

Apple's bold privacy move

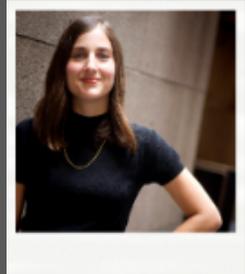
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Apple has just rolled out iOS 14.5 and it comes with a privacy catch – the App Tracking Transparency feature, which puts tracking in the hands of the user and has started a ‘war’ with Facebook.

What is the new feature?

When an iPhone user opens an app like Facebook the first time after installing the iOS update, they’ll get a pop-up that:

- notifies the user that Facebook wants to track their activity across other companies’ apps and websites;
- potentially a pitch from Facebook to explain why users should allow tracking; and
- two options: to track, or not to track.

What is tracking?

Users’ activity across apps is tracked using their Apple device identifier, a set of numbers and letters assigned to their iPhone. Tracking means that companies get a load of data about user behaviour and can use that data to target advertising (you know when those RM Williams boots you’ve been eyeing off are suddenly advertised to you on Instagram and you take that as a sign from above to whip out the credit card? Yeh no, you were just tracked). If the user opts-out of tracking, the Apple device identifier is essentially disabled.

What does this all mean?

If you listen to Zuckerberg, who is so cranky he even took out [full page ads about it](#), Apple’s update will cost small businesses 60% of their sales because of how much they rely on personalised ads. Apple responded to the ads with not a word of a lie: that Facebook totally disregards its users’ privacy. Burn.

This won’t mean that users will no longer get ads, or personalised ads for that matter; ad tech companies have other ways to monitor online behaviours, and this new iOS functionality might inspire them to develop new tracking software or find other loopholes in the future. However, it is an interesting and big move by one of the largest tech companies in the world who claims the move is all about privacy. And we love privacy.

Questions? Give us a call.