



LAN, Trace Noizer, 2001, screenshot

LAN, TraceNoizer – Disinformation On Demand

Year: 2001

Type: Internet Artwork

Duration: variable

Dimension: variable

Acquisition: Acquired 2017, Inv. No. S0047.

Artwork Link: <http://www.tracenoizer.net/> (<http://www.tracenoizer.net/>)

Artist Website: www.anninaruest.com/a/tracenoizer/

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Artist Website: <https://marclee.io/en/tracenoizer-disinformation-on-demand/>

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TraceNoizer was a website that allowed all registered users to conceal their own Internet identity by repeatedly cloning and faking websites containing their name. Bit by bit, the so called clones were captured by the major search engines, so that they became indistinguishable from the original websites. The clones were stored on free web page hosting platforms that no longer exist today. With the help of the Clone Control Center, users had the chance to review a list of the clones and, where appropriate, remove them.

TraceNoizer dates from 2001 and worked with the world wide web from back then. However, as the world wide web went through big changes since then, particularly transitioning from personal webpages to social media, the parsing and cloning of the websites does not work properly today. Instead, the user can access clones the artists made in 2002.

Working under the label "LAN" (Local Area Network) at the New Media Department of Zurich's Art and Design University, Annina Rüst, Roman Abt, Fabian Thommen, Marc Lee and Silvan Zurbruegg already realized in 2001 that the only way to truly erase something from the Internet was to overlay relevant facts with false ones. In his ars oblivionalis, Umberto Eco describes this phenomenon as the generation of an all-encompassing noise.

Neither the human brain nor the WWW can forget on demand. Unlike human memory, however, certain data that has appeared online is virtually impossible to erase permanently. How to make such data disappear is one of the biggest current controversies related to digitalization and one that affects every single one of us.

Artist Bio

The people behind *TraceNoizer* are LAN, a group consisting of students, media workers, artists and designers working under this name in varying compositions, sharing skills and resources in our locally networked environment and beyond. LAN created network-oriented interactive projects. They regard their open source/open content position as a small but effective stance against the cultural dominance of large IT-corporations.