

Tech Tips And Tricks

The Click That Gives You Control Over Online Ads

(NAPS)—If you use the Internet through a computer or mobile device, you may wonder why you see certain ads. For example, why do you get an ad offering a discount on a new camera after you visit a camera review site or one for hotels as soon as you start planning a trip?

In some ways, the process is similar to the customized paper coupons you get when you check out at the grocery store. In both cases, computers make predictions about the types of promotions that might interest certain groups of customers, such as a toothbrush offer for people buying toothpaste, and those promotions or ads are shown to the people most likely to be interested in them.

In the case of online advertising, some of the predictions are based on data collected from websites or apps that help identify interests for those users, such as sports, movies, cameras or travel. That type of advertising is called “interest-based advertising,” or IBA for short.

Most people find that type of advertising relevant and helpful and it provides a tremendous value as IBA and other digital advertising help fund the thousands of free websites, services and apps that people use every day, including e-mail, news, videos, social media, photos, maps and search.

In fact, a recent study found that Americans assign a value of nearly \$1,200 per year to the free ad-supported services and content available to them on their computers and mobile devices. A study also showed that users click on interest-based ads twice as often as regular ads.

For people who would prefer not to get IBA ads, however, there’s a simple trick that gives you control over the types of online ads you see: Click the blue triangle.

In the corner of nearly every IBA ad, you should see a little blue triangle, sometimes along with the words “AdChoices” or “Your AdChoices.” That triangle is the YourAdChoices icon and it’s the gateway to trustworthy information and control over digital ads.

AdChoices 



A tiny blue triangle in online ads can offer more information on the ad and help control the types of ads you see.

Clicking on the icon will tell you more about the companies that brought you the ad on which it appeared and offers a way to turn off those companies’ and their ad partners’ ability to collect and use data for IBA advertising to you in future.

In addition, if you want to learn more or control your preferences for hundreds of companies at once, you can go to YourAdChoices.com, which serves as a kind of control panel for responsible companies engaged in IBA.

At that site, you can access a tool that performs a quick system check and shows you which companies are currently customizing ads for your browser. With a few clicks, you can opt out of receiving IBA ads from any of those companies or all of them at once.

As online activities move to mobile devices such as cell phones, there are also tools for the mobile world. You can set your mobile ad preferences in mobile browsers via the website and download the “AppChoices” app through YourAdChoices.com or any major app store, so you have information about and control over IBAs in apps, too.

Run by the Digital Advertising Alliance, a nonprofit self-regulatory program created and supported by the advertising industry, the YourAdChoices program has given millions of people the tools to control their online advertising experiences, while increasing their confidence in the advertisers who display the icon.