

Simulation: Internet Search and Tracking

Objective: Understand how your online behavior is tracked and how this data is used to tailor marketing strategies, focusing on real-time observation and ethical considerations.

Overview: You will be participating in a simulation where you'll experience the roles of an internet user and a tracker. This will help you understand how online activities are monitored and how data is used in personalized marketing.

Procedure:

- 1. Form Pairs:** Each of you will pair up with a classmate. You will alternate roles between being an Internet User and a Tracker.
- 2. Roles Explained:**
 - **Internet Users:** You will conduct searches and read pages based on your interests, as if you were browsing the internet normally. You may visit news sites, online stores, or any websites of your choice.
 - **Trackers:** Your role is to simulate how AI algorithms track online behavior. Quietly observe your partner's search behavior, noting the types of websites visited and the content interacted with. Write down potential products or services that align with the interests shown.
- 3. Activity Steps:**
 - Start the simulation with one student as the Internet User and the other as the Tracker.
 - The Internet User will browse freely on topics of interest for approximately 10 minutes. During this time, the Tracker will discreetly observe and take notes without interrupting.
 - When your teacher tells you, switch roles and repeat the process.
- 4. Discussion and Reflection:**
 - Once both of you have performed each role, compare your notes.
 - Discuss the list of potential products or services you noted for each other's web browsing.
 - Reflect on what it felt like to be tracked and to track someone else's internet behavior.

Ethical Guidelines:

- **Trackers:** Do not record any personal or sensitive information. Focus only on general interests and potential product alignments.
- **Internet Users:** Avoid searching for sensitive or personal topics during this simulation.

Learning Outcome: By the end of this simulation, you should have a better understanding of how online behaviors are tracked and used for personalized marketing, as well as the ethical considerations involved in data tracking.