

CON101 ASSIGNMENT#1

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DISCORD

Discord is an online messaging and calling platform where people can communicate via text, voice, or video call, share photos and files in personal messaging, and on 'servers,' which are essentially like groups on platforms like WhatsApp. What is different about Discord's so-called 'servers' is that they provide a lot of customizability and programmability. You can create text and voice channels inside the server with all or some particular people inside the group can access. Not just this, it also provides the option of creating server roles, which is very helpful for access control. To add to this, Discord also has the feature to add bots to a server which opens up a whole new world. There are thousands of different bots out there which are open for public usage. They help with a lot of things like play music for the entire channel (ex. Groovy), for moderation and language control (ex. MEE6), for fun and memes (ex. Dank Memer), etc. People also use Discord to stream and watch movies and videos together or host online competitions like quizzing.

Data Privacy in Discord:

The way that data in Discord is collected is somewhat shady. Unlike most other platforms, we don't consent for the data being collected. It is stated in the Privacy Policy the one might agree with the use of data but not have any say in its collection. Even using a third-party tool would not help you in this matter. Also, the API for Discord can be manipulated in many different ways to create applications that might harvest data from your device. The threat of hackers fishing away for sensitive information is troubling.

As there aren't any strict checks on the kinds of links and files shared via Discord, Malware and Trojan viruses can spread quickly via Discord. These viruses might give the administrative rights of your computers to a hacker, and we might find ourselves in a vulnerable position. Discord tracks the IP and all the in-app activities of its users from the moment the user logs in to the time when logs out. There is always a chance of this data being sold to external parties without checking how that data might be used and controlled. Also, the data from the user's social media account may be collected and sold out similarly.

Although there are these minor issues on how Discord collects and uses this data, it is still safer than many other apps out there in public like Skype, Slack, or Teams. These minor loopholes can be neglected while gaming, but one must be careful when using Discord for business purposes.

Improvements in security measures:

- Two- Factor Authorization (2FA) is an excellent fix for protection against unwanted logins.
- The Safe direct messaging allows the content in private messages to be flagged by a bot in case it is harmful
- The Snoopy link filter filters out any suspicious links and displays a warning.
- Automated server moderation can be set up using bots to filter any unwanted content.