

Is Your Digital Radio Tracking You?

January 18, 2017 - 30 years ago, the number of people with cell phones was miniscule. Tracking your movements once you left home meant real surveillance; someone would have to follow you. That's no longer the case. Just about everyone has a cell phone which is easily tracked. And if you drive a car with a telematics system like OnStar, it can be tracked too. But what if you have avoided these things like the plague? What if you leave your phone at home, don't own a vehicle with OnStar and want to be left alone for the day? Can you be tracked another way—such as through your digital radio? The answer is, "maybe."

Tweet

```
(function() {
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();
```

```
(function() {
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);
})();
```

You're probably familiar with SiriusXM. There is a good chance that you have one of their radios installed in your car. And you probably think of your digital radio simply as an entertainment device. But the company is also becoming a competitor to GM's OnStar, with similar capabilities.

Right now, they have telematics agreements with Fiat Chrysler and Nissan for service in many of their vehicles. Those agreements include a feature that allows them to locate stolen vehicles when activated. That may sound great but it also means that your movements can be tracked and, it turns out that there have already been cases where police have used to the feature to tail suspects.

The chances are that if you have telematics installed in your vehicle, you know it. That's because car manufacturers use these systems as a feature to sell their cars. In most cases, if you purchase a new car, the manufacturer will offer you one or two free years of service with the purchase.

What you may not be aware of is that if you decide not to renew your annual subscription for service, and the service is turned off, it can still be used to track you. Police can obtain a court order to have the service turned on without your knowledge. The only way to avoid being tracked is to disconnect the system from your car. There are a number of websites out there that provide instructions for doing so.

Why do that? Well, maybe you're paranoid. Or perhaps you value your privacy and you really don't think it is anyone's business where or when you go. Either way, knowledge is power. Now you have the knowledge. It's up to you to exercise the power.

by Jim Malmberg

Note: When posting a comment, please sign-in first if you want a response. If you are not registered, click here.

Registration is easy and free.

Follow me on Twitter:

Follow ACCESS