Press release

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Research projects
Information technology, Media and communication sciences, Social studies
transregional, national

TU Berlin: A Manifesto for the Web of the Future

Scientists examine how the Web can strengthen its potential for positive impact in the "2020 Manifesto for Web Science"

The spectrum of virtual space ranges from progressive movements such as #metoo and #blacklivesmatter to nihilistic messages of hate and death threats. Proximity to the public and the strengthening of democratic processes are confronted with hacker attacks on Twitter accounts, authorities, and companies. The flipside of the nearly unlimited access to scientific knowledge is an overwhelming flood of fake news and manipulation. While some apps help to disrupt chains of infection, others turn their users into "transparent patients".

These examples demonstrate the full potential of the Web, its promises and abysses. A team of international scientists has now published the "2020 Manifesto for Web Science" in which they examine the question of what can be done to develop the Web in such a way that it maximizes its positive potential for humanity and leads to the best possible results. The authors of the manifesto include Professor Dr. Bettina Berendt, head of the Chair of Internet and Society and TU Berlin and director of the Weizenbaum Institute.

The Web is used by over 4 billion people across all spheres of life, reaching into the lives of everyone and shaping global markets, climate science, political conflict, war, social fabric, and the ethics and moral of different societies.

"Information freedom versus information quality, personalization versus data protection and privacy, mass participation versus manipulation of the masses, inclusiveness and fairness versus exploitation, sustainability versus growth – these ambivalences characterize today's Web. Artificial intelligence has the potential to amplify both positive and negative outcomes In our manifesto, we explore these possibilities. We consider ways in which the Web can be further developed and how individuals, groups, organizations, and countries can work together locally and globally to define the aims for a "good" Web and contribute to making this a reality," says Professor Dr. Bettina Berendt.

"In their manifesto, the scientists also emphasize the necessity to further develop Web Science, the research field dedicated to the analysis and development of the Web, in order to reinforce its role in shaping the future of the Web."

The 2020 Manifesto for Web Science synthesizes and extends results from the "10 Years of Web Science" workshop held at the Leibniz Center for Informatics in Dagstuhl, Saarland in June 2018.

Link to manifesto: https://www.webscience.org/2020/07/09/the-2020-manifesto-for-web-science/

To find out more, please contact:
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