

Privacy Divide

Facilitation Guide

Explore the growing issues posed by the privacy divide.

Overview

This module introduces learners to the privacy divide and helps them gain a better understanding of what it is, how it happens, how it relates to the overall digital divide, and how it affects certain communities. Participants will consider examples and discuss the challenges posed by this issue and potential solutions.

For more information, be sure to watch Series 5 training videos from NYC Digital Safety.

Outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Define the digital divide
- Define the privacy divide
- Describe issues and challenges surrounding paying for privacy
- Identify ways to ameliorate the privacy divide

Format + Time Frame

This module provides a more conceptual overview of the topic of surveillance, particularly in online environments, and introduces learners to trends and ongoing issues posed by different kinds of online surveillance. This module is designed to both introduce terms and concepts and to provide learners with a space for discussion, reflection, and exploration.

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This module will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. The content in this module can be delivered in different ways, whether via a discussion-based workshop session or as a component in another, more hands-on, skill-building module. See below for more suggestions.

Materials

- Slide deck
- Facilitation guide

Lesson Plan

Activity	Materials	Time Needed
Introduction and welcome Greet learners and review the plan for this module.	Slides 1 and 2	2 minutes
Define the digital divide and privacy divide Start by providing a definition of the digital divide to help set up and contextualize the definition for the privacy divide. Pause to see if anyone has any questions.	Slides 3 and 4	3 minutes
Privacy divide issues Explain some of the issues surrounding the privacy divide, notably how privacy is becoming more of a luxury good and how lower-income people are more vulnerable to online privacy threats and violations.	Slides 5 and 6	10 minutes
Activity: Digital and privacy divide challenges	Slide 7	15 minutes

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<p>Break your learners into small groups. Have them discuss other issues, challenges, or concerns posed by the digital divide and the privacy divide. Have your learners share their thoughts and ideas with the entire group.</p>		
<p>Privacy divide examples</p> <p>Provide a case study example of a privacy divide issue: The predatory behavior of for-profit colleges who use data collection practices to target vulnerable populations. Pause to see if anyone has thoughts, questions, or a reaction to this example.</p>	Slide 8	5 minutes
<p>Activity: Privacy divide solutions</p> <p>Put your learners back into small groups. Have them brainstorm some different solutions or approaches to addressing the privacy divide. Encourage them to be bold with their ideas!</p>	Slide 9	15 minutes
<p>Privacy divide actions</p> <p>Highlight different groups and organizations that are trying to address privacy divide issues with education and awareness, increased online access, and more regulation. See if anyone has anything else to add or a question.</p>	Slide 10	5 minutes
<p>Wrap up, final tips, and final questions</p>	Slides 11 through 14	5 minutes

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Review the closing thoughts and share the suggested resources. See if anyone has any final questions.		
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Considerations

The topics covered in module 5 are all complex and at times contentious. The Privacy Divide is a sensitive topic in that class divides may come into play. Your learners might come in with certain preconceptions, impressions, experiences, and ideas that will shape their view of the topic. You might consider using a pre-test question to get a sense of your learners' questions and views to help you better prepare for this module. See suggestions below.

The main goal of the modules in module 5 is to give learners a chance to explore, reflect, and discuss some of the major issues surrounding digital safety and our online experiences more broadly. As such, you might consider keeping the structure of this workshop fairly loose and making adjustments as needed based on how the discussion flows and the questions your learners may have. Feel free to bring in your own examples, recent stories you have read on this issue, or revise the discussion questions posed on the slides to your liking.

You might also consider taking some time to immerse yourself in this topic before your workshop to ensure that you are comfortable and confident with the content. The NYC Digital Safety videos and the resources suggested on the slide deck can all be great places to go to learn more. This workshop could potentially benefit from having a co-instructor to provide support and expertise, help lead discussion, or offer different perspectives.

Options and Variations

This module is designed to be conceptual in nature and can be offered in a variety of ways. You could pair parts of this module (including key definitions, examples, or discussion prompts) with other, more hands-on modules for a richer learning experience. Additionally, this module could work well as part of a longer workshop series on various digital safety topics. The content here is designed to be flexible and you can either run this module as is, make it part of a series, or take portions of this module to use with another digital safety module of your choosing.

One option you could consider is combining the modules on censorship, surveillance, and privacy as a way to have a more wide-ranging discussion of these connected issues. You could also run these workshops together as part of a discussion series.

Note that this module contains numerous places for discussion. If you are looking to add more discussion elements or reflection opportunities to another digital safety workshop, you could consider utilizing the prompts from this module.

This content here works best when introduced in a workshop setting where there can be a chance for questions and guided discussions. However, you can emphasize the themes and concepts included here if you are engaging with a patron one-on-one at a service point and if you are providing them with handouts and materials from other digital safety modules. You might also consider sharing some of the resources listed on the slides with patrons who wish to learn more about the topics and issues covered here.

Assessment

The following are some suggested assessment questions that you can use and adapt for your own purposes. These questions can help you assess various things, including knowledge retention, personal views and preferences, and concept application.

You might consider asking these as a pre or post test, or you can have learners answer these as part of an exit survey or a follow-up survey. Keep reading for suggested questions and an answer key with further details and explanations.

Questions for Participants

What is the privacy divide?

- A. The divide between those who can access tools and resources to manage their online privacy and those who cannot
- B. The gap between those who do and do not have internet access

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- C. The divide between people who have social media privacy settings turned on and those who do not
- D. None of the above

What factors influence the digital divide?

- A. Income
- B. Race
- C. Geography
- D. All of the above

What questions do you have about the digital divide and the privacy divide?

[Free text response]

Answer Key

What is the privacy divide?

Answer: A, The divide between those who can access tools and resources to manage their online privacy and those who cannot

A facet of the overall digital divide, the privacy divide refers to the growing gap between those who can access tool to manage their privacy, and those who cannot.

What factors influence the digital divide?

Answer: D, all of the above

The digital divide is influenced by location, race, and income in particular.

What questions do you have about the digital divide and the privacy divide?

Answer: Free text response

You might consider using this as a pre-test question in order to get a sense of what your learners are interested in and hope to discuss. You can use these responses to pose questions or guide discussion in your workshop.

Connections to Other Modules

This module connects to many other modules. The following suggestions provide opportunities for exploration, connection, and potential programming. However, feel free to explore and make connections between other modules not listed here as well!

This module in particular can connect with nearly every other module here, given the foundational and conceptual nature of the content included. While we have listed a few suggestion ones, note that this module can really connect with all other modules.

1.1 Data Generation Online

1.2 Data Minimization

2.1 Algorithms

2.1 Targeted Advertising

2.2 Doxing

2.2 Data Brokers

2.2 Social Media Settings

4.1 Avoiding Social Engineering

4.3 Technology Mindfulness

4.3 Thinking Critically

5.1 Privacy

5.1 Censorship

These and other modules can be found at this project's website, nycdigitalsafety.org.

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About This Project

These materials were released in October 2022 as part of NYC Digital Safety: Privacy & Security.

NYC Digital Safety: Privacy & Security is a partnership between New York City's three library systems — Brooklyn Public Library, The New York Public Library, and Queens Library — and METRO Library Council. With support from the New York City Office of Technology and Innovation, this project ensures that NYC residents can rely on public libraries for their questions about internet privacy and security.

Visit nycdigitalsafety.org for more information.