SIMMER

Server-side Tracking

Myth of the “cookieless” future

from **@Team_Simmer**
for **#FoS22**

Simo Ahava

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Definitions:
“Regular” tagging

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“Regular” tagging

“Regular” tagging

HTTP Request

HTTP Response

“Regular” tagging

HTTP Request

Reliant on 3P CDN

Privileged access

Cross-site tracking

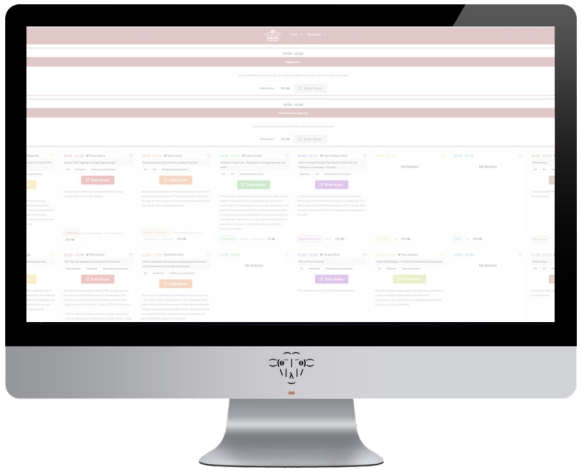
Data transfer laws

PII leaks / XSS vectors

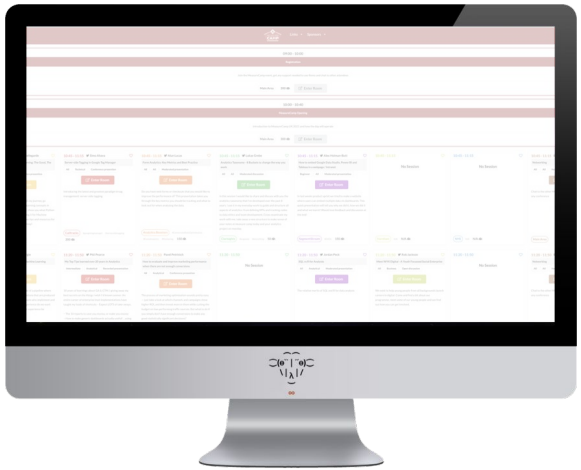
HTTP Response

Definitions:
Server-side tagging

Server-side tagging

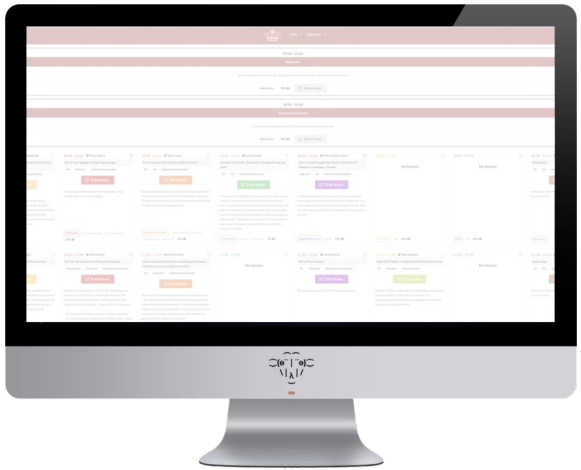


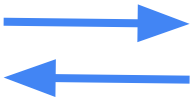
Server-side tagging



Server *container*

Server-side tagging





Server *container*

Hit validation

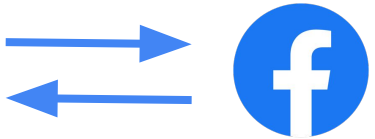
Stream consolidation

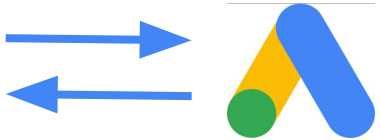
Anonymization

Data flow control

Client-side perf

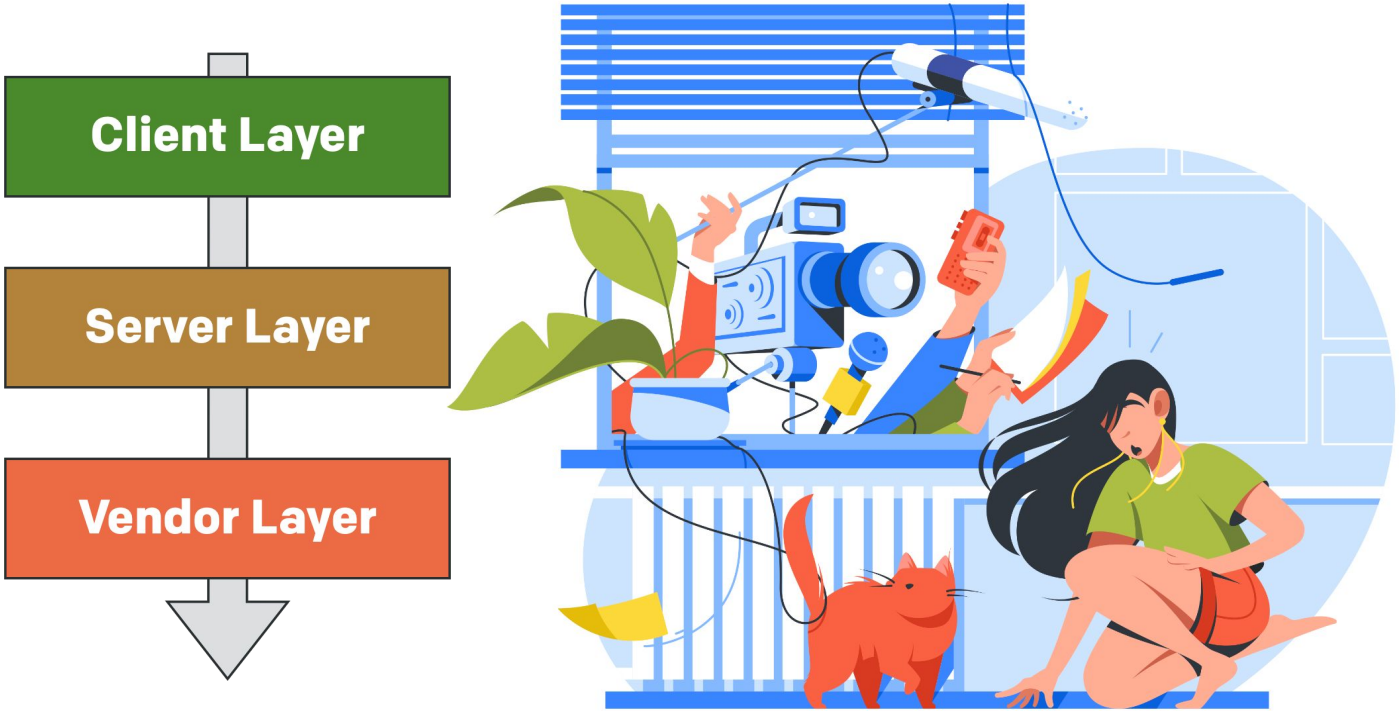
Tracking protection
protection



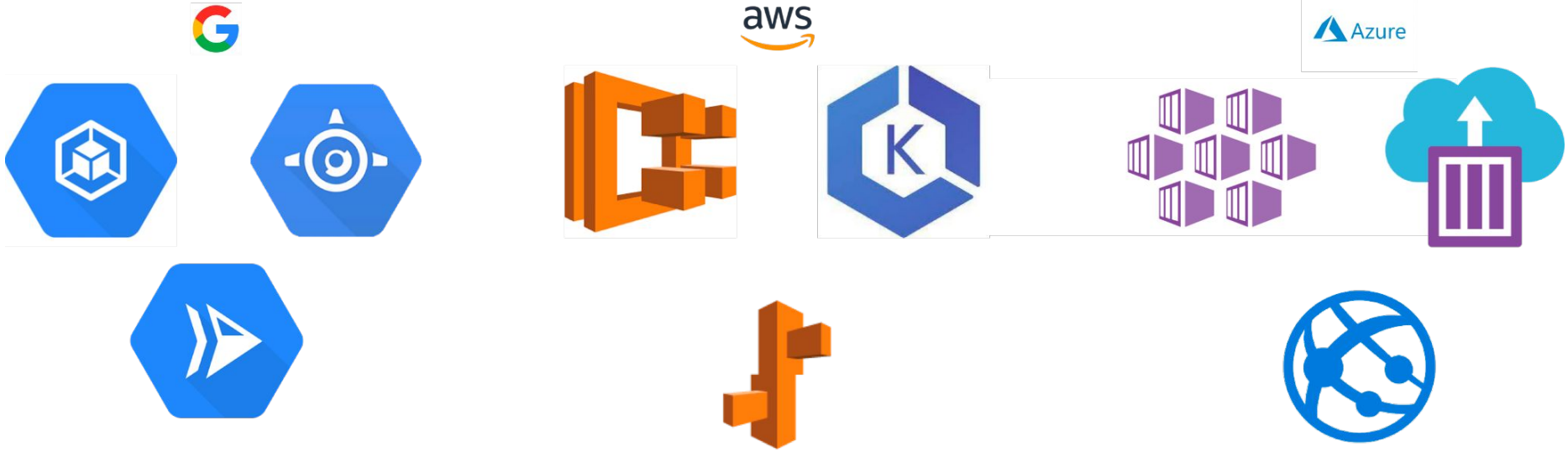


What **happens** in the server,
stays in the server.

Server-side gives organizations **full control** over the upstream data flows and allows them to **selectively validate** and **enrich** the data that is shipped to vendors.

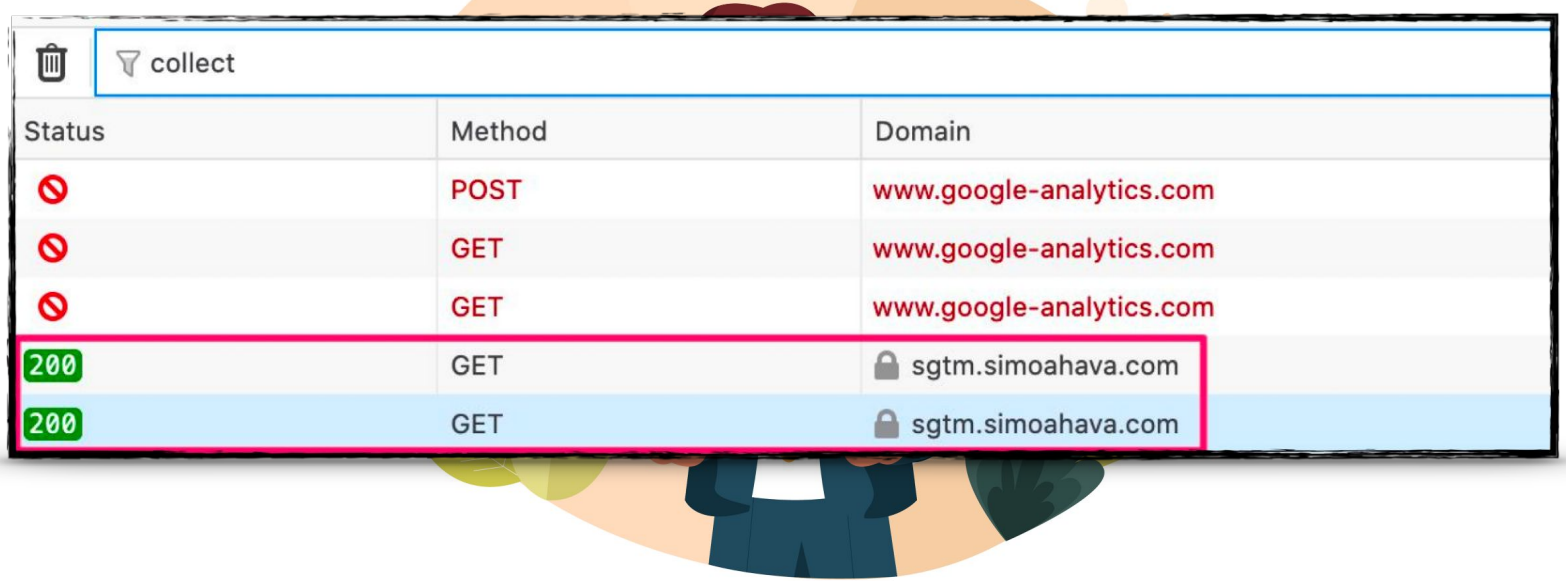


Controls for ***full anonymization*** of the data stream

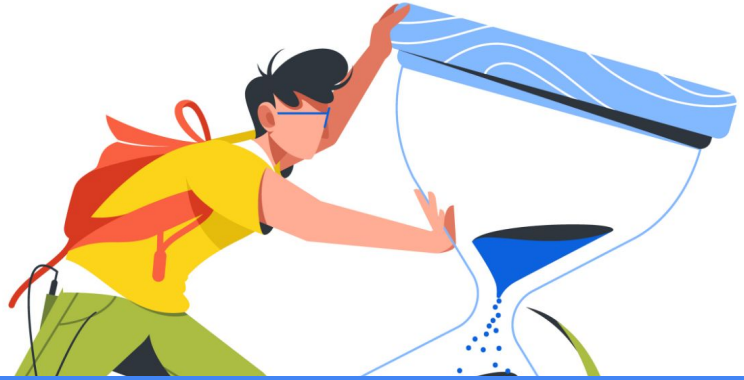


Portable solution, runs on **Docker**

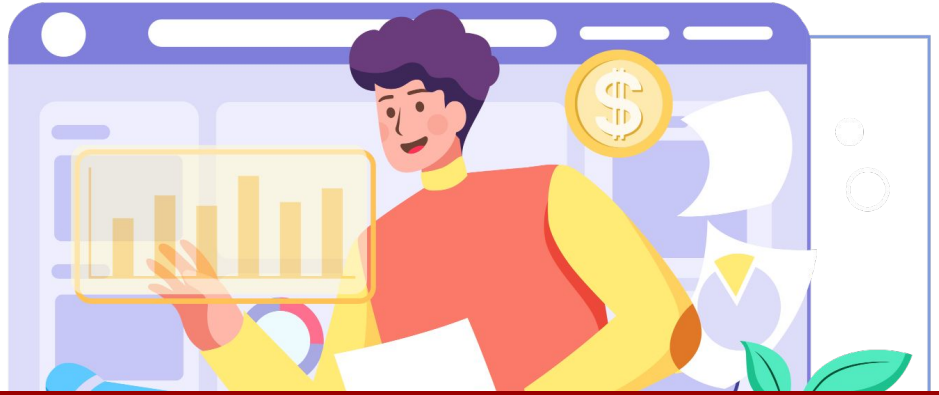
Server-side lets organizations **hide and manipulate** the data streams in ways that might violate the **trust** of the user and the **legal bases** for processing their (personal) data.



Opaque data collection



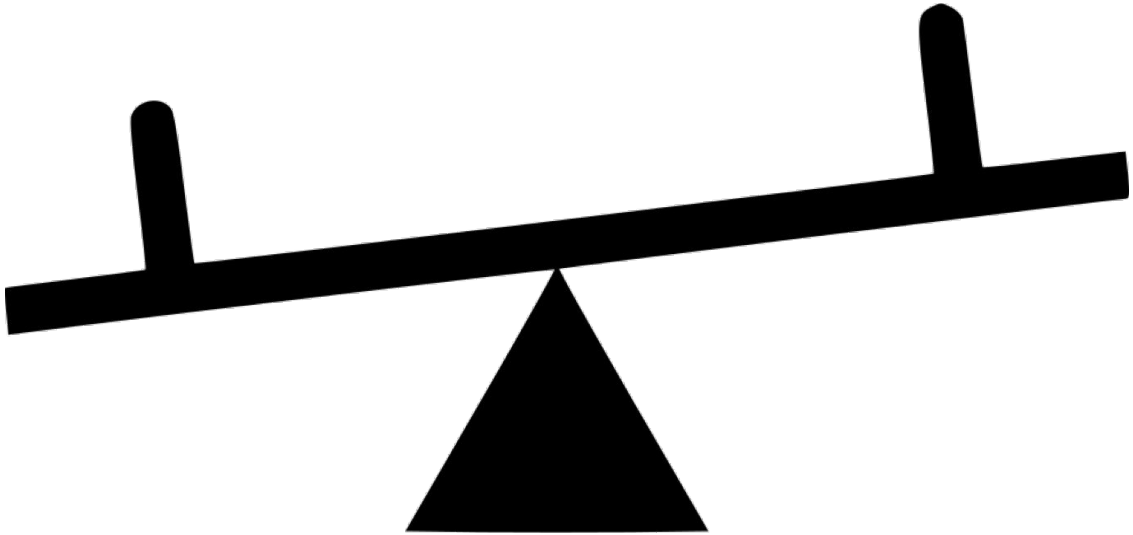
Server-side can have amazing **client-side performance** benefits, as heavy, expensive third-party JavaScript libraries and pixel requests **can be offloaded** to the server.



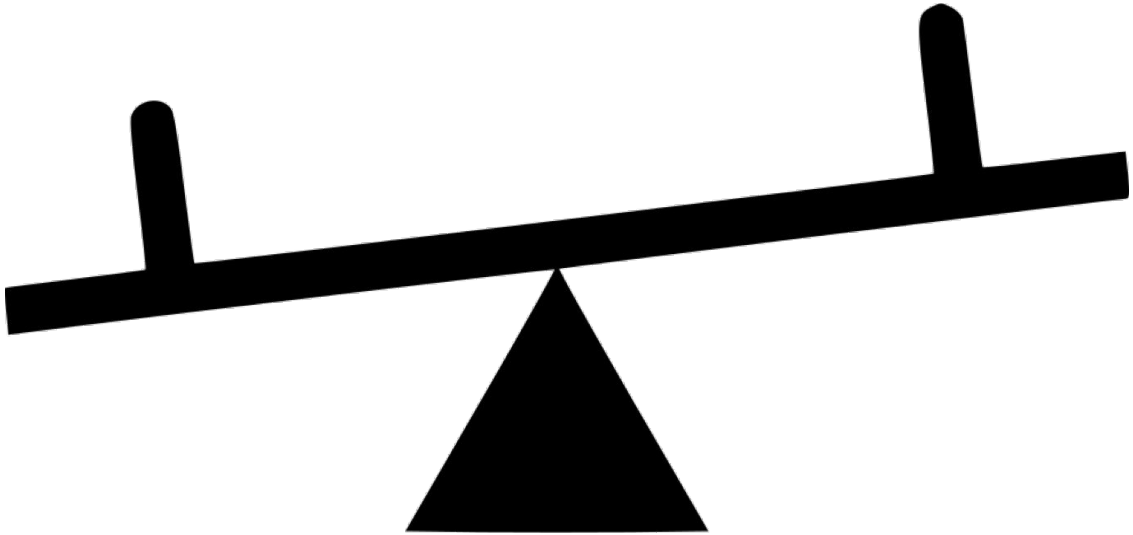
Server-side lacks proper controls for allowing **validation** and **auditing** of data flows from the **client**. Only those with access to the server can **report** what is being done.

Server-side lets you move to a **first-party only** setup, where user data cannot be **harvested** by vendors using **third-party cookies** or **unchecked** scripts.

Server-side might tempt companies to send **(“hashed”) identifying bits** to vendors due to lack of proper **matching signals** using just (pseudonymous) identifiers.



Server-side is a paradigm for **companies** to gain more **control** over what data **vendors can process** from the companies' customers.



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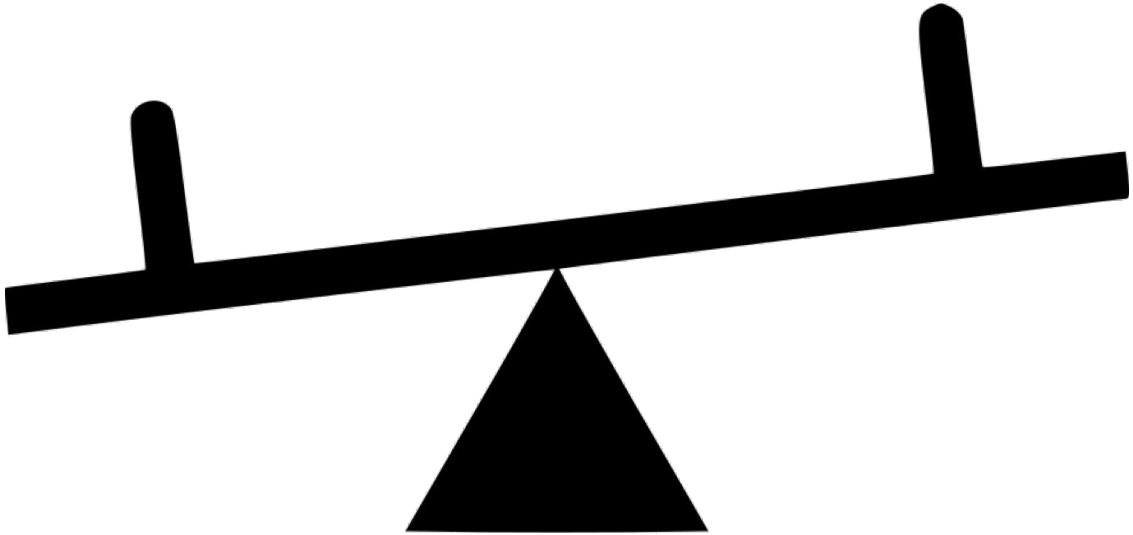

By moving the data flows **away** from the **client**, users/customers lose **agency** and control over their data.

Summa summarum…

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- **Is** a great way to reduce client-side bloat and introduce data enrichment at scale
- **Should not** be considered a way to circumvent consent and ad blockers, or to erode user agency
- **Is not** a silver bullet that helps solve all data-related issues in 2022; it's a *surgical tool*, not a *panacea*
- **Should be** something that all companies working with client-side data investigate and research for compatibility with their own data practices

Further reading

Resources…

My articles:
https://www.simoahava.com/tags/server-side-tagging/

Official documentation:
https://developers.google.com/tag-platform/tag-manager/server-side

Overview video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OGbOh216mU

Course on the Simmer platform:
https://www.teamsimmer.com/courses/server-side-tagging/

```
log(`Thank you ${yourName}`)
```

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