Web Training Collar

Many websites still only offer an unencrypted (HTTP) connection to their visitors. The communication between the visitor's computer and the server hosting the website is open, and can easily be intercepted by others. Possible attackers can see anything the user is seeing: text, images, links clicked, etc. Especially on open or public Wi-Fi networks there is always the chance of someone looking at your Internet usage.

The Web Training Collar is aimed at Internet users who want to change this. If the owners of the websites don't offer a more secure connection, you can use the tested Pavlov-effect to condition yourself into not visiting these websites anymore.

This is done using a dog collar that is able to apply a small electrostatic shock to its wearer. A small piece of software running in the background on the user's computer monitors the Internet traffic and applies a corrective shock when needed. The intensity of the shock increases with each consecutive visit to an unprotected website.

All necessary code to use the Web Training Collar can be found in the github repository.

The Web Training Collar was built during medialab Setup's "Controlegroep" (control group) project. The 25 participants of the Controlegroep have set up experiments to see if and how their behavior can be monitored or altered with the help of apps and gadgets.

The Web Training Collar uses a browser plugin combined with a local Flask webserver. To control the collar from the computer, an Arduino Nano was used in combination with a 433Mhz RF-transmitter to replace the original remote control.

Details work

Title: Web Training Collar
Year: 2015
Materials: dog training collar, custom USB RF transmitter, custom software
Project page: https://jaspervanloenen.com/web-training-collar/

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