

## The Tech Spies Among Us

February 27, 2023 - There is no doubt that technology can add a lot of convenience to our lives, but at what cost? This has been a debate for many years now and it has been complicated by a lack of clarity on the part of US regulators. For instance, you buy a new cell phone and while you may own the phone, you don't own all of the data that it is generating. That's something that regulators should have put an end to in the early 2000's. Addressing it today would be much more complicated because it isn't just your phone that is tracking you.

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s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
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po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';
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})();
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The fact is that just about every new piece of technology you purchase is making a record of your life. Your new smart TV knows what you watch and reports that information to someone. Your car records everyplace you go, how fast you drive, how hard you brake, and if you listen to satellite radio, it knows what you listen to.

If you use a Roomba vacuum cleaner, Amazon (the company's owner) now has the ability to make a map of the interior of your home.

And all of this is just in the United States, where at least we do have some privacy rights. More draconian uses of technology are available in other countries. For instance, in Saudi Arabia they have an app to allow husbands to track the movements of the wives.

The ability to "get away from it all" and be let alone is becoming much more difficult to attain. For a little convenience, Americans have pretty well given up their privacy to unknown actors. You may trust Amazon with a map of your home's interior, but what if they decide to sell that data to anyone who wants it? And as for your car's data, the government routinely subpoenas that data in accident investigations, and they have used it to prosecute people.

There is no good way to put the genie back in the bottle here. But this is one area where more government regulation is much needed. Consumers today have almost no right to privacy and that is something that really needs to change quickly because the technology to track our every move keeps getting more advanced.

by Jim Malmberg

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