

## RPE 4: Joint Communique

Team A: Mark F., Dan R

Team B: Max R., Roger W., John T

After our discussion, both groups A and B have found some middle ground that they can both stand on. However, they have also found topics that they cannot agree on.

After discussion, a few elements of a common ground became clear. The first is that tracking is a serious privacy concern and should be treated as such. It is important in the coming years that governments around the world work with industry experts in order to create strong and reasonable laws protecting the privacy of users.

At the same time, we can both agree that there is a value that comes from being able to access content on the Internet. Therefore laws that are created cannot be too restrictive, or else it will not be possible for websites to fund their content without charging a subscription fee.

Both groups were aware of the two primary reasons for the use of AdBlock technology, and their situations are as follows:

1. Websites need more revenue, and thus they decide to serve more advertisements
  2. Websites serve too many advertisements, and it is distracting to the viewer
  3. Consumers install AdBlock in order to avoid viewing the advertisements
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1. Websites need to generate clicks in order to obtain ad revenue
  2. Websites begin tracking user preferences and serve them more relevant advertisements in order to increase the success of these advertisements
  3. Consumers are upset that their online activities are being profiled and install AdBlock to prevent tracking

Unfortunately both groups do not agree on opt in or opt out systems.

Group A believes that any opt out system must find some way to compensate the company for the lost revenue. In the same way that people get discounts at the grocery store by allowing themselves to be tracked with a loyalty card, online users are getting a large

discount on content and services provided by websites by letting the sites build user profiles and serve them ads. If people do not want to be tracked, then they need to find a different way to pay for the service. However, we do acknowledge that we will need to look into Canadian privacy law in order to determine how to handle opt out for Canadian users, since they are entitled to be allowed to opt out for free.

Group B believes that no matter what system is used, the user who is being profiled, owns their own personal data and information, and thus should have complete control over it. The current laws in Canada, including PIPEDA, although favour the consumers, are far from perfect. Currently, websites in Canada are not forced to notify users when their activities are being monitored, and they do not tell users what is being monitored. Moreover, the lax enforcement of the breaches in PIPEDA means that most companies do not suffer repercussions for violating the law. Lastly, if any user permits a website to track their activities online, the user should be allowed to specify exactly what and when a they permit the tracking - with the authority to request the deletion of all their data whenever they want.