

Not all data collection programs are spyware, as long as the user fully understands what data is being collected and with whom it is being shared. Tracking and reporting user information can help legitimate software vendors to improve their products or better support customers. For this reason, marketing firms often object to having their services called "spyware." The line between illegal spyware and legitimate data collection is often drawn at cookies, a well-known method of storing information about internet behavior on individuals' devices.