

User Privacy In the World of 3 Billion Snaps Per Day

Abstract:

Snapchat takes user privacy seriously. The ephemeral nature of disappearing snaps and messages, inability to see your friends' friends, "For My Eyes Only" option, no permanent public content searchable for years and other privacy features set Snapchat apart from other online social platforms. It is all about fleeting conversations and private memories. Snapchat started with a vision of private communication but requires constant and deliberate focus to keep it that way. Our Privacy by Design program ensures that best privacy practices are followed across the whole Snapchat ecosystem. We are keen to adopt time-tested privacy solutions, while working hard to push the bounds by developing and promoting recent or novel privacy technologies. We will give an overview of our efforts ranging from differentially-private analytics reporting to on-device (federated) machine learning and discuss challenges and successes of usable privacy at Snapchat.

Vasyl Pihur's Bio:

I received my PhD in Biostatistics from University of Louisville in 2009. Thinking that academic career is ahead of me, I took a joint post-doctoral appointment between Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and their Biostatistics department to work on "gene hunting" for hypertension and autism. Two years later, I was doing data science work for Youtube. I was not ready to give up my research dreams quite yet and transferred to a privacy research group at Google. While there, we published two Rappor papers and implemented the first differentially-private data collection in the tech industry. I joined Snapchat in the beginning of 2017 and currently lead a data privacy team responsible for technical privacy solutions.