

It's tough to pin down one tech company as the absolute data collection champion, since it depends on what kind of data we're talking about and how they're getting it. But based on what's out there, Google (Alphabet) often takes the crown for sheer volume and variety. They've got their hands in search histories, location tracking via Google Maps, YouTube watch habits, Gmail content, and Android device data—pretty much everything you do online if you're using their services. A 2021 study noted Google's trackers, like doubleclick.net, were on 70 of 88 analyzed websites, racking up massive cross-site data. They're also known for scooping up 262 instances of tracking across those sites.

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That said, Meta (Facebook) isn't far behind, especially for social and behavioral data. They collect a ton—think 69.23% of available data points like hobbies, height, weight, even sexual orientation—mostly for hyper-targeted ads. Instagram, under Meta, is a retargeting beast, using your online shopping behavior to flood your feed with eerily specific ads. A post on X claimed Meta builds 52,000 data points per person, though that's unverified.

Amazon's another contender, with data from purchases, Alexa voice recordings, and browsing habits, but their privacy policy is shorter, and they share less directly with third parties compared to Google. Apple, meanwhile, collects the least among the big players, focusing on search terms, device activity, and GPS, but they don't pull from public sources and avoid sharing for marketing.

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If we're talking raw data volume, Google's breadth across platforms likely edges out Meta, but Meta's depth in personal profiling is intense. No hard numbers exist to settle it definitively—companies don't exactly publish their data hoards. If you want a deeper dive into one company or specific data types, let me know!