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YAHOO AGREES TO IMPLEMENT DO NOT TRACK



Yahoo! is among the first large online providers to announce the implementation of a Do Not Track (DNT) header solution that will be accessible across Yahoo!'s global network by early summer. In accordance with the Digital Advertising Alliance's (DAA) principles this site-wide DNT mechanism will provide a simple step for consumers to express their ad targeting preferences to Yahoo. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a final report setting forth best practices to protect the privacy of American consumers and give them greater control over the collection and use of their personal data. The FTC also recommends that Congress consider enacting general privacy legislation, data security and breach notification legislation, and data broker legislation. The FTC will work with concerned departments to develop industry-specific codes of conduct. Companies that do not honor the codes they sign up for, could be subject to FTC enforcement actions. The final FTC report calls on companies handling consumer data to implement recommendations for protecting privacy, including: Privacy by Design; Simplified Choice for Businesses and Consumers and Greater Transparency. Yahoo!, with a proven history of providing enhanced transparency and heightened control to its users, has been a leader in the DNT discussion and was among the first to launch an Ad Interest Manager three years ago and the industry AdChoices Icon program two years ago. With this new feature, Yahoo! continues its leadership in privacy innovation while continuing to create the free online services consumers demand that are made possible through advertising. In a related development, Security firm AVG has announced a do-not-track feature for Windows that will run as an add-on for Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome browsers. The new tool is available for free to its users. The Do Not Track (DNT) header solution may be a possible rejoinder to Lori Andrews book "I Know Who You Are and I Saw What You Did"; a book that while extolling the merits of social media networks like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Skype also points out the stripping-away of our right to privacy, our right not to have our personal data shared with a jealous ex-boyfriend, a potential employer, or a police investigator. Soon after the publication of Andrews's book the American media reported that Google had found a way to spy on consumers' searches on iPhones and iPads, even after users had imposed blocks. A further revelation by the US media is that Android phones can secretly copy photos and post them on the web. Yahoo! looks forward to continuing the dialogue with policymakers to discuss commonsense solutions that protect user privacy while maintaining the free Internet model.

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