficial for them in this?

Question 2 sample answer: Based on your browser's language and timezone they could for example guess your nationality and mother tongue.

Question 5 sample answer: The websites automatically switch to the right language and calendars to the right timezone and content is adjusted according to their interests so that they can find the right things online.



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