A Data Day

We rely on technology in our everyday life more than ever. It makes us more efficient and means that we can do more with less. The devices and services we use are getting smaller, smarter, and more connected than ever. The amount of personal data we give away to make them better is also growing.

Let's look at a data day of a person in a big city. Any person, maybe a person like you or me who always clicks "I agree". Let's start the day early, a smart alarm clock might come in handy. It can adapt to our changing habits, whereabouts, measure our sleep time, or even our movements. Let's skip our smart toothbrush, we're living in a fast moving world. Time to check the news! While we're reading mostly bad - and some good - news, the news app also reads our data. What we're interested in, when we read, where we read, and how often.

Feeling overwhelmed? Let's take a break and regain some energy. Some meditation should do it, there's an app for that too. While we're relaxing, the app is working. As they say, if you're not paying, you're the product. Our meditation generates valuable personal data that brings advertisers into our calm space.

We had to rush a bit, there's plenty of meetings waiting for us at work. Some of them are online, "hello, can you hear me?" Meeting platforms make their money like everyone else. They need some data too. All the usual stuff. Sometimes they record snippets of our voices, just to train their algorithms. Trying to get through the to do list, but nothing is as distracting as a meme. While we're looking at it, another profile grows. This time our guilty pleasures, or just what makes us laugh.

Time to take a break. Walking back from lunch we pop into a store. Shops are not what they used to be, now spaces watch us too. Cameras check what we're doing, but also sometimes they recognise us or even track our emotions. Knowing what we like helps some brands sell us more. What. Did I consent to that?

Today we finish early. Need to get some exercise. Trying out the new fitness tracker. How far did we run? And how was our heart beat? Don't think about the data that may end up with our health insurance company. That may raise our heart beat too much.

What a day! Time to get some food. No time to cook! Luckily with our data day we get our food quickly through a delivery app. They get more data to munch on too, not only checking what food we're into, but also when we eat, where, with whom, how often, and how much we spend.

Time to unload and slow down. Let's listen to some music. Ask the smart speaker to play some tunes. While relaxing, our data does not. The smart DJ needs our data too, our actual voice and lots of personal information. Let's read about it in their terms and conditions, that might be relaxing too.

A smart phone or smart speaker might be good company, but real humans are too. What about a date for the weekend? No problem, this has also been made easy. Like choosing food, we can browse through dates and yes, the deal is the same, the platform will also collect data. On a dating site, some of this might be sensitive, or even very very private.

Before checking out for the day, let's also pre-order some groceries. It's not just the store who collects our data, but also our payment company. They can help out with the chores too, like making suggestions about who we want to give our money to. Other stores, services, even our friends and family.

What a day! What a data day. Before we get cosy in our beds, we may just want to adjust the smart thermostat to make it cosier. Don't worry, they don't collect any data. Why would they? However, maybe they do. Because why wouldn't they? Our 24 hours together is almost over. Now we are logging out of this journey, it's time to take your own. What does your personal data day look like?