



# HEART/NSTA TRUST CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES UNIT




## Let's Talk...

# CAREER


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## Digital Footprints





You are basically correct Natalie. Whenever you use the internet, you leave behind a trail of information known as your digital footprint. A digital footprint grows in many ways, for example, when you post on social media, leave an online review or shop online.



Miss, anytime at all that we go on the internet, we leave a digital footprint? Even when we just check our email?

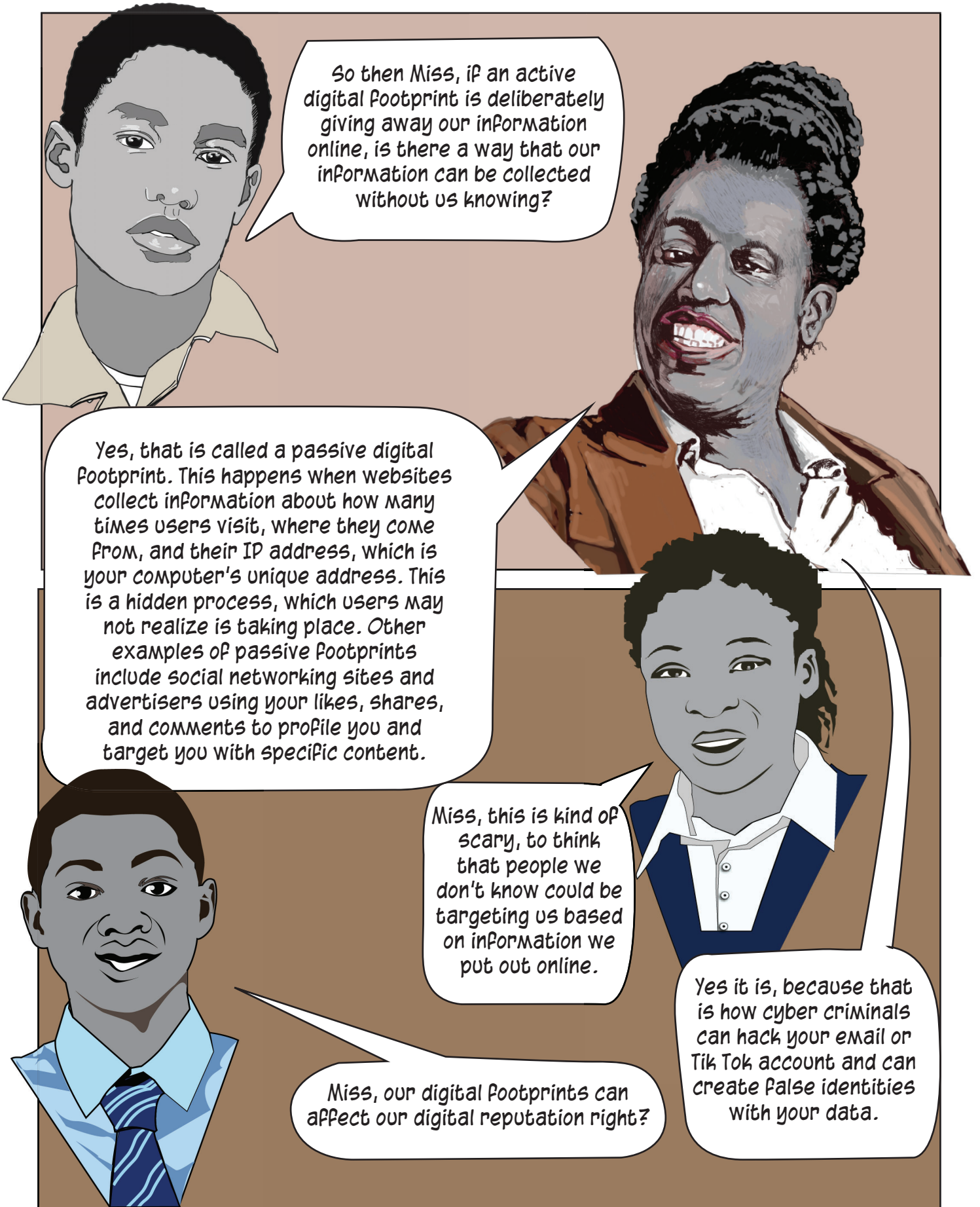
Yes, and guess what? We both actively and passively leave a digital footprint.



We do? How Miss?

Ok, so when you post or participate in any social media sites, or online games, or when you log on to a website using a registered username or profile, this is called an active digital footprint. It is also considered to be an active digital footprint when you complete an online form, or agree to accept cookies on your browser.





So then Miss, if an active digital footprint is deliberately giving away our information online, is there a way that our information can be collected without us knowing?

Yes, that is called a passive digital footprint. This happens when websites collect information about how many times users visit, where they come from, and their IP address, which is your computer's unique address. This is a hidden process, which users may not realize is taking place. Other examples of passive footprints include social networking sites and advertisers using your likes, shares, and comments to profile you and target you with specific content.

Miss, this is kind of scary, to think that people we don't know could be targeting us based on information we put out online.

Yes it is, because that is how cyber criminals can hack your email or Tik Tok account and can create false identities with your data.

Miss, our digital footprints can affect our digital reputation right?



It can. Remember that your digital reputation is just as important as your offline reputation. Digital Footprints are permanent and once the data is public— or even semipublic, as may be the case with Facebook posts— you have little control over how others will use it.

Yes Miss, just the other day I was reading that employers can check their potential employees' social media and posts online, before deciding to hire them. Colleges and universities can do the same for their prospective students before accepting them too.



That's right Kristen, that's a perfect example of why digital footprints matter.

We have to be very careful about what we post online then Miss.

You do!

Miss, how can we see our digital footprint?



Well, you can enter your name into search engines to see what comes up. It will give you an idea of what information about you is publicly available.



Is there any way to protect our digital footprint?

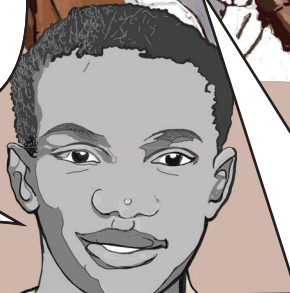


Yes, you can limit the amount of data you share online. Every time you provide your personal information to a company online, you widen your digital footprint, so before you submit that form, think about if you really need to do it. You can also double check your privacy settings especially on social media, to ensure you're ok with who can see your posts.



Yes guys, remember that on Facebook for example, you can limit posts to friends and make customized lists of people who can see certain posts.

This was a good class Miss! Very useful information.



I'm glad you enjoyed it. Now, go and check your digital footprint and tell me what you find next class.

