Privacy Violations in Crowd Work

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Crowd Work

Crowdsourcing obtains contributions to tasks from an undefined pool of people (crowd workers)
Our Research

What are people’s privacy experiences in crowd work?

We chose Mechanical Turk (MTurk) as a case study

We surveyed 435 MTurk workers around the world
Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk)
Privacy Violations

Information collection
Information processing
Information dissemination
Invasion
Deceptive practices
“To participate in the task, I had to upload a picture of my health insurance card. The purpose of the study was to find out what people hated about having or getting a health insurance. But I feel like I had to give up very sensitive information.”
“The requester asked you to take a series of photos of yourself doing different tasks, like smoking a cigarette, sweeping etc. I did not think too much about it and completed the task. Six months later, I heard that the requester was using these photos in some type of art exhibit. I felt violated and lied to. I hated having my picture out there.”
“It’s very usual they ask you too for your e-mail. Maybe they will never use it, but I don’t know...they are a company, and we know company can earn money sharing private information, as the emails are.”
Invasion

“I regretted when I started to realize it was probably some creep who wanted pictures of women. Not knowing who got my picture and my address is very scary. They could be stalking me or trying to find me.”
Deceptive Practices

“Requesters will put up jobs that are actually phishing. So when workers click, they get to a fake log-in screen and end up having their account and linked payment account compromised.”
Human Flesh Search

Find contact information of Founder or CEO
Person name: Arsham H
Job Title: VP
Company name: Corp Strategy
Location: Universal Electronics Inc., Santa Ana, CA

Tips for Finding all information
1. Typically you can go to LinkedIn and search the Person based on Job title and company name and get email address;
2. Go to the Person's website and their resume/online presence.
Install Software
Transcribe Sensitive Information
Implications for Design & Policy

Tools to help workers detect privacy threats
Tools to help requesters convey data practices
Best practices or rules
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“Our Privacy Needs to be Protected at All Costs”: Crowd Workers’ Privacy Experiences on Amazon Mechanical Turk. CSCW 2018.