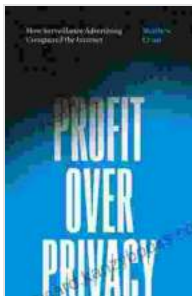


# How Surveillance Advertising Conquered the Internet: A Chilling Exposé



## Profit over Privacy: How Surveillance Advertising Conquered the Internet by CADArtifex

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
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In the early days of the internet, advertising was a relatively simple affair. Companies would buy banner ads on popular websites, hoping to catch the attention of potential customers. But as the internet grew and became more complex, so did the advertising industry.

Today, surveillance advertising is the dominant form of online advertising. This insidious practice tracks every move we make online, from the websites we visit to the products we buy. This data is then used to create targeted ads that are designed to manipulate our thoughts and behavior.

Surveillance advertising is a major threat to our privacy, autonomy, and democracy. In this gripping exposé, investigative journalist Suresh Venkatasubramanian reveals the dark underbelly of this industry.

## **How Surveillance Advertising Works**

Surveillance advertising works by tracking our online activity using a variety of methods, including:

- **Cookies:** Cookies are small text files that are stored on our computers when we visit a website. They can be used to track our browsing history, interests, and even our physical location.
- **Web beacons:** Web beacons are tiny images that are embedded in emails and websites. They can be used to track whether we have opened an email or visited a particular website.
- **Browser fingerprinting:** Browser fingerprinting is a technique that can be used to identify our browser and device based on its unique

characteristics. This information can be used to track us across different websites and even different devices.

The data collected from these tracking methods is then used to create targeted ads. These ads are designed to be highly relevant to our interests, which makes them more likely to get our attention and click. This, in turn, increases the chances that we will buy the product or service being advertised.

## **The Dangers of Surveillance Advertising**

Surveillance advertising is a major threat to our privacy, autonomy, and democracy.

### **Privacy concerns**

Surveillance advertising collects a vast amount of data about our online activity. This data can be used to create a detailed profile of our interests, preferences, and even our political beliefs. This information can be used to target us with ads that are designed to manipulate our thoughts and behavior.

For example, surveillance advertising can be used to target us with ads for products that we are likely to buy, even if we are not aware of these products. This can lead to us making impulsive Free Downloads that we may later regret.

Surveillance advertising can also be used to discriminate against us based on our race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics. For example, a study by the University of California, Berkeley found that black

people are more likely to be targeted with ads for payday loans and other predatory financial products.

## **Autonomy concerns**

Surveillance advertising undermines our autonomy by tracking our every move online and using this information to manipulate our thoughts and behavior. This can have a profound impact on our ability to make our own decisions and live our lives as we choose.

For example, surveillance advertising can be used to target us with ads that are designed to influence our political views. This can lead to us voting for candidates or supporting policies that we may not otherwise have supported.

Surveillance advertising can also be used to manipulate our behavior in other ways. For example, a study by the University of Cambridge found that people who are exposed to ads for unhealthy foods are more likely to eat those foods.

## **Democracy concerns**

Surveillance advertising poses a major threat to democracy by undermining our ability to make informed decisions about our government and our future.

For example, surveillance advertising can be used to target us with ads that are designed to influence our votes. This can lead to the election of candidates who do not represent our interests.

Surveillance advertising can also be used to suppress dissent by targeting activists and other critics of the government with negative ads. This can make it difficult for people to speak out against the government without fear of reprisal.

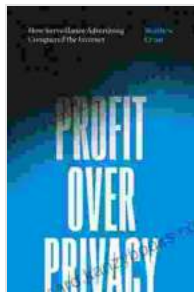
## **What Can We Do?**

There are a number of things that we can do to protect ourselves from surveillance advertising and its dangers.

- **Use privacy-friendly browsers:** There are a number of privacy-friendly browsers available, such as Firefox and Brave. These browsers block tracking cookies and other surveillance technologies.
- **Use privacy extensions:** There are a number of privacy extensions available for browsers, such as Privacy Badger and Ghostery. These extensions block tracking cookies and other surveillance technologies.
- **Be aware of your privacy settings:** Most websites and social media platforms have privacy settings that allow you to control how your data is collected and used. Make sure that you are familiar with these settings and that you have them set to protect your privacy.
- **Support organizations that are fighting for privacy:** There are a number of organizations that are fighting for privacy, such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union. You can support these organizations by donating money or volunteering your time.

Surveillance advertising is a major threat to our privacy, autonomy, and democracy. It is essential that we take steps to protect ourselves from this insidious practice.

By using privacy-friendly browsers and extensions, being aware of our privacy settings, and supporting organizations that are fighting for privacy, we can help to protect our privacy and our freedom.



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