

Solid: “Empowering people through choice”

Solid is a way in which people can have their own data stored decentralized so companies cannot have access to it unless the user allows it. It offers users ‘Pods’ that are secure personal web servers that keep their data. When the user wants to share their data, Solid protocols go through authorization and authentication systems to allow it. The speaker in the conference also talks about the ability for users to write their own applications for their data. While the idea of controlling data before allowing third-party access is a great way to reclaim our own data, it seems to be a first very small step of tackling data privacy, especially post third-party access. Giving access to our data in this way is one-sided and puts the user at an impasse. Perhaps Solid seeks to evolve and undertake protocols to allow the user to revoke access once it is given. Since this application is a more technical practice in securing data, perhaps it would be more beneficial to somehow get access to any information a third-party makes use of our data as well. How can the user be certain that their data isn’t used ethically or for financial gain once it gets given away. Won’t it be generally easier for a third-party application to just keep the user’s data once it gains access instead of asking for permission each time? Solid’s philosophy is altruistic but overwhelming since there is also no clear legislation that can help their cause and there seems to be so much more developmental work yet to be done.