FACEBOOK DATA SCANDAL

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THE FACEBOOK–CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA DATA SCANDAL WAS A SCANDAL WHICH WAS REVEALED IN MARCH 2018, IN WHICH IT TRANSPIRED THAT CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA HAD HARVESTED THE PERSONAL DATA OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLES' FACEBOOK PROFILES WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT AND USED IT FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES.

IT STARTED AROUND 2014, WHEN A RESEARCHER ALEKSANDR KOGAN CREATED A PERSONALITY QUIZ APP ON FACEBOOK NAMED "THISISYOURDIGITALLIFE." WHILE ONLY AROUND 270,000 USERS LOGGED IN TO TAKE THE QUIZ, THE APP WAS ABLE TO SCRAPE DATA FROM THOSE PEOPLE AND THEIR FRIENDS — ULTIMATELY COLLECTING INFORMATION ON AS MANY AS 87 MILLION FACEBOOK PROFILES WITHOUT THOSE USERS' EXPLICIT CONSENT.

THAT INFORMATION WAS THEN PROVIDED TO CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA, A POLITICAL CONSULTANCY THAT USED IT TO DEVELOP PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF VOTERS. THESE PROFILES WERE SUPPOSEDLY USED TO MANIPULATE PUBLIC OPINION AND PITCH POLITICAL ADVERTISING IN COMPETITIONS LIKE THE 2016 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND THE BREXIT VOTE.

The scandal arose in 2018 as revealed by whistleblower Christopher Wylie , who helped found Cambridge Analytica, and raised questions about the data practices at the heart of Facebook. Public backlash was swift, reflecting broader growing concerns about how Facebook manages user data.

In reply, Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's chief executive, appeared before the U.S. Congress. Facebook was fined $5 billion by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) years later, one of the largest fines ever against a privacy violation.

The event ignited global discussions about data privacy, the influence of tech companies and the ethical obligations of social media platforms.
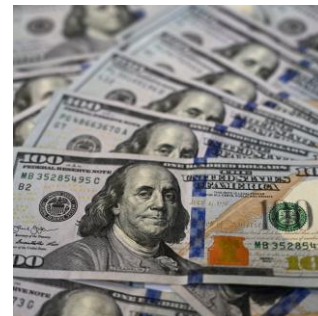
GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in Europe, which went into effect in 2018, was a model for digital privacy protections around the world. It offers users greater control over their personal data and forces companies to be more transparent about how data is collected and used.

(Similar laws were soon passed in other countries and states:

In 2020, California introduced the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), which allows residents to ask for a copy of the personal data that companies hold on them and to request that it be deleted.

Nations such as Brazil (LGPD) and India passed or updated their own privacy laws taking into account increased public pressure.

Changes at Facebook (Meta) Facebook rolled out tougher privacy controls and more information on the ad targeting.

The platform limited third party access to user data and updated its API policies in order to prevent other similar data scraping.

Facebook (now Meta) changed its public message internally as well by emphasizing "privacy" and "trust," critics say most of those changes have been little more than cosmetic.

In 2018, Cambridge Analytica declared bankruptcy, but its data-driven political methods didn't go away. Some of its people and methods reappeared in successor companies and political campaigns.

Politically focused consulting firms from around the world faced increased scrutiny, especially for how they used personal data to create hyper-targeted political ads.

The scandal sparked a reassessment of ethics in data science and digital political campaigning.

-For this project, we created a basic website using HTML and CSS and hosted it through GitHub Pages. We began by using HTML (HyperText Markup Language) to define the structure of the webpage. At the top of the HTML file, we included the DOCTYPE declaration to specify that the document uses HTML5 standards. The content was wrapped within the html tags and divided into two main parts: the head and the body. In the head section, we added metadata including the title, which sets the name shown in the browser tab, and a link tag to connect an external CSS file (style.css) that handles the visual design.

-In the body section, we organized content using semantic tags. We used a header section to display a main heading with an h1 tag and a short description in a p tag for a paragraph. Next, we added a main section with a secondary heading using h2, along with more paragraph text to describe the site. At the bottom, we included a footer to show copyright information.

-To style the webpage, we wrote CSS rules in a separate file called style.css. CSS, or Cascading Style Sheets, allowed us to define how the HTML elements should look. We started by styling the body to use a clean font, set a light background color, and remove default spacing. We also styled the header and footer to have a dark background with white text, centered alignment, and padding to give the content space. The main section was given its own padding to separate it from the edges of the page.

-Once the coding was complete, we uploaded our files to a GitHub repository. We then went to the repository settings, enabled GitHub Pages, and selected the root folder as the source. This published our website and gave us a public URL that anyone could visit. Through this process, we demonstrated our understanding of how to build and structure a webpage with HTML, style it with CSS, and host it online using GitHub Pages.

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