**Web Sites Give Our Personal Details To New Tracking Industry**

from [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703977004575393173432219064.html#articleTabs%3Darticle](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703977004575393173432219064.html)

5.2 (new reading level)

Adapted from an article by  JULIA ANGWIN and TOM MCGINTY

July 30, 2010

Some big U.S. websites put trackers on your computer. It happens when you visit their sites. They track (record) what you look at. We don’t even know it!

Some people don’t like this. In one visit you might get 100 tracking tools added to your computer. Reporters at the *Wall Street Journal* found this out.

They visited 50 popular U.S. websites.

Then reporters added up the trackers. The total was 3,180!

Only Wikipedia.org was “safe.” They didn’t install any files at all.

Do you use Dictionary.com, Comcast or MSN? They each added over 100 tracking tools.

Companies like Google, Microsoft, and Quantcast sell your information to advertisers. Advertisers then send ads to you online.

Reporters said trackers are getting worse. Some trackers can record what you type. They send the text to a company that looks at your data. They see what you read online. They see who you connect with. They figure out what you might want to buy.

Trackers can be hard to get rid of. Some trackers “come back” even when you delete them.

Advertisers say tracking doesn't intrude on your privacy. Why? It doesn't identify you by name. They also tell you they are tracking, but it’s often in small print.

Companies say they provide a useful service. Because of them, you see ads and information you are interested in….

Congress may make laws to limit tracking. The Federal Trade Commission is writing privacy guidelines for the industry.