
Instructions for Google Adssettings 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 we will explore how the information gathered can be used to build behavioral profiles. In a sense this activity presents the result of first two activities. First and third party tracker information gathered on scale to build behavioral profiles.

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

Checking what Google has collected on you for ad optimization

Motivation

Google is probably the largest individual company that collects data on people for marketing purposes. The information they collect is used for example to determine what ads you will see by creating a profile on you based on your activities. They also have a page specifically for seeing what your marketing profile looks like and for disabling it.

The activity

Go to adssettings.google.com on your browser. You will first have one button that you can press to disable ad personalization. By removing this, you will get ads that are not specifically targeted at you for example based on your assumed age, gender and other interests.

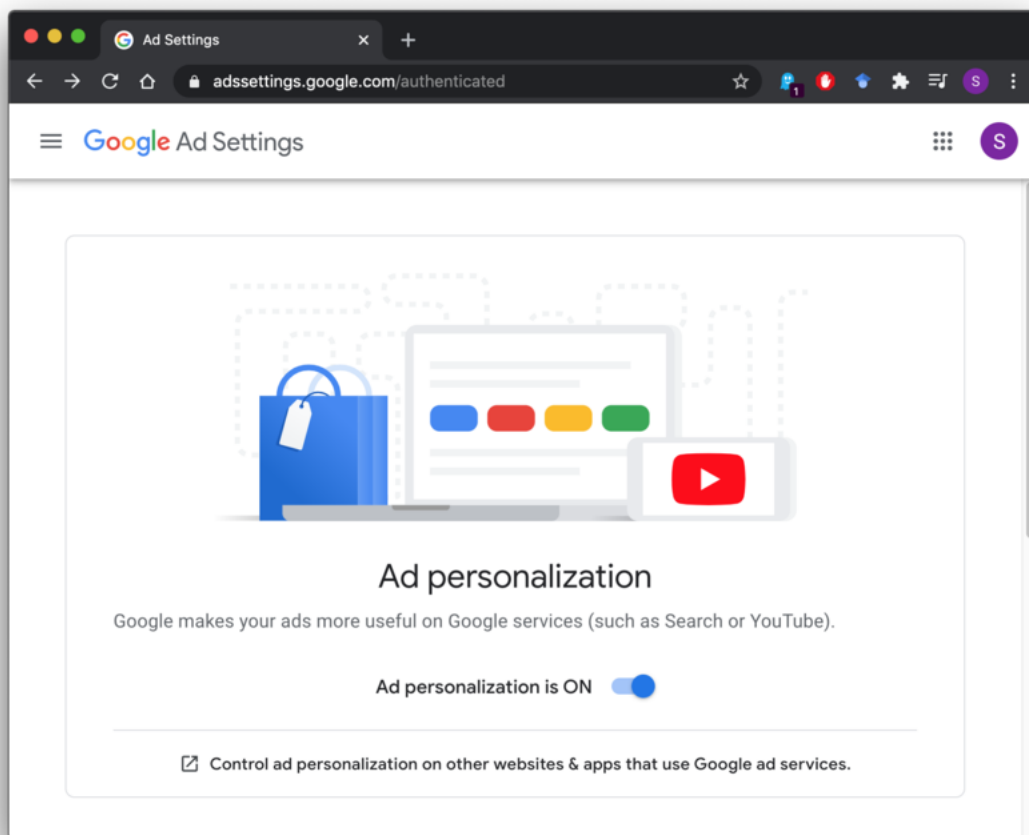


Figure 1: adsetting.google.com

Below this you can also see the following assumptions that Google has made on you:

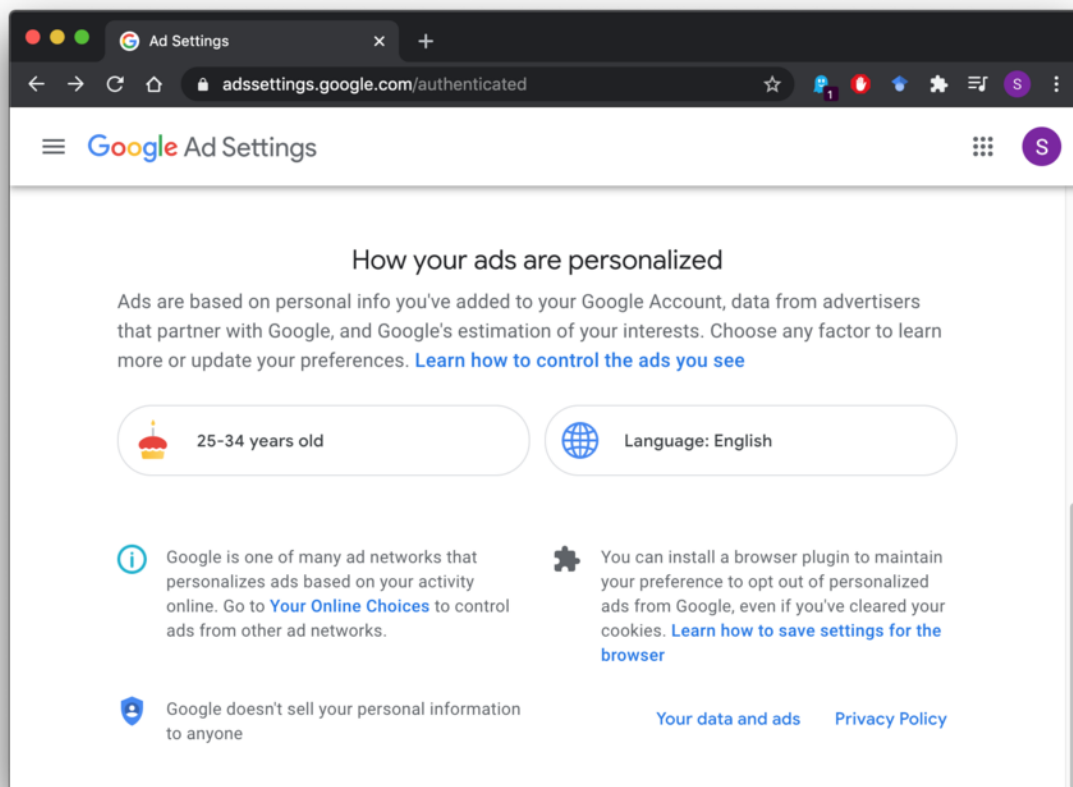


Figure 2: adsetting.google.com

In the example they have only determine 2 things due to this browser having not been in use with ad personalization allowed for more than one minute.

Discussion

- Did you decide to disable personalized ads?
- Do you think it is better to see personalized ads even if it means that you potentially give Google more information?
- How accurate was Google's profile on you? What were most surprising things that they had correctly determined about your interests such as hobbies?



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