

# Privacy and the University Press

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# Topics

- The direct-to-consumer (D2C) project
- How D2C marketing works
- Privacy implications of D2C
- Survey of university presses
- Policy issues

# The D2C Project

- Funded by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Aim is to help university presses sell more books from their Web sites
- Includes a survey of current press practices concerning D2C
- Will also include recommendations for implementing such a program
- Will be completed this summer and made openly available

# How D2C Works

- For *consumer* sales (aka sales to individuals), not sales to libraries or businesses
- Direct relationship between the publisher and the customer/user
- Marketing funnel: users attracted to Web site; view offerings; make transaction
- Theoretically competes with other channels (e.g., Amazon, libraries)

# How To Be Successful at D2C

- Requires a great deal of Web traffic
- Web site designed to facilitate transactions
- Needs secure ecommerce systems; reliable back-end fulfillment; regulatory compliance
- Which brings us to –*storing and reusing data about customers to enhance marketing campaigns*

# Privacy Implications

- D2C marketers attempt to collect as much information about users as possible
  - Personal identifiers (name, address, etc.)
  - Demographic information (e.g., white male, 40 years old, household income \$100,000, BS in chemistry, etc.)
  - Purchasing history (books, movies, cars, groceries—everything that is legal)
  - Records enhanced with third-party data

# Storing Data

- All data is retained when possible
- Must be in secure environment—but who has access?
- Ideally stored in form that enables detection of patterns and easy extraction

# Using and Reusing Data

- Used to sharpen a company's own marketing plans
- Data may be loaned or leased to others (How do we guarantee a third-party's data security practices?)



# Press Survey

- Some respondents had a clear idea of data and privacy policies and conscientiously managed this area
- But some did not (“Don’t know if we have a privacy policy”; “We do what the university tells us, but I don’t know what that is”)
- Some said they do not use tracking devices, but in fact they do (assume ignorance, not malice)
- Most have firm policies on credit card information

# What Can We Learn from This?

- No evidence (based on my survey) of inappropriate data or privacy policies
- But lack of well-known and carefully articulated policies is troubling
- Universities have multiple constituencies to serve with their privacy policies
- A need to develop balanced, well-articulated policies for all university departments

# Recommendations

- U. press community begins process to articulate policy for all presses
- U. press community participates in discussions on campus for overarching privacy policies
- Goal: a set of useful, practical guidelines for privacy issues

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