

All-Seeing Eye of JPMorgan-Chase

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Workforce Activity Data Utility brings innovation
in labor exploitation through hyper-surveillance

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In the modern world, so-called 'artificial intelligence' machine-learning technologies pervade all spheres of life, not least of which in labor. JP Morgan Chase (JPMC), America's biggest bank, rolled out its proprietary Workforce Activity Data Utility (WADU), shortly before the pandemic. This is a system of data collection which is staggering in its full scope, gathering extensive bio-data on employees, every glance at their phone and every bowel-movement made at the office, for the eyes of senior management.[1]

This tool promises to increase efficiency and optimize the company's business processes, as well as protect from insiders leaking information, according to the company. Let's see what is really in store.

This system is a logical innovation on the previous version, which was called Metropolis. It collected emails, browser histories and GPS location from company phones. As a result, in 2013 it was revealed that the system was used to track various people across the bank, including senior executives for fraudulent and abusive purposes.[2] Another recent program, BlueOptima, was quietly dropped after a short time in order to be replaced with WADU.

What information does WADU collect?

JPMC offices and branches are equipped with high-quality HD-AV surveillance cameras. The WADU software has access to these multiple cameras in the office in order to track and record small movements (non-verbal gestures) throughout the day. The collected information is updated on your WADU profile in real time. Each manager has access to an information display page where all indicators related to his subordinates are represented. Employee performance indicators are updated immediately after the employee logs in. Two biometric characteristics are available for employees in the office: the level of concentration and the level of stress.

These categories are determined by the WADU algorithm's processing of information such as eye-movement and body language.

In recent years, the practice of collecting information about employees by the employer has become a given - completely unresisted by an organized working class. But WADU is an advanced tool for the exploitation not only of office employees, but also remotely working people.

By connecting the camera and microphone to the Citrix Workplace system, artificial intelligence peers into every second of working-life - even into the home. There, it record from the webcam, analyze what is present in your room for unprofessionalism and other 'dangers', listening to every conversation, including background sounds.

Your manager can even listen to your audio broadcast live, like their own private live-streamer.

Why is WADU really needed?

The implications of such surveillance are hard to overstate, bringing corporate power over employees to a previously impossible level. According to some reports, JP Morgan Chase seeks to bring employees back to the office, forcing them to work at least 3-4 days there regardless of productivity. One reason behind this dire 'need' by the company is to need to collect as much data as possible with the embedded AI, for use in improving the system itself and providing invaluable test-data on its operation.

How will they train it enough on their own employees? They may distribute a "successful product to increase efficiency" in which they are invested so that this system pays off, otherwise why would they spend millions of dollars. And of course, the data can be sold in huge amounts for commercial purposes, for example to advertisers, generating a new revenue stream off this commodity.

But most of all, it is an investment in the future of capitalism.

Even the employees of high-finance in the center of developed imperialism will now feel the reach of Capital's clawing profit need. This system will attack the formation of new unions by preventing traditional worker's organizing, it will psychologically intimidate employees into over-compliance, and it will be integrated into a holistic system of government surveillance for the identification and tracking of 'dissidents' - this data will inevitably fall into the hands of the state agencies, both voluntarily by the bosses, through purchase of data-piles on the market by agencies like the NSA, etc., just as any other private corporation, or seized by force of law with warrants and subpoena. This innovated and expanded surveillance information gives the state access to data on its citizens which is unprecedented even in the 'Patriot Act' age.

Labor control systems based on artificial intelligence suppress collectivism and solidarity among workers, each hoping to appear good for the camera. Competition and fear of negative consequences can stimulate individualism and disunity among colleagues. Instead of promoting fair and equitable treatment, these systems create inequality and exacerbate social differences.

But, the company says it's only for productivity and improving working life in the office for all...

Instead of improving the working environment serving to increase the conditions of employees and encouraging fruitful productivity, artificial intelligence is put at the service of private interests for the sake of blind profiteering. By expanding and perfecting this system, they mean to turn all workers into machines that do not know rest and do not reduce productivity due to human distraction from engaging in the work-place computer screen. The result is increased exploitation and restriction of workers' freedom. This only causes distrust and paranoia among workers. [3] - not greater efficiency, but establishing a newly heightened level of exploitation of labour-time.

While capitalists train artificial intelligence to control workers even more, it is necessary to prepare to protect labor rights. Companies implementing such systems should be fought at every step, and that includes being forced to comply with data collection legislation while what little of it remains. Labor unions outside the control of the employer must take an active part in monitoring and regulating such systems - and work to expose their true nature. Under capitalism, social relations do not truly increase through liberal progress and improving technology, but are instead dragged down into deeper robbery of human dignity.

Source: 1, 2, 3

Original article