

How data mining targets pregnant mothers

For me, like most potential parents, the first test I took was not genetic. Instead it was a simple pregnancy test.

Filled with anticipation, I bought 25 pregnancy tests from amazon in January. That's when things started to change. Not necessarily with my body, but with my data. Immediately my Amazon search results began to skew. This was hardly surprising.

We all expect the “recommendations for you” will shift based on past purchases.

The big change came in late March. It seemed the Internet knew I was pregnant before I could be sure myself. In my excited frenzy over seeing a faint, barely visible red line, I googled “pregnancy test accuracy.”

While I agonized over the results of the early pregnancy test, the Internet morphed around me, forming itself into a pregnancy paradise, offering pregnancy sites and baby products that followed me from news sites to blogs to online stores. Using tracking software, I found that with each site I visited more than a dozen data brokers followed me. Their alarm bells were ringing in response to my pregnancy related behavior.

From one of these targeted ads I registered on a popular pregnancy site, providing my due date and downloading an app, so that I could track the baby's growth in a weekly fruit comparison: from a blueberry to a papaya to a watermelon. While I fawned over the adorable update that my embryo was now the size of an orange seed, the company was selling my information to as many retailers as possible.

It was the beginning of my pregnancy but also the start of something else.

Read the full, original story: [Bump Tracker: Nine months of big data](#)