



SIMMER

Server-side Tagging

Deliverance Or Distraction?

Digital Analytics Summit
Amsterdam, 13 Oct 2022



Simo Ahava



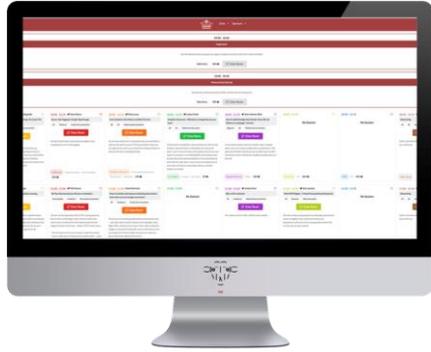
Partner, Co-founder, **8-bit-sheep** and **Simmer**

Google Developer Expert, **Google Analytics**

Blogger, developer, **www.simoahava.com**

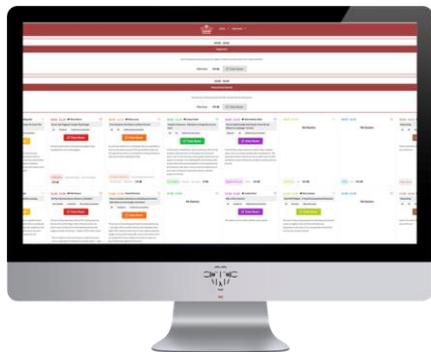
Twitter-er, **@SimoAhava**

Curator, **www.cookiestatus.com**



“Regular” tagging





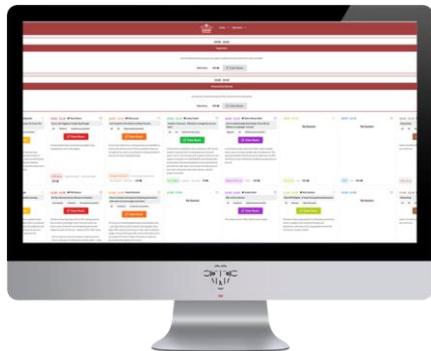
“Regular” tagging

HTTP requests



HTTP responses





“Regular” tagging

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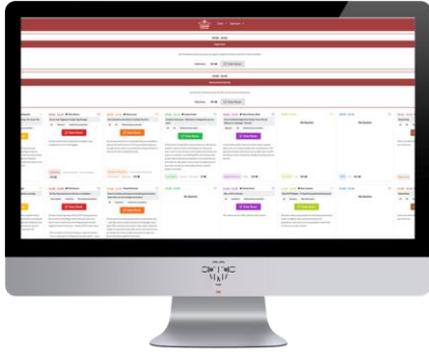


CDNs
Cookie stores
Cross-site tracking
Data transfer laws
PII leaks
XSS attacks



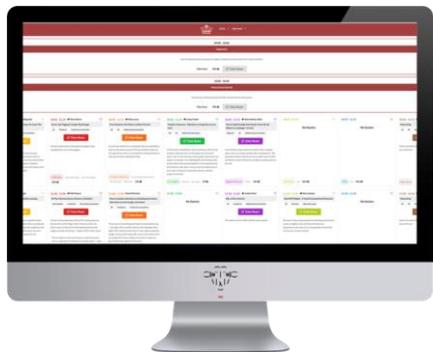
HTTP responses





Server-side tagging





Server-side tagging



Server container

Hit validation

Stream consolidation

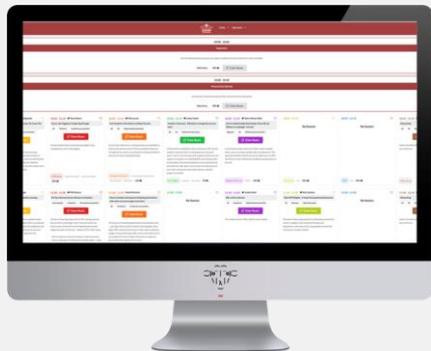
Anonymization

Data enrichment

Client-side perf

Tracking protection...protection





“Regular” tagging

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CONTROL

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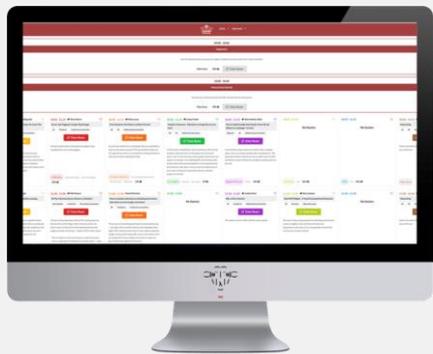


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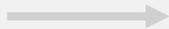
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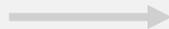
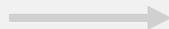
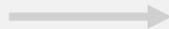
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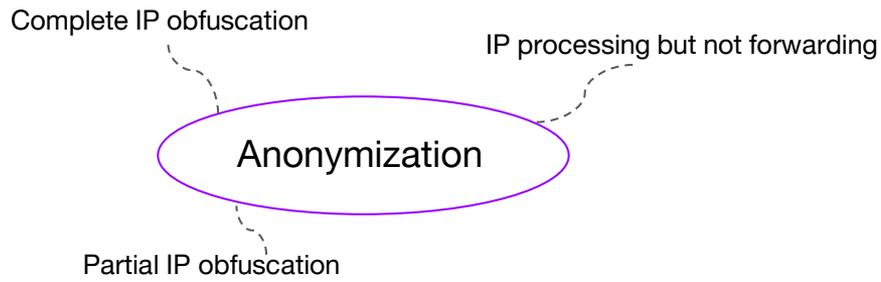
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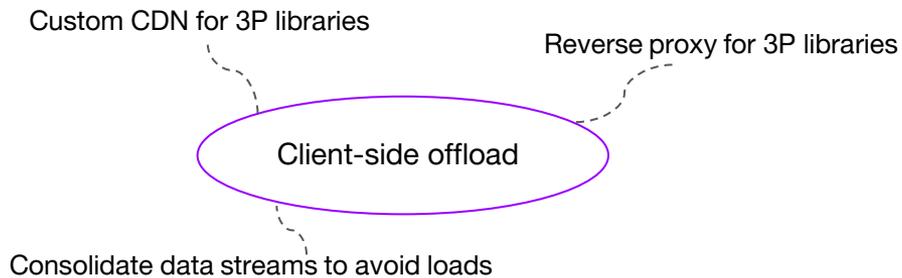
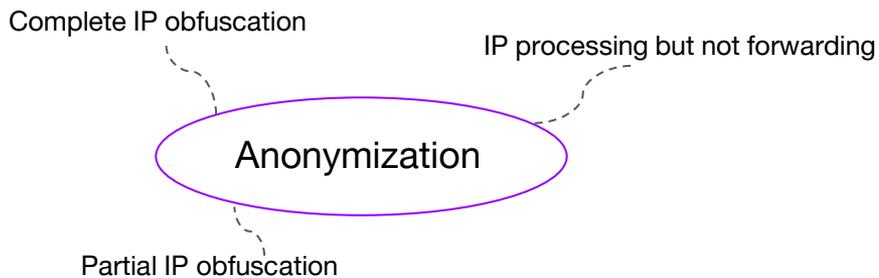
Tracking protection...protection

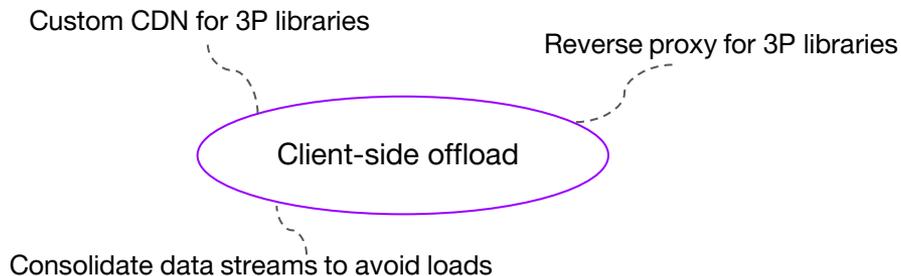
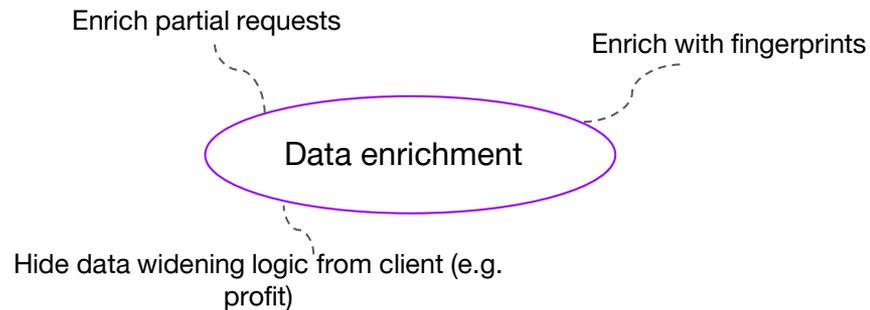
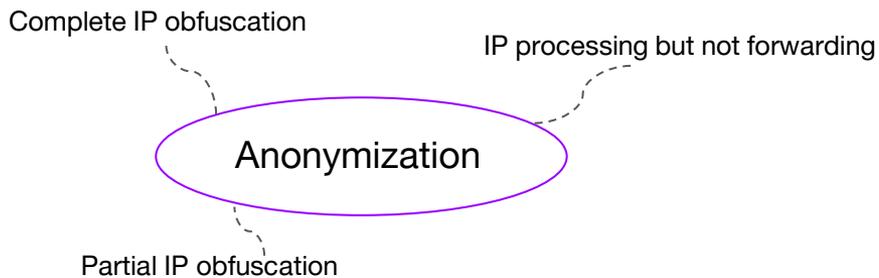
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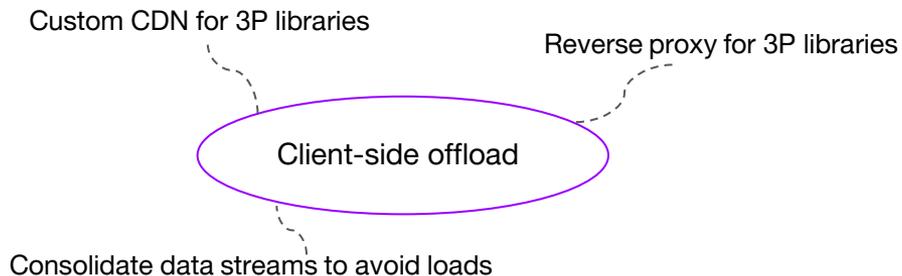
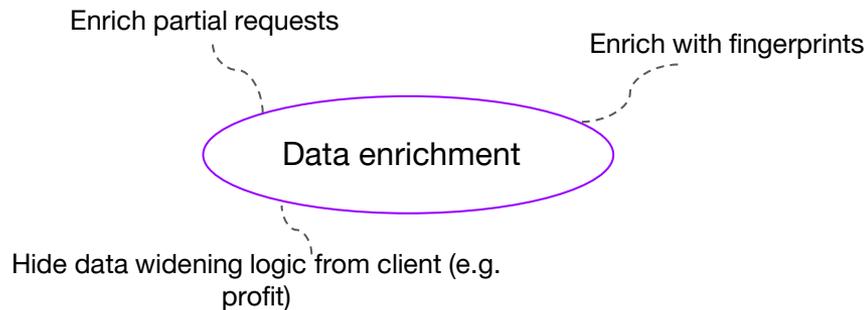
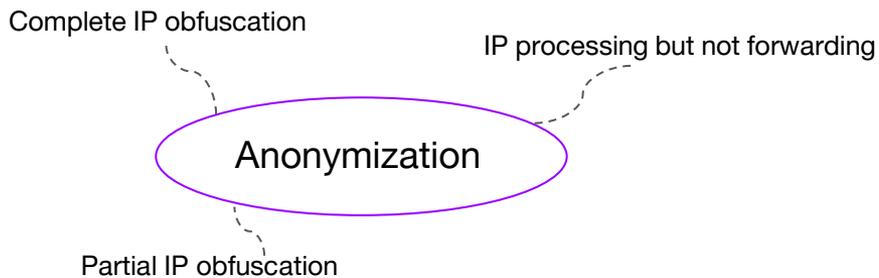


Benefits and concerns alike









What happens in the server,
stays in the server



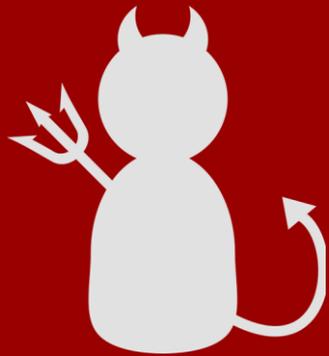
Server-side gives organizations **full control** of the upstream data flows, and allows them to **selectively validate** and **enrich** the data that is shipped to vendors.



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 the data.



Server-side can have amazing **client-side performance** benefits, as heavy, expensive third-party JavaScript libraries and pixel requests **no longer need to be loaded**.



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.

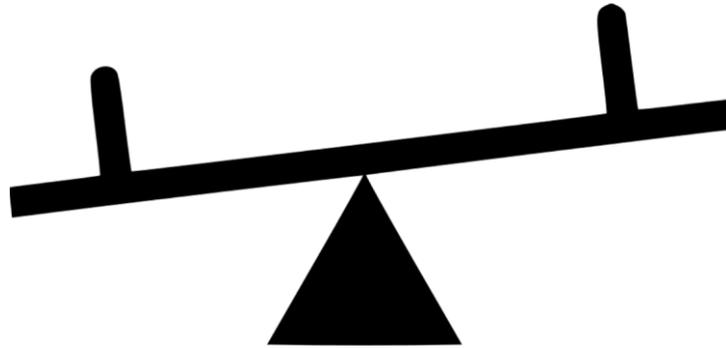


Server-side lets you move to a **first-party only** setup, where user data cannot be **harvested** by vendors using **third-party cookies** or **unchecked scripts**.

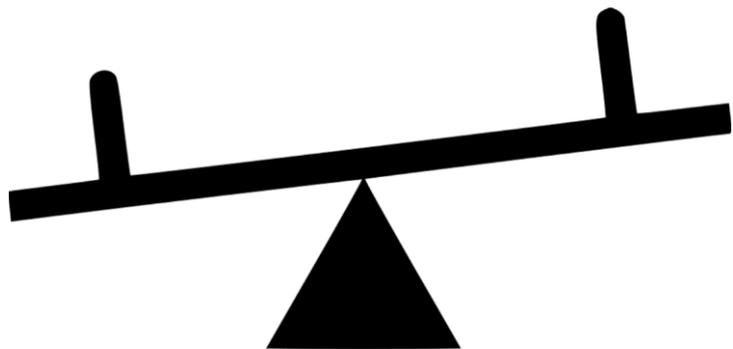


Server-side might tempt companies to send **(hashed) identifying bits** to vendors due to lack of proper **matching signals** using just (pseudonymous) identifiers.

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

Summa summarum...

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- **Should not** be considered a way to circumvent consent, 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

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