



# Information Is Valuable

## Review Questions

### *Answer Key*

1. How are free online services able to operate at no cost to users? Name two common privacy-relevant ways that such services make money, and explain how each affects your online privacy.

*Example answers might include:*

*Selling advertising “space” to advertisers/other businesses: services may compile extensive data about users’ interests, advertising companies may track users’ activities from site to site where they place ads (for example, using cookies), etc.*

*Selling users’ personal information to other businesses, advertisers/marketers, or data aggregators: more people have those users’ personal information (and not necessarily with their permission).*

*Selling upgrades, extras, or related services to existing users: services may compile extensive data about users’ usage histories and interests to target sales pitches.*

2. Describe two possible ways a business can use information they've purchased about you.

*Possible answers might include finding potential new customers (among people known to be interested in the types of goods or services they sell); determining who their existing customers are (by buying additional data about them), to adjust marketing campaigns and pricing; running background checks on possible clients (for example, in insurance and banking); preventing fraud by confirming customers’ information; etc.*



3. Explain the difference between “opt-in” and “opt-out” models for information sharing. Which do you think is better for consumers, and why?

***Opt-in is where the user/customer has to specifically indicate they are willing to participate. Opt-out is where the user/customer has to specifically ask to NOT participate.***

***Example arguments in favor of opt-in models might be that users/customers are more likely to be making the choices they really want or that users/customers often don't know they have the option of opting out.***

***Example arguments in favor of opt-out models might be that users/customers can get promotions and deals without having to seek them out, or that companies that have more customer data to sell (because users don't bother to opt out) can (ostensibly) make more free products available.***

4. Name at least one way your online data might have non-monetary value to someone.
  - a. What kind of person, business, or organization might use your information?
  - b. What information might they use?
  - c. How might they use it?
  - d. In your opinion, would that use be beneficial, neutral, or harmful to you?

***Example answers might include:***

***People at the student's school might use information about their personal life to bully or make fun of them.***

***Someone the student was in a fight with (or a stalker, or...) might use information about their location to find and attack them.***

***The student's friends might use information about their location to meet up with them, or information about their personal life to keep track of what's going on with them.***

***A court might use data about the student's location or information in the content of their email or social-media accounts as evidence in a case (against them or against someone else).***

***(Students' answers may differ as to whether they consider these uses beneficial.)***

5. Describe three ways you can limit the amount of personal information that data brokers can obtain about you.

***Possible answers include opting out of information-sharing by apps and services (by using privacy settings, etc.); limiting use of social media; using a tool that blocks tracking of online activities by advertisers; using private-browsing modes or setting browsers to delete cookies when the browser is closed; refraining from using free services that seem like something that should be paid for; being selective about which information to include when filling out a form; etc.***



6. Next time you're thinking of signing up for a new website or installing a new app...
- Name two methods you could use to figure out what the provider will do with your personal information, including who they might sell it to.

*Possible answers include reading the privacy policy or an independent summary of it; looking at a site that rates apps and websites on their privacy practices; or doing a web search for the app or site's name along with relevant search terms, e.g., "privacy issues" or "data sharing".*

- What kinds of data use or sharing, if any, might make you decide not to use the site or app?  
*Answers might cover a wide range of concerns, from who might have access to the data to potential consequences down the road.*
- Why would that use concern you? (Or, if nothing would concern you, why not?)  
*Answers should indicate that students have actively thought through their preferences about information-sharing.*

