Twitter Thread by Martin Gundersen

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My Phone Was Spying on Me, so I Tracked Down the Surveillants

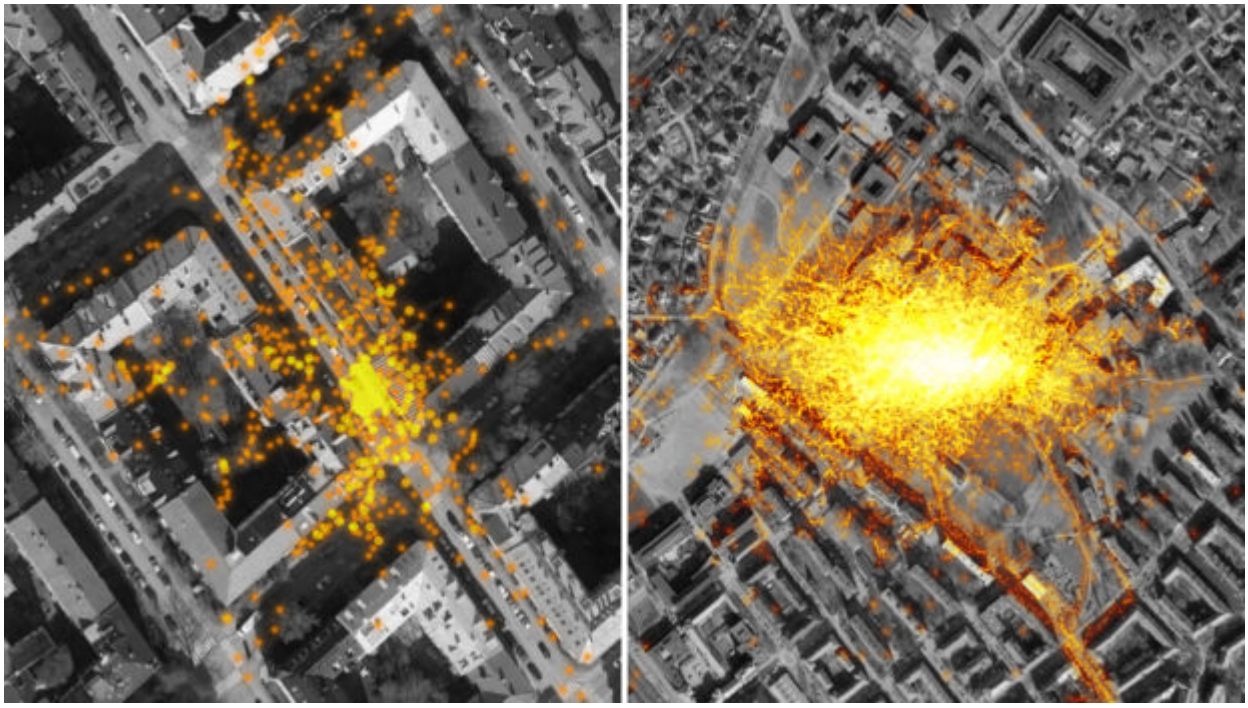
THREAD on the location data industry and how European personal data ended up at a U.S. government contractor.



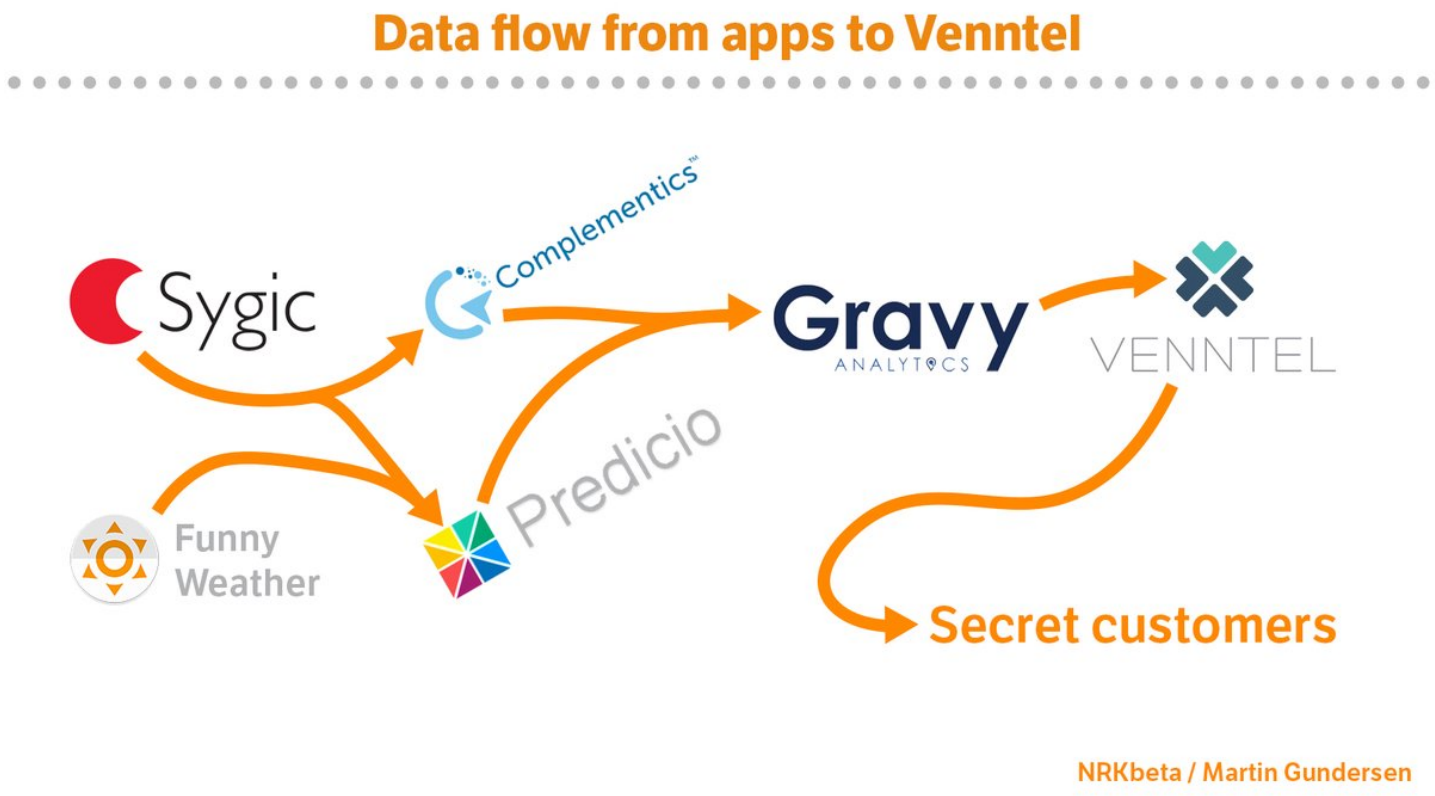
There are 160 apps on my phone. What they're actually doing, I don't know. So I decided to figure it out by using the power of the GDPR - or the more lame name of subject access requests (SAR).

Long story short – I got a lot of data on my movements. Actually more than 75.000 data points on my precise location.

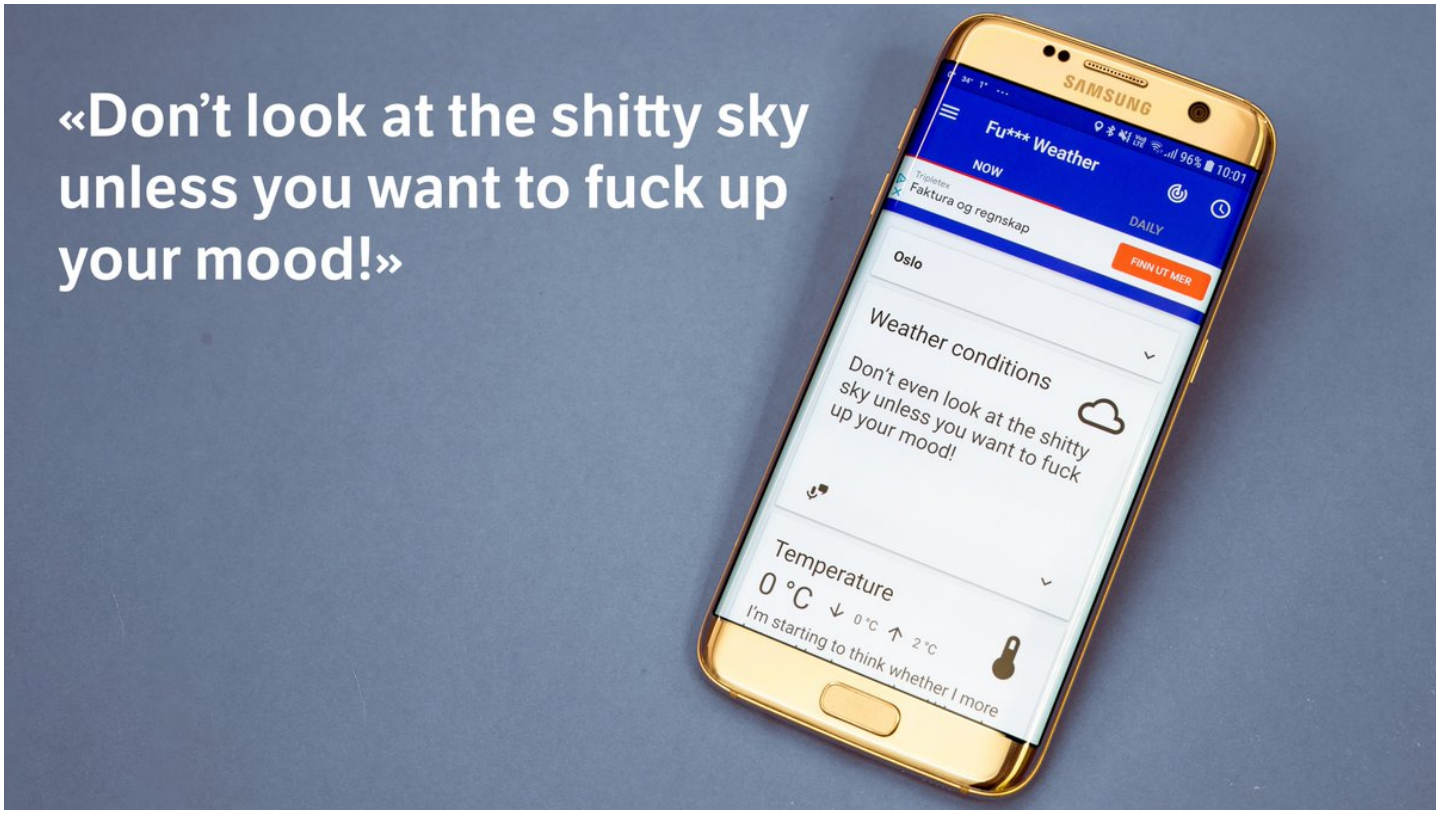
Home and work:



How: I designed an experiment where I installed a lot of apps on an Android phone. I then consented to sharing my location data. Then I turned the tables: By using SARs I stitch together the data flows from me to different companies. (Better graphics in article.)



The app Funny Weather appeared in the metadata provided by Venntel and Gravy Analytics. The data might have been shared through Predicio, but the company did not respond to any requests for an interview.



Complementics and Predicio sent my personal data to Gravy Analytics, a major data broker in the marketing business. This is according to the SAR from Gravy. Gravy did not respond to comment.

Venntel is a subsidiary of Gravy Analytics. Venntel has a lot of government contracts – CBP, ICE, IRS, FBI, DEA. What these agencies actually use the data for @ByronTau (WSJ) and @josephfcox (Motherboard) have a lot of good reporting on.

Venntel told me in a subject access request that my data was shared, but they did not provide to whom. When contacted later - they told me in a short statement that the data was not shared with ICE or CBP.

ENGLISH ARTICLE: https://t.co/PQOLHq5W1A

We cooperated with @josephfcox, who made this article with a US focus https://t.co/f4NSDckqao

In the article you will find statements from U.S. agencies and apps / companies.

Reaction to the reporting by @josephfcox https://t.co/qbwp42NY9v

> BREAKING: We\u2019re demanding the government turn over all records about the military\u2019s purchase and use of cell phone location data on Muslim app users.
>
> — ACLU (@ACLU) December 3, 2020