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CSCI 344 Tutorial #1

Google

1. Did anything surprise you about the scope / scale / type of data that Google collects?

    a. After a few attempts at finding a Google account with these types of permissions on, it was shocking to see the type of data collected. Google collects location data back a few years. They also collect voice command data from smart speakers and mobile voice assistants. It was very surprising to see these types of commands listed as we all assumed these were deleted after querying.

2. How does Google benefit from the data collected about your behavior on their platform? See if you can come up with at least 3 **specific** ways that Google monetizes this information.

    a. Targeted ads which lead to higher profits from sales.

    b. Boosting traffic to google owned sites and services.

    c. Selling data to third parties to boost internal revenue.

3. How does this collection of your behavioral data benefit you?

    a. For users who want their online experience to be tailored, targeted ads can be used to lead the user to the things they actually want to see. Companies can also suggest services based on the habits of the user to make their lives easier. Ex) someone who frequents public transportation may be given ads with upcoming changes to schedules.

4. Note that you can turn off these settings. Would you want to do that? Why or why not? What are the consequences for you and for the platform?

    a. YES, it was the consensus of the group that these settings should be disabled and any information or products can be searched for manually at the time they are needed. Online privacy is important as there are many ways companies can exploit your data or steal sensitive information.

    b. Consequences for the company are that their profit margins are a fraction of a percent smaller than they would have been and they can argue they are not able to provide the same type of user experience.

5. Why should we care about this?

    a. Online privacy is at an all time low while online piracy is at an all time high. It has never been easier for companies to steal information and be hacked for this information. This would lead to a heightened risk of identity theft and falling victim to cyber attacks.