DEEP SEEK

DeepSeek collects user information in three ways: User-Provided Information (profile details, inputs, and communication), Automatically Collected Information (technical data, usage data, cookies, and payment details), and Information from Other Sources (third-party logins and partners). The data collected includes personal details like contact info, browsing behavior, device data, and transaction history. DeepSeek retains this information as long as necessary for service provision, legal compliance, or business interests. Data is stored on servers in China, with possible transfers elsewhere.

ABOUT

DeepSeek is a Chinese Artificial Intelligence that provides responses comparable to other contemporary large language models, such as OpenAI's GPT-4o and o1. DeepSeek's AI models were developed amid United States sanctions on India and China for Nvidia chips.

Founder Background:

QLiang Wenfeng (40) was born in 1985 in Zhanjiang, Guangdong, China. The son of two primary school teachers, Liang Wenfeng studied finance and engineering in eastern Zhejiang province, China. Liang Wenfeng began his early career studying the quantitative investment methods of Jim Simons, which he utilized to create AI trading strategies. (Jim Simons was an American quantitative hedge fund manager and mathematician who through the creation and utilization of quantitative investment strategies, amassed an estimated net worth of more than $30 billion by the time of his passing in 2024) Liang Wenfeng's AI trading strategy model utilizes machine learning to predict market trends and optimize investment decisions, which drove his High-Flyer hedge fund to more than $8 billion in assets from 2016 to 2019.

Parent Company

High-Flyer – Chinese quantitative hedge fund company, also formed by DeepSeek founder Liang Wenfeng, incorporated in February 2016 in Ningbo, Zhejiang, China. High-Flyer's main office is located in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, China. High-Flyer manages $8 billion USD in assets annually, which provides significant research resources for DeepSeek.

BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name: DeepSeek Artificial Intelligence Company Ltd.

Chinese Name: 深度求索 / Shēndù Qiúsuǒ)

Product: DeepSeek – Free, open-source, AI-powered chatbot

Company Founded: May 2023

Headquarters: Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

Company Founder: Liang Wenfeng

Current Valuation
$1 Billion USD

(Forbes – January 30, 2025)

Active Users
5-6 million Globally
- 2.6 million app downloads
- More than 7 million Google searches per day.

(January 28, 2025)

DATA COLLECTED

The information collected by DeepSeek is identified in three ways: "Information You Provide, Automatically Collected Information, and Information From Other Sources."

Information You Provide

- Profile Information: Includes details provided during account setup, such as date of birth, username, email, address, phone number, and password.
- User Input: Any text or audio input, prompts, uploaded files, feedback, chat history, or other content shared with the service.
- Information When You Contact Us: Includes proof of identity or age, feedback or inquiries about the service, and reports of potential violations of DeepSeek's Terms of Service.

Automatically Collected Information

- Technical Information: Includes device model, operating system, keystroke patterns, IP address, system language, and service-related data like crash reports and performance logs.
- Usage Information and Cookies: Tracks features used and user actions within the service.
- Payment Information: Covers payment orders, transactions, customer service interactions, and after-sales support.

Additionally, DeepSeek assigns a device ID and user ID to track activity across multiple devices.

Information From Other Sources

- Log-in, Sign-up, or Linked Services: If a user logs in through third-party services (e.g., Apple, Google), DeepSeek may collect information from those services.
- Advertising, Measurement, and Other Partners: Partners share data about user activities outside the service (e.g., on other websites, apps, or in stores).
  - This may include purchase information and mobile identifiers, hashed email addresses, phone numbers, and cookie identifiers.
  - May be used by DeepSeek to match users and track their actions outside the service.

DATA RETENTION:

Per the DeepSeek privacy policy, DeepSeek will "retain information for as long as necessary to provide our Services" and for the 'other purposes' set out in their Privacy Policy. DeepSeek also retains information when necessary to comply with contractual and legal obligations, when they have a legitimate business interest to do so, such as improving and developing Services, and enhancing their safety, security and stability, and for the exercise or defense of legal claims.

The Data collected by DeepSeek is stored on Servers located in China and are allowed to transfer to servers located elsewhere.

OTHER SECURITY CONCERNS

DeepSeek has already suffered a significant data leak of over 1 million sensitive records. The data included user chat logs, system details, operational metadata, API secrets and sensitive log streams. The DeepSeek user database was publicly accessible, raising significant concerns about DeepSeek's data management practices and compliance with privacy laws. The data leak has been found to have been caused by a misconfigured cloud storage instance that lacked proper access controls.

Cisco's research team used algorithmic jailbreaking techniques to test DeepSeek R1 "against 50 random prompts from the HarmBench dataset," covering six categories of harmful behaviors including cybercrime, misinformation, illegal activities, and general harm. DeepSeek failed to block a single harmful prompt and had a 100% attack success rate.

OpenAI says it found evidence that DeepSeek used their proprietary models to train itself, which would be a breach of intellectual property. OpenAI claims there is evidence of "Distillation" which is a technique used by developers to obtain better performance on smaller models by using outputs from larger, more capable ones. Distillation is common practice in the industry, but the concern is that DeepSeek is doing it to build their own model.

DeepSeek has also been censoring any questions or comments that may be considered harmful to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which may support a growing concern of misinformation being relayed to users when utilizing DeepSeek services.

ENDING NOTES

DeepSeek's aggressive data collection and retention practices raise significant privacy and security concerns. The company retains user information for as long as necessary for service provision, legal obligations, or business interests. DeepSeek data is stored on servers in China, with the potential for transfer to other locations, which may heighten privacy risks. In addition to these data practices, DeepSeek has faced security breaches, including a massive data leak of over 1 million sensitive records due to poor cloud storage configurations. Furthermore, DeepSeek's failure to block harmful content, as demonstrated by Cisco's tests, and its use of proprietary models in ways that may infringe on intellectual property rights, adds to the growing concerns about its practices. The censorship of politically sensitive topics related to the Chinese Communist Party only compounds these issues, raising alarms about misinformation and the ethical implications of using the platform.

DeepSeek Privacy Policy
DeepSeek Data Leak Exposes 1 Million Sensitive Records
DeepSeek Fails Researchers' Safety Tests
Does DeepSeek Censor Its Answers? We Asked 5 Questions On Sensitive China Topics.
Here Is How Much the AI Firm DeepSeek And It's Founder Are Worth
Liang Wenfeng: All About The Brain Behind DeepSeek

On DeepSeek, you can watch AI navigate censorship in real time
OpenAI says it has evidence China's DeepSeek used its model to train competitor
Who is DeepSeek founder Liang Wenfeng, the math whiz-hedge fund manager upending the AI industry?
Who Is Liang Wenfeng? From Age to Net Worth, Here's All You Need To Know About DeepSeek AI Founder
Who Is the Founder of the A.I. Start-Up DeepSeek
Upstart Chinese AI company DeepSeek's founder started out as a low-key hedge fund entrepreneur