

Smart devices in the AI age: why only
open source, collective action and public funding can
make us sovereign and prevent dystopy

Pierre-Yves GIBELLO





European Open Source Non Profit
Since 2007

Professional OSS code base
(backs our infrastructure)



SFSCON

Community-driven

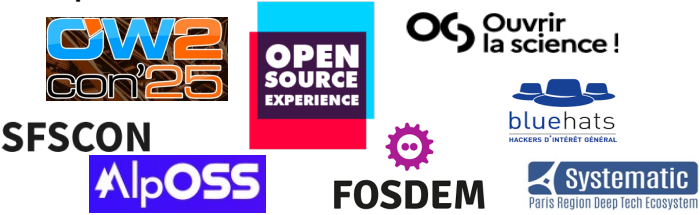
+ 2600 individuals



« Community As A Service »

Open Source ecosystem
On-demand agile cooperation
("propagation medium")

Open source / science advocate



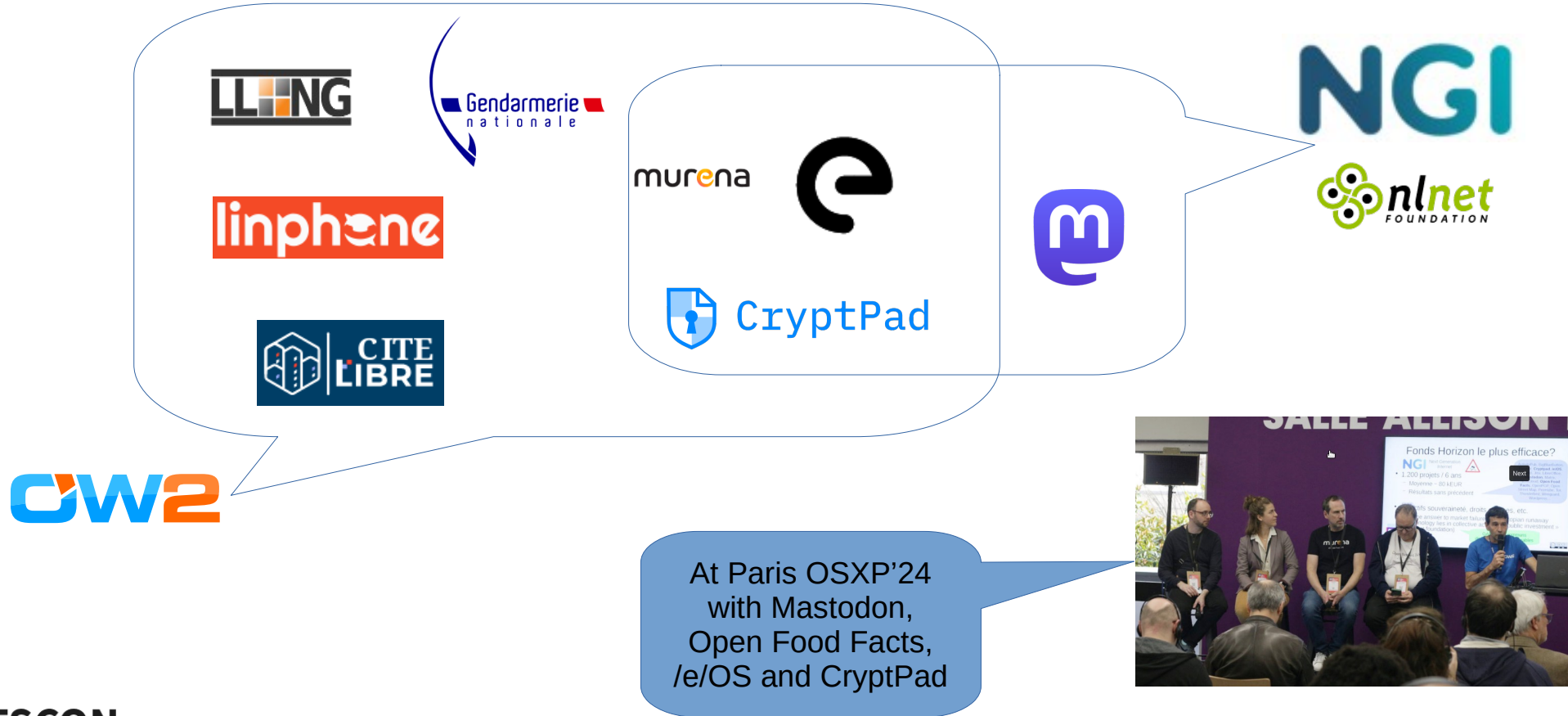
EU + Global
foundation network



Innovation

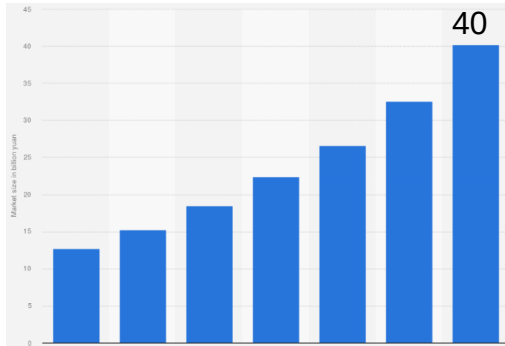


Privacy / sovereignty in our community



Who can we trust?

States? « Democracy »?



China market (BRMB) biometric tech. 16-22
© Statista 2025

Smartphones
can even make
you a cop in 2
weeks (!)



INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE : LA FRANCE OUVRE LA VOIE À LA SURVEILLANCE DE MASSE EN EUROPE

Reconnaissance faciale en temps réel, interprétation des émotions, catégorisation des pensées religieuses, sexuelles et politiques... La France a activement milité pour que ces pratiques soient permises par « l'AI Act », le règlement européen sur l'intelligence artificielle, révèle Disclose et Investigate Europe, documents confidentiels à l'appui.

France secretly
advocating to weaken
AI Act protection
(source : Disclose)



How to stop Google from listening to your every word

Kim Komando | Special to USA TODAY

Some of us are more paranoid than others about what our phones are listening to and what they do with that information.

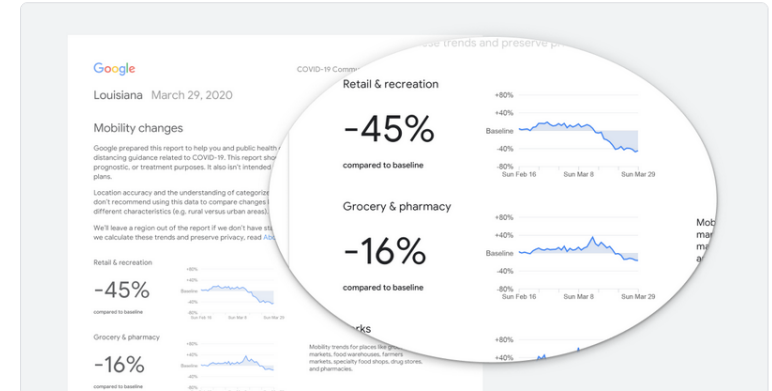
We're giving away a \$799 iPhone 15. [Enter to win now!](#)

Advertisers and data brokers know so much about you ... They don't need to listen to discover your secrets. Still, you better believe it's happening.

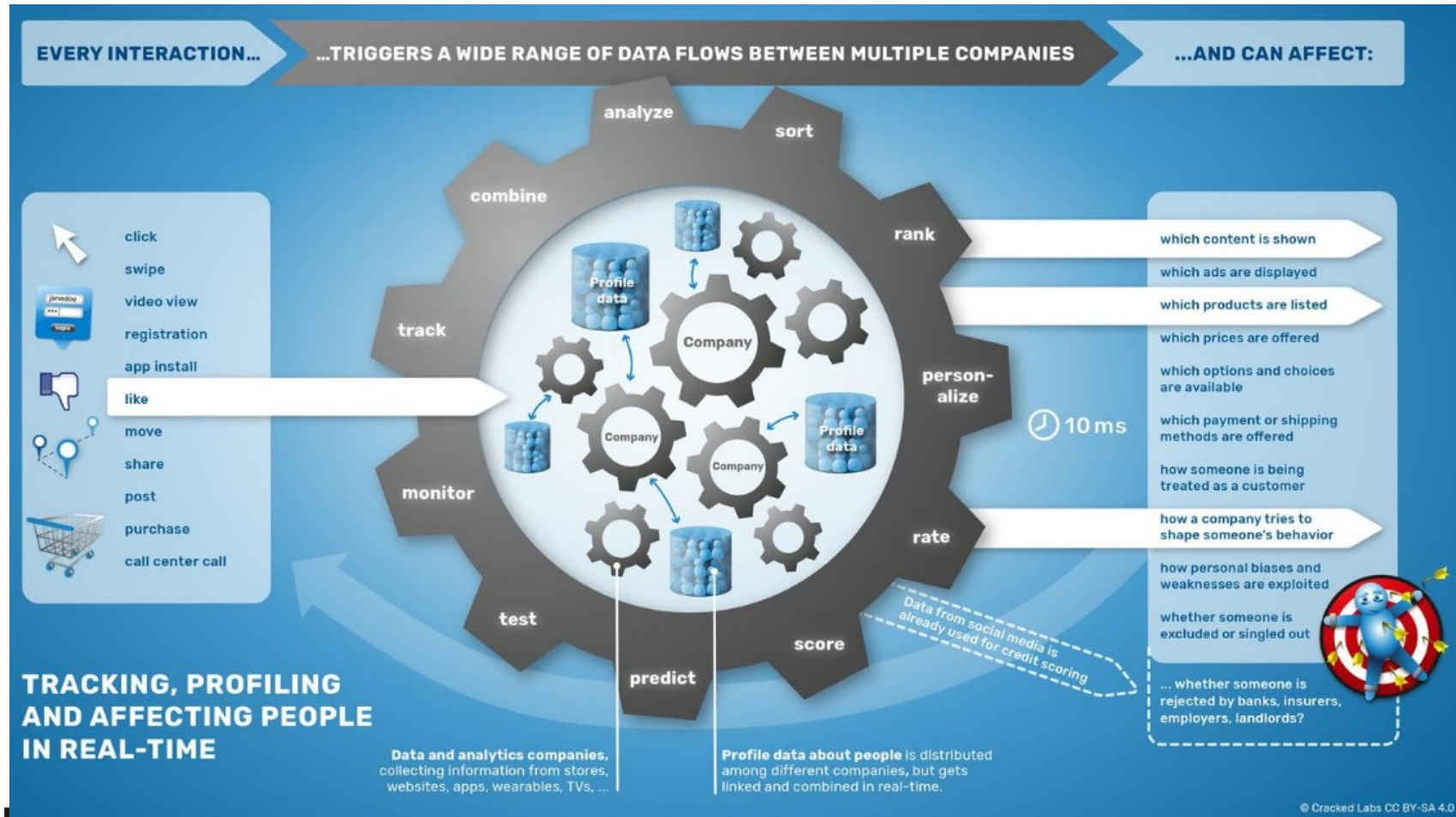
Market?

What's a Community Mobility Report?

Each Community Mobility Report is broken down by location and displays the change in visits to places like grocery stores and parks. [Learn more about the data.](#)



Smart devices are watching you

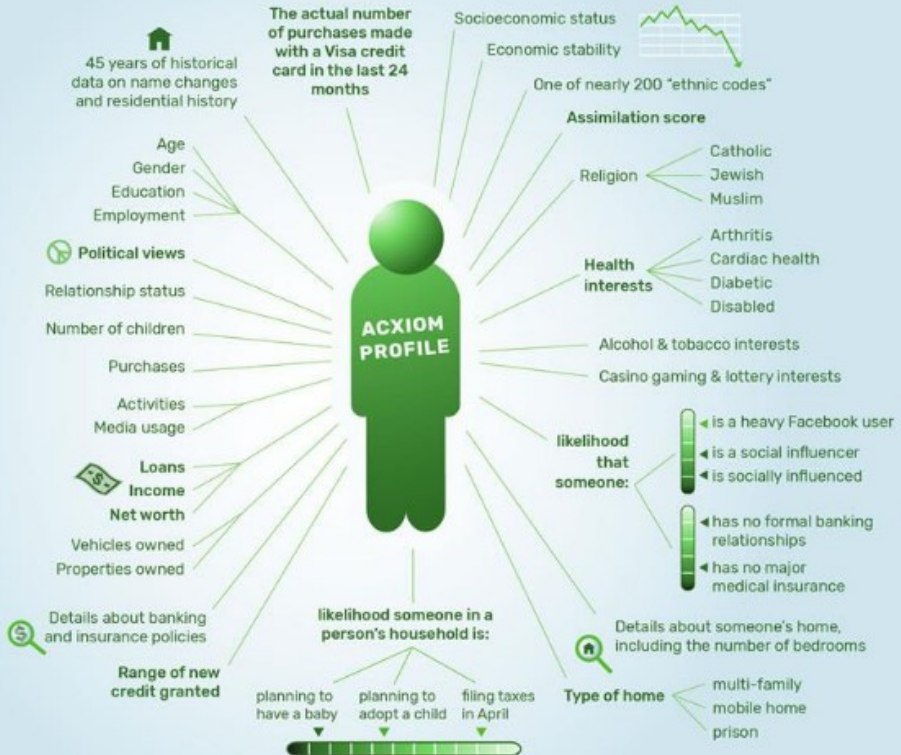


Then brokers aggregate everything...

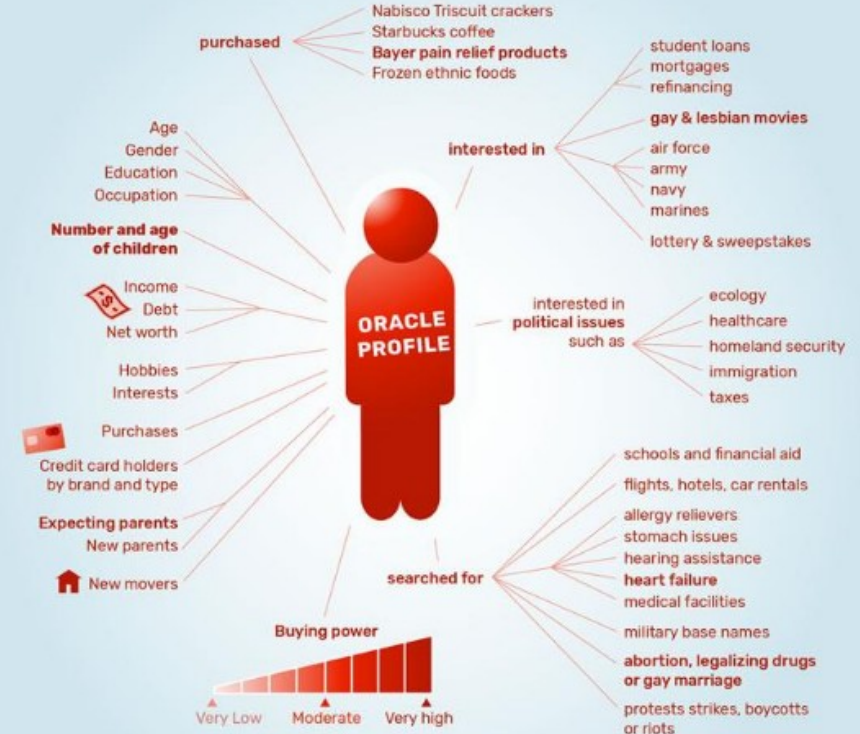
DATA BROKERS HAVE EXTENSIVE PROFILE INFORMATION ON ENTIRE POPULATIONS

Examples of data on consumers provided by Acxiom and Oracle

© Cracked Labs CC BY-SA 4.0



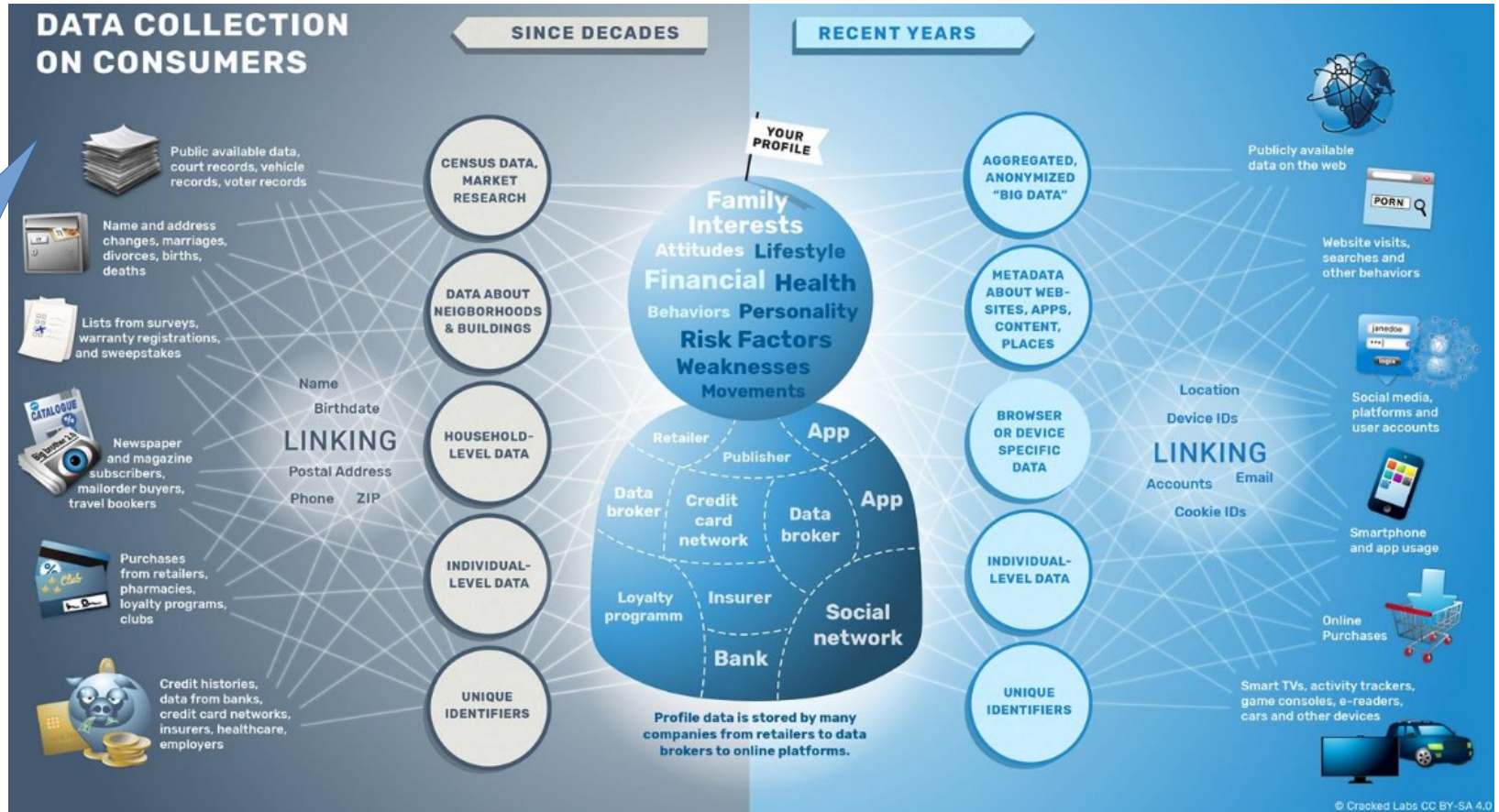
Acxiom provides up to 3,000 attributes and scores on 700 million people in the US, Europe, and other regions.



Oracle sorts people into thousands of categories and provides > 30,000 attributes on 2 billion consumer profiles

Including the past decades (!)

Acxiom, est. 1969 (!), already had files about 160 M americans in 2001



Suggested reading: « Corporate surveillance in everyday life »

Cracked Labs (Vienna, 2017) - <https://crackedlabs.org/en/corporate-surveillance>

Why does AI make things worse?

- More temptation to provide data
 - Generate abstracts from complex documents, translate or sub-title meetings, generate code for you, etc. (so you provide confidential and strategic content!)
- More dependency on oligopoly players
 - Bet on the infrastructure race!
- Negative externalities
 - Climate change, etc.

Is data capitalism a new feudalism?
(rent unprecedented since middle-age / Y. Varoufakis)

So, what can I do?

No more professional meetings / confidential docs on untrusted clouds !

- « Degooglize » your usages (and this includes GAFAM / BATX at large)
 - Open Street Map + apps, Fediverse (Mastodon, Pixelfed, PeerTube, etc.), alternate collaboration tools (NextCloud/Collabora, CryptPad, HedgeDoc, etc.) and video-conferencing (BBB, Jitsi), local (small or medium) email providers, own blogging/publication/hosting chain (WordPress or alternatives), Linux, etc.
- Host your own LLM (or rent it at a local cloud operator)
 - Also think of not using AI whenever possible!
- Go private
 - Signal / Element (Matrix), Tor, Degooglized phones, etc.
- Prefer open source / open data
 - Auditable, no lock-in, (often) self-deployable
- Interoperability / decentralization is key
 - No central storage: split data everywhere!
- Be part of the play!
 - fund/donate, use, report bugs, contribute, advocate, etc.



When legally forced to provide information to government or law enforcement agencies, we'll disclose the transcripts of that communication here.

Signal disclosing all subpoena transcripts (and they have nothing!)

Search warrants for Signal user data, Santa Clara County

08 Aug 2024

Because everything in Signal is end-to-end encrypted by default, the broad set of personal information that is typically easy to retrieve in other apps simply doesn't exist on Signal's servers.

[Read more...](#)

MLAT order from Luxembourg for Signal user data

02 Nov 2021

Signal still knows nothing about you, but the government still continues to ask us if we do.

[Read more...](#)

Grand jury subpoena for Signal user data, Central District of California (again!)

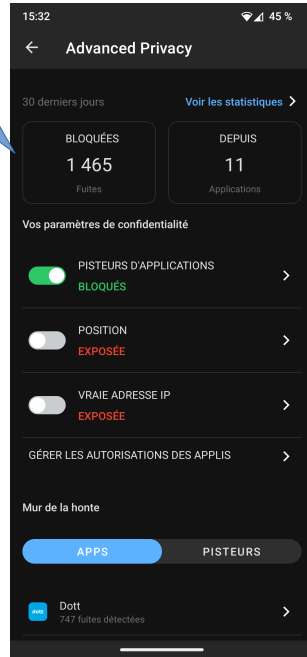
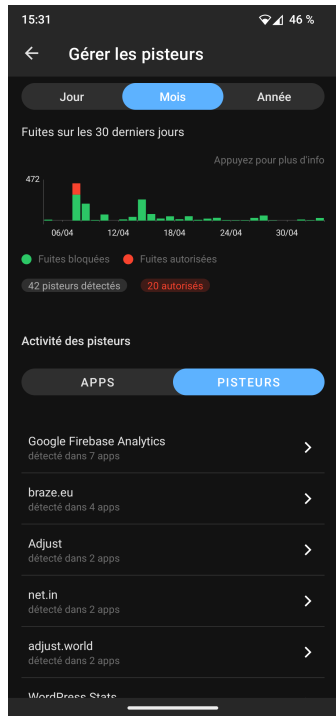
FOSS, a 2-sided coin

- Android is open source, OpenHarmony as well
 - Required for trust (by people and regulators)
 - More efficient... even to mine your data!
 - But for sovereignty as well (unlock blockade, etc.)
- Open source allows alternatives (and civil rights/privacy)
 - Android forks (LineageOS, /e/, etc.)
 - Linux-based (Ubuntu Touch)
 - Commons based on public goods, decentralized infrastructure



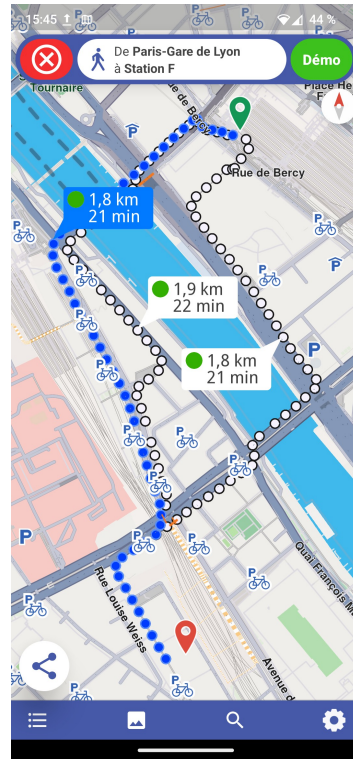
Samples from the /e/ ecosystem

1465 trackers blocked this month on my phone

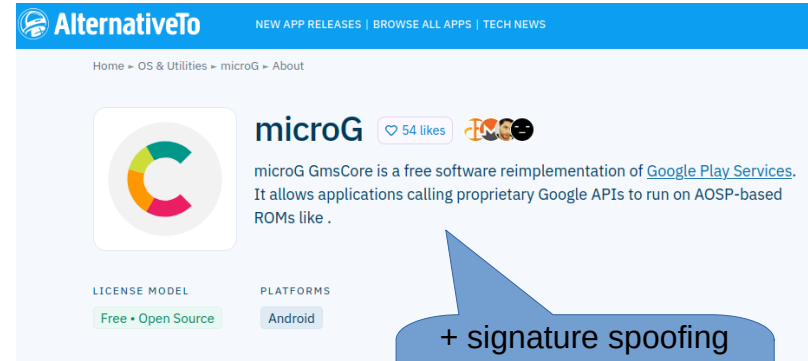


Did you agree on these trackers? Not me!

Maps without « Maps » (OSM instead)



And a « fake » Google Play (sic) (+ AppStore also includes F-Droid)



+ signature spoofing (supported by /e/ and others including LineageOS)

Nurturing the ecosystem for good?

- The answer to **market failure** and **dystopian runaway technology** lies in **collective action** and **public investment**

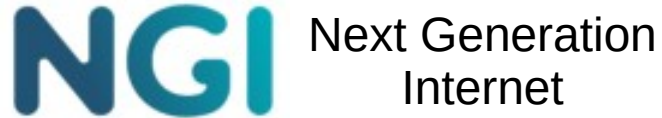
(NLnet / NGI0 Commons Fund)



- A European answer: cascade funding
 - Make funding application as easy as filling a form
 - Focus on FOSS, digital commons, privacy, etc.
 - Small grants (1 to 3 person/year)
 - Give control to non-profit foundations and/or academics



Most efficient Horizon funding ever?



- 1.200 projets / 6 years
 - Average ~ 80 kEUR
 - Unprecedented outcomes
- Cascade funding of FOSS community
 - Focus on sovereignty, civil rights, privacy, etc.

ActivityPub, BigBlueButton, **Cryptpad**, **Ie/OS**, F-Droid, Jitsi, LibreOffice, **Mastodon**, Matrix, NextCloud, **Open Food Facts**, OpenPGP, Open Street Map, Peertube, Tor, Thunderbird, Wireguard, Wordpress...

But now threatened by lobbyists action and political shift



Building a new story?

- Alternative to the « Unicorn »!
 - Other success stories people can identify themselves to (like Open Street Map or Mastodon)
- Towards a global « social economy »
 - No more walls btw business, so-called « social economy », academics, public sector and civil society
- **Stories shape reality** (not the other way round)

Thanks for your attention!



- Now you can apply to NGI Zero Commons Fund



<https://nlnet.nl/commonsfund/>

See
You
(very)
Soon
?

- Meet OW2 at OW2con'26
Paris, June 9/10 – ow2con.org
 - or at AlpOSS(.fr) Feb. 17 (French speaking)

15:00

SIDE EVENT | CRANE HALL BOF

BOF

Funding your project with NGI Zero Commons Fund

All you may wish to know about NGI, its funding opportunities and community.

Where: [Crane Hall](#)
Duration: 40 mins