



## Digital Footprint

### Description

#### Theme:

- In the present times, Digital footprint is more important now than ever before. It can affect our career, relationships and most importantly reputation.

#### What is 'Digital Footprint':

- Digital Footprint is a record of our information online. There are two types of digital footprints. One is the active digital footprint and another one is the passive digital footprint.
  - An active digital footprint is what we post online intentionally. For example, our social media posts create an active digital footprint.
  - A passive digital footprint is a piece of information we leave on the internet unintentionally. Examples of passive digital footprints are our browsing history, our location, online purchases history, IP address etc.

#### How can our digital footprints affect our lives:

- In the present times, employers are checking the digital footprints of job applicants before hiring them. So, it is very important to have a positive digital presence. For example, if you troll anyone, that will be added to your digital footprint and will negatively affect your job opportunities. And if you stand up for any cyberbullying victim, it can create a positive digital presence.
- Our digital footprints can influence what other people think of us. It can affect our online reputation either positively or negatively. Now, online reputation is as important as offline reputation.
- It can also lead to identity theft if our personal data falls into wrong hands. Criminals can stalk and gather data about you and can misuse that information to impersonate you. Criminals can use it to communicate with your contacts by pretending to be you for many purposes including taking money, affecting your reputation etc.

- It can also be misused to hack your accounts by forming answers to security questions such as where you studied, where you were born etc.
- Even emails and messages we send are not completely private. With data breaches, they can be extracted by the wrong people. It can be misused to affect our reputation.
- Based on our browsing history, online purchases, and other data we create online, we are targeted with advertisements.
- Some people go anonymous and troll people. But that comment can be traced back to their IP address and as a result, their offline reputation will be negatively affected.

### How to manage digital footprint:

- We can google ourselves with our name to check the search results. We can even create google alerts to get a notification if any new content is created on our name. If we do not like any content, we can delete it if it is created by us, otherwise, we can ask the content owner to delete that particular information. Erasing and managing digital footprints can help us in improving our reputation.
- Prevention is better than cure. So, it is important to be cautious about what we share online. It is better not to share personal information more than necessary. A positive digital presence helps us in building a good reputation.

### Conclusion:

It is important to be cautious about what we share online. A positive digital presence, which does not give away too much personal information can help us in building a good reputation.

### Your Turn...

What are your thoughts on digital footprint? Are you concerned about the search results of your name? Join the group discussion by expressing your point of view through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

*Photo by [Ekaterina Belinskaya](#)*

### References:

- [Leaving a digital footprint](#)
  - [digital footprint](#)
  - [Your Digital Footprint: It's Bigger Than You Realize](#)
  - [Your digital footprints are more than a privacy risk – they could help hackers infiltrate computer networks](#)
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