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ITN 295: Topics in Gateways Into the Dark Web

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Warren Holston Lecture Report

In this paper I will be discussing Warren Holsten’s lecture on the ability to track the advertising ID of a device and how it can be used to track, find patterns of a person.

Advertising-IDs are used by Google as well as Apple and are the identifier for the device to track and provide advertisements. Google calls their Advertising IDs Android Advertising ID and Apple refers them to IDFA which stands for ID for Advertising (*How Do I Find My Advertising ID?*, 2020). The Advertising ID is refreshed every couple of seconds and can provide a detail of how the user travels, habits, patterns and other habits. The Advertising ID can even make it to find where you live, which can expose the user’s personal information such as their home address, work address, other relatives’ homes. Once the place of residence is established, it is easy to look up online to find the user’s name, family members, age, work history, friends, etc. through social media and such.

Mr. Holsten did mention that is was possible to change the Advertising ID, but to go out to a public spot where many other Advertising ID’s will be and change the ID there. On android devices you can go into the Settings, Ads, and on the bottom will have the option of the Advertising ID. On Apple Devices, it is not displayed in the setting but is possible through third-party applications.

Mr. Holsten also mention that the companies no longer sell this information to the US Government. If this information is being stored, bought, and sold, it is entirely possible for this information to be compromised of be sold to people who have ill intentions. This information can also end up on the dark web where information of people can be used to blackmail, help steal identities, or kidnap these users.

I learned that anyone who uses the web or have any device are compromised and we can only minimize these security risks with constant active measures. I plan to change my advertising at least every two months if not more frequent. Also if anyone expects true privacy and security, they are either in ignorant bliss or should live completely off the grid.

# References

*How do I find my Advertising ID?* (2020, May 16). Tapjoy.Com. https://www.tapjoy.com/faqs/how-do-i-find-my-advertising-id/