



FACT SHEET

U.S. Army Cyber Command

The Nation's Army in Cyberspace

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THE FACTS: GEO-TAGGING

What is geotagging?

- Geo-tagging is adding geographic identification to photographs, videos, websites and SMS messages. It's like tagging a precise map grid coordinate to everything you post on the internet.
- Geo-tags may automatically be embedded in pictures taken with smartphones, but many people are unaware that those photos have been tagged before they post them online.
- Photos posted to photo sharing sites like Flickr may also be tagged with their locations.
- Posting photos tagged with an exact location allows others to track your exact location and correlate it with other information.

Geotagging photos

- Photos have used geotagging for quite some time. Some formats such as JPEG format allow geographic information to be embedded within the image that can be read by picture viewers.
- Owners should study their cameras' manuals to learn whether their devices automatically add geolocation metadata to pictures and understand how to turn off those functions.
- On photo sharing sites, people can tag a location on their photos, even if their camera does not. A simple search for "Afghanistan" on Flickr reveals thousands of location tagged photographs that have been uploaded.
- Soldiers deploy to areas all over the world. Some locations are public, others are classified. Soldiers should not geo-tag uploaded photos. Publishing photos of classified locations can be detrimental to mission success, and in violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.



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ABOUT US: United States Army Cyber Command directs and conducts integrated electronic warfare, information and cyberspace operations as authorized, or directed, to ensure freedom of action in and through cyberspace and the information environment, and to deny the same to our adversaries.

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