

Design for This Century

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Response

The whole Internet business model is built on the selling of either information or time. For all major technology companies, a free product is never more compelling to customers. However, after all corporations have to monetize in certain ways to either maintain their services or even generate profit surplus. The easiest and fastest way is to exploit the vast amount of data users generate daily and somehow sell them in a different way to advertisers. Every economy is generally driven by three modes of economic growth: investment, exportation and national consumption - or known as the troika of economic growth. This kind of revolving door, where technology companies accumulates our data, process and offer consumer insights, is almost the norm of Internet business. As long as we see capitalism as the foundation of our economy, this tendency to use data as competitive advantages will always exist.

In face of such surveillance capitalism era, what can consumers do to counter or at least protect themselves? This remains a tough question for me. Should we just trust tech companies and their founders to "not be evil" or do we actually have the power to protest and select which service can fit in our values and economy. In a more centralized era in the technological world, this the second choice seems almost impossible while the first one is simply naive. We are the very beneficiary of the economy at scale and the open competitive

market. The devil fruit of this wilderness is probably around the corner as well for us to taste it.