

The background features abstract organic shapes. A teal shape is in the top-left corner, and a large orange shape is in the bottom-right corner. A small orange circle is positioned between the teal and orange shapes.

THE IMPACT OF YOUR

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

AND HOW IT COULD AFFECT YOU

what to watch for

1 causation

data/records of where on the internet you've been and what you did there.

2 importance

data taken from your online activities can be seen and used by other entities.

3 impacts

digital footprints can follow you for a long, long time, and can build quickly.

4 remedies

there are ways to be more conscious of what you're doing online.



CAUSATION

namely, what is it?

what are you doing right now that can
allow a digital footprint to accumulate?
do you know what it is?

WHAT'S IT FROM?

websites

your data is constantly being mined and sold to third parties online, on most websites.

social media

oversharing online is very common, and a lot of information can be found out simply from your pages.



affects of your digital footprint

future opportunities/career

online history might affect your job prospects by informing would-be employers of your opinions and image. this could be negative. in the case that they decide this is not something that reflects their company values, they may decide against you. this also works for universities or colleges. if it is decided that your digital footprint contains within it things they don't want to be connected with their organization, it could limit opportunities.

current effects

if it's ever relevant that you have a good social media persona (becoming an influencer, YouTuber, online content creator, freelancer, etc...), that digital footprint could haunt you. it's worth it to be cognizant of this effect when posting/sharing online. whether it's signing into a website or posting a video, it could follow you for the rest of your life, and it will. with online tools like the WayBack Machine and other digital archives, it's possible to find anything that someone posted. you may also regret posting something online, because it no longer reflects your values.

googling myself

and what i found



when I performed a cursory google of my own name, I didn't find much at all. a lot of other people I am not related to have my same last name - it's a Slavic name meaning, generically, 'Peter's son', as far as I know - and the only thing I found that was directly related to me was a news article mentioning me.

others might find my instagram page or pictures of me posted by others. that may give them an idea of who i am, but otherwise, there isn't very much about me online; unless someone was trying to find me, they wouldn't find much.



DIGITAL FOOTPRINT STRATEGIES

what can you do to keep your digital footprint appropriate and safe?

self-education

think of privacy risk to do with sharing things. review ISOC digital literacy guides. make sure you know what your privacy is. make sure you know how to protect it.

being careful

be mindful of what you share/where you share it. check default privacy settings. check them on any browser, device, or app that you use. separate what info you share where.

privacy enhancement

review options for privacy-enhancing programs you can install. VPNs are also an option. these programs will help you protect certain parts of your digital footprint. they can also be used to monitor what service providers are looking at.



digital permanence

when you use the internet, that digital service provider may take your data and sell/give it to third parties. namely, advertisers and marketers. furthermore, that data may be *permanently* stored by the service provider. this data, when used by advertisers, can be used to observe, mine, and link data from customers/consumers. there's a saying for this: if you aren't buying a product, you are the product.

WAYS TO DESCRIBE DIGITAL PERMANENCE



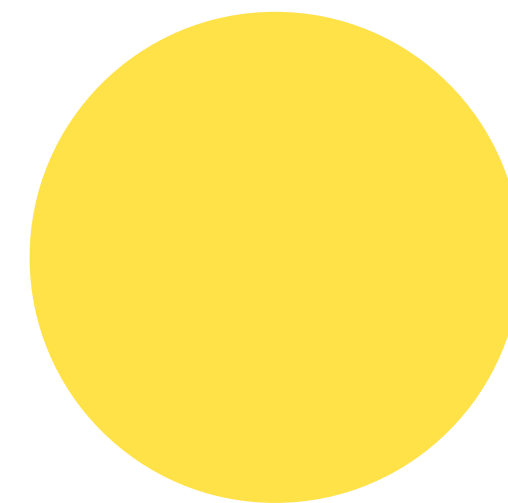
simplified

digital permanence is when websites you visit record who you are and what you did there.



overcomplicated

digital permanence is the storage of accumulated data by providers of online service, mostly for sale to third-party companies.



extreme simplified

be cautious online!
sometimes things you say don't go away :)

so why should you even care?

your digital footprint is *all record of you* online. it will follow you through your whole life, and affect all parts of it - **career, education, and personal opportunities**. if your digital footprint is very large, strangers can see it - and by extension, see you. it's important to know what it looks like for these reasons.