

Privacy

Multimedia Design 2
Week 14

Questions

- How is a user represented?
- Who owns your online data?
- When is something private/public?
- What can you do as a website builder to avoid privacy disasters?

What constitutes a person online?

- What data do you need to store?
- Can users upload photos/video/etc?
- To what extent is the user's offline life represented online?

Who owns your data?

- Technically it resides on the server
- Legally it varies, depending on context
- Ethically the user owns his/her data

Privacy is relative

“Privacy is not simply about the state of an inanimate object or set of bytes; it is about **the sense of vulnerability that an individual experiences**. When people feel exposed or invaded, there’s a privacy issue.”

—[danah boyd](#)

Privacy is a norm

- **What is considered acceptable is a product of group dynamics**
- **What's natural for one group may be abhorrent to another**
- **Standards evolve in response to social software “constitutional crises”**

Constitution

noun

1. a body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed.

New Oxford American Dictionary

Who decides?

- How do you establish the rules for establishing the rules?
- Do we fall back on End User License Agreements & privacy policies?
- What happens when a site implements feature X and its users object?

What is “public?”

- Personal e-mail messages?
- Mailing list e-mail messages?
- Posts on a Facebook wall?
- Posts on a Twitter feed?

Tips for users

- Be careful what you post online
- Learn how privacy features work
- Demand that social software does not make you feel “icky”

Tips for builders

- Be open about your development process, solicit feedback from users
- Don't store anything you don't need to
- Features: export data, delete account

Responsibility

“Once a community exists, it is not about the person who created the conditions for its existence; **it’s about the people who inhabit the space**. If you don’t believe that, you have no business creating anything.”

—Jeffrey Zeldman