

Welcome

Welcome to the study!

Informed Consent

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study. The goal of the study is to understand how people's online behavior impacts the advertisements that they see on the web and in smartphone apps.

Your participation should take no longer than 15-20 minutes.

If you choose to participate, this browser extension will collect the interest profiles that four online advertisers have collected about you: Google, Facebook, Bluekai and eXelate. You will be asked to log in to Google and Facebook so that we may temporarily access these services. We will collect three types of information during this process:

- The interest profiles that the five advertisers have developed about you
- Your search history on Google Search
- Your browsing history from your web browser

This data will be used to analyze the correlations between your online behavior and your interest profiles. We will NOT record any other information, including your username and password for any online services, or personal information like your real name, etc.

Once this study is complete, you may uninstall this extension, at which point we will no longer be able to access your Google and Facebook information, or your browsing history. The data collected by our browser extension will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

While we collect your online advertising interest profiles in the background, we will ask you several questions about your demographics, web usage, and interactions with online advertisements. Your responses to these questions are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. We will not share your responses with anyone who is not involved in this research. All data that is collected from the survey and from ad preferences managers will be stripped of personally identifiable information to the best of our ability. The data collected from users will only be stored on a server at our end. Our software is designed to upload survey and crawled data directly to our server over an encrypted connection using HTTPS. No data will be stored on the crowdsourcing services or elsewhere.

The decision to participate in this research project is voluntary. You do not have to participate; there is no penalty if you choose not to participate in this research or if you choose to stop

participating at any time.

By checking the “I agree” box below, you agree that you have read and understand the information about and voluntarily agree to participate in the survey.

[checkbox: “I agree”]

Google Login

To proceed with our survey you must have a Google account and be logged-in to it.

[[If the user is logged-in:]]

Thank you, you are logged in to Google. You may proceed with the survey.

[[If the user is not logged-in:]]

Clicking on the button below will open a new tab so that you can securely log in to Google. Please return to this page after you log in to Google.

[button: Click here to log in to Google]

Facebook Login

To proceed with our survey you must have a Facebook account and be logged-in to it.

[[If the user is logged-in:]]

Thank you, you are logged-in to Facebook. You may proceed with the survey.

[[If the user is not logged-in:]]

Clicking on the button below will open a new tab so that you can securely log in to Facebook. Please return to this page after you log in to Facebook.

[button: Click here to log in to Facebook]

Basic Demographics [this is region specific; similar questions were asked for Pakistan within the Pakistani context]

First, we would like to know a bit about you. Remember, your answers to these questions are confidential so please be honest.

Where are you from? [radio buttons: United States; Pakistan]

How old are you? [radio buttons: 18-24; 25-44; 45-64; 65+]

What is your gender? [radio buttons: Male; Female; Other]

What is your race or ethnicity (check all that apply)? [check boxes: White/Caucasian; Black/African American; Native American/Alaska Native/Hawaii Native; Latino/Hispanic; Asian; Other]

What is the highest level of education you have completed? [radio buttons: None; High school; Some college; College; Some graduate school; Masters; Doctoral]

What is your current marital status? [radio button: Never married; Married; Divorced; Separated; Widowed; I prefer not to say]

How many children do you care for in your household? [number]

Are you currently employed? [radio button: Yes, Full-time; Yes, Part-time; No]

What is your yearly household income? [radio button: Under \$15,000; \$15,000 to 30,000; \$30,000 to 45,000; \$45,000 to 60,000; \$60,000 to 75,000; \$75,000 to 100,000; \$100,000 to 150,000; \$150,000 and over; I prefer not to say]

How would you describe the place where you currently live? [radio buttons: Urban; Suburban; Rural]

General internet and web usage

We would like to know about your usage of the internet in general.

How many years have you been using the internet? [number]

Approximately how much time do you spend each day browsing the web on a desktop computer or laptop? [radio buttons: 30 minutes or less; 30 minutes - 1 hour; 1 -2 hours; 2 - 4 hours; More than 4 hours]

What Internet browser do you use most often? [radio buttons: Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer/Edge, Safari, Brave]

Which search engines do you use most often? [radio buttons: Google; Bing; DuckDuckGo; Yahoo; AOL; Baidu; Other]

Approximately how many web searches do you conduct each day? [radio buttons: less than 10, 10-50, 50-100, 100 or more]

General Online Activities

How often do you perform the following activities online, either via websites or via smartphone apps?

Posting content on social media [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

Reading content on social media [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

Sending and receiving email [...]

Online banking and money management [...]

Researching health information [...]

Reading the news [...]

Booking airline flights, hotels, and/or rental cars [...]

Shopping for clothes [...]

Shopping for electronics [...]

Shopping for household items [...]

Shopping for movies, music, and/or books [...]

Shopping for toys, games, or other entertainment [...]

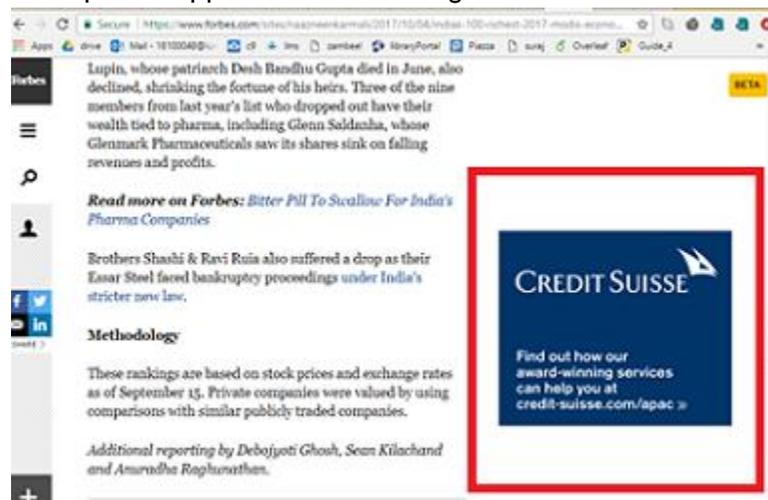
Shopping for office products [...]

Shopping for food [...]

Online Advertising

We would like to know about your experiences seeing and interacting with online advertisements.

For these questions, please consider advertisements that you have seen on websites and in smartphone apps. We are referring to ads that look like this:



[screenshot of an online ad]

Do not consider advertisements that you have seen on search engines.

How frequently do you interact with online advertisements in the following ways?

See online advertisements [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

See online advertisements that you find relevant [...]

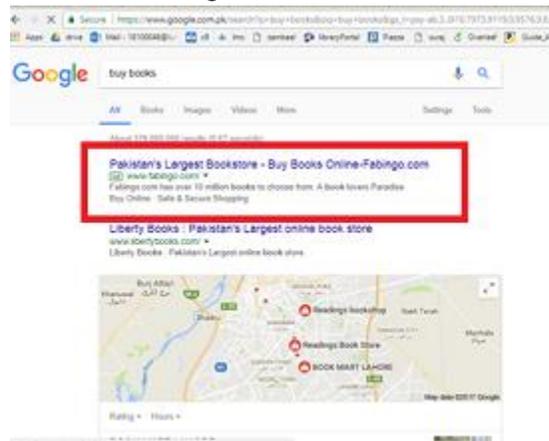
See online ads that you find annoying or intrusive [...]

Click on online advertisements [...]

Purchase a product after clicking an associated online advertisement [...]

For these questions, please consider advertisements that you have seen on search engines.

We are referring to ads that look like this:



[screenshot of an ad on Google]

Do not consider advertisements that you have seen on other websites or smartphone apps.

How frequently do you interact with search advertisements in the following ways?

See search advertisements [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

See search ads that you find relevant [...]

See search ads that you find annoying or intrusive [...]

Click on search engine ads [...]

Purchase a product after clicking an associated search ad [...]

Tracking and Privacy

We have a few questions about things you may have done to block online advertisements or enhance your online privacy.

Do you use any of the following browser extensions?

Adblock [radio button: Yes; No; I don't know]

Adblock Plus

uBlock Origin

Ghostery
Disconnect
Privacy Badger

Do you have “Do Not Track” enabled in your web browser? [radio button: Yes; No; I don't know]

Have you ever opted-out of online advertising or online tracking? [radio button: Yes; No; I don't know]

Do you use a proxy, virtual private network (VPN), or other anonymous web browsing service such as Tor? [radio button: Yes; No; I don't know]

How often do you clear your cookies? [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

How often do you clear your browsing history? [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

How often do you browse in private mode (e.g. Incognito)? [radio buttons: Never; Monthly; Weekly; Daily; Multiple times a day]

Your Interests

This section had dynamic questions, based on the interest profiles that were collected on them by Facebook, Google and Exelate. The format for the questions was as follows:



Your Interests
We have a few questions about things your interests.
~~ Shopping
* Are you interested in 'Shopping'?

Not at all A tiny amount Somewhat Very much Extremely

* Have you recently seen online advertisements related to 'Shopping'?

Yes
 No
 I don't remember

If the answer to this question was yes, a follow up question was asked as follows, otherwise we asked about other interests without any follow up.



* Have the online ads you have seen related to 'Shopping' been relevant and useful to you (e.g. the ad introduced you to a new product that you appreciate, or reminded you to purchase a product you had intended to buy)?

Yes
 Maybe
 No

Ad Preference Managers

Some companies that sell online advertising, like Google and Facebook, have an “ad preferences” webpage that allows users to opt-in and opt-out of behaviorally targeted advertising, as well as view the “interest profile” that the company has inferred about the user.

Prior to taking this survey, were you aware that Google had an “ad preferences” webpage?
[radio button: Yes; No]

[If yes to the previous question] Have you ever visited Google’s “ad preferences” webpage?
[radio button: Yes; No]

[If yes to the previous question] Have you ever manually edited the interests that appeared on Google’s “ad preferences” webpage? [radio button: Yes; No]

Prior to taking this survey, were you aware that Facebook had an “ad preferences” webpage?
[radio button: Yes; No]

[If yes to the previous question] Have you ever visited Facebook’s “ad preferences” webpage?
[radio button: Yes; No]

[If yes to the previous question] Have you ever manually edited the interests that appeared on Facebook’s “ad preferences” webpage? [radio button: Yes; No]

Have you ever heard of a company called eXelate? [radio button: Yes; No]

Have you ever heard of a company called BlueKai? [radio button: Yes; No]

Conclusion

Thank you for taking our survey! You may now uninstall this browser extension.