Internet Cookies

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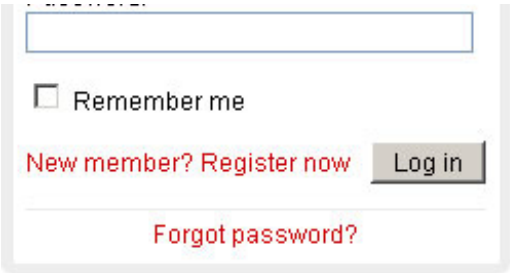
Jargon Buster - Cookies

Sadly, we're not talking about Chocolate Chip or Fruit Shortcake here.... No, the cookies we're going to talk about are Internet Cookies or Computer Cookies or more commonly referred to as just Cookies. Cookies are small files of data, which are stored on your computer whenever you open a new webpage on a website. They're designed to grab and hold data or information specific to a visitor and website for a number of reasons. Cookies can be beneficial to both the website visitor and the website builder. They can make browsing the internet more convenient, but some can be very intrusive and benefit only the issuer.

There are two kinds of Internet cookies and they are permanent or temporary. Permanent cookies or Persistent cookies, save information for either your benefit or the issuers and can remain on your computer for years. Temporary cookies are saved to the browser memory but then disappear at the end of each browsing session.

But what are they for?.....

Their uses vary but generally they make internet life easier for both the visitor and the website builder. The friendly helpful Cookies include those, which are created when you visit a website, which requires you



to register or become a member. A Cookie will keep the information for your registration permanently stored so that the next time you visit, you'll instantly be recognized and can easily log back into the site. When your Internet Browser requests a Web page, it will scan your hard drive for any cookies that match the site's address. If it finds any related cookies, this will trigger open the server's counterpart and provide the necessary registration information to help you log in quickly and easily.

If you customize or personalize a page or facility on a website, a cookie will be created to store your preferences so that the next time you visit the site, your preferences will automatically be loaded.

Some Internet cookies are used to smooth the process of shopping online. For example, if you have to leave a shopping session for some reason, your selected items will be saved and restored to a cart the next time you go back to the site.

Some of the less friendly, more intrusive cookies include those used for Web profiling. For instance, sometimes, every time you click your mouse, while looking through the pages of a website could be recorded into the visitor's unique cookie log, saved as record of that person's surfing habits. Everey time you revisit the site, more data is added to the cookie. If you provide personal information to the same site, this will then be associated with the existing profile.

Even less friendly, indeed more intrusive, are profiling cookies, which are used for marketing purposes. Thousands of popular websites can hide third-party Internet cookies, allowing a marketer to track a visitors activity across a number of websites. The amount of information, which can be gathered about someones surfing habits is endless. This profiling information includes statistical data such as age, gender, location, religious interests, political opinions, health problems, hobbies, marital status, lifestyle choices, property assets, investment info and lots of other personal life information, which can then be used for marketing purposes to target specific audiences.

Do Cookies pose a security risk?

There's a lot of concern about security and privacy on the internet. Cookies don't pose a threat to privacy in themselves, as they can only be used to store information that the user has provided voluntarily or that the web server has already. If you're worried that the information you've provided to a website won't be treated confidentially then you should question whether you actually need to provide that information at all

Can I control Cookies on my computer?

Yes you can....In your Internet Browser, you can access the area which controls the activity of cookies by clicking the Tools button in your main browser menu. Go down to Options / Internet Options, then click the Privacy / Site Controls tab (the tab names will differ between the various browsers). Here you can adjust the settings to block or allow various categories of cookie. You can also delete Cookies here but keep in mind that if you delete all the cookies on your computer, you may have to re-enter information on some website, which was previously stored in their cookies.

Dont forget!.....
leave a comment,
ask a question,
or just say hi !