

**Privacy Perils in Technology for Today's Consumer: Global Positioning Systems, RFID, and the Store Loyalty Card Program**

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The rapid rate that technology is increasing in sophistication is faster than the average consumer has the time and the expertise to understand. Consumers view devices and programs such as RFID chips, store loyalty card programs, and Global Positioning Systems as advancements that can make life easier or more cost effective, but they may not comprehend the perils these technologies can have on their personal privacy.

Over the last few years, Global Positioning Systems have expanded to the consumer market and are fast becoming a common fixture in consumers lives through cellular phones, cars, boats, and various tracking devices. GPS use with online social networks, rental cars, insurance programs, and employer requirements are discussed.

Store loyalty programs are used to create a type of customer following in stores in which the person who has the store card receives special benefits, such as lower prices. While this program may seem appealing and innocent at first, one must delve deeper to realize the perils associated with such programs such as misuse of tracked information, discrimination against lower income consumers, and an unequal pricing system.

RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) chips are creating a new world where the purchases you make, the products you own, the size of clothing you wear, the places you travel, the food you eat, and the amount of money you currently have in your bank account become public knowledge to large corporations, public officials, and even your neighbor. Researchers help consumers educators to understand how this noteworthy technology is increasingly becoming one of the prime technologies that can be misused to infringe on consumer privacy.

Consumers loss of privacy may not always be of their own choice. Loss of privacy is often the result of a lack of awareness. Education on the perils of technological advancements to increase awareness is our best weapon against identity theft, anonymous surveillance, stalking, price gouging, discrimination, and privacy invasion.