

Retail companies allegedly not collecting personal information as aggressively

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Raymond Chen

Several months ago, [The Washington Post reported that retail companies were no longer collecting personal information as aggressively](#). The poster child for this sort of thing was RadioShack, which demanded your name and address even if you just stopped in to buy a pack of AA batteries. I didn't shop there often, and when I did, I merely refused to give them any information about myself. At the store near Microsoft main campus, after going through this exercise, the cashier eventually entered my name as "Cash" and out came the receipt:

James Cash
123 Main St
Redmond, WA 98052

Thank You, James Cash, for shopping at RadioShack

I enjoyed telling this story, and to my surprise, one day I got a piece of email from James Cash himself! (As it turns out, one of my friends actually knew James Cash.)

The story is even funnier: For years, my pet peeve was the way that RadioShack wanted my address – and I refused to give it. There was quite a scene a couple of times, with a salesclerk begging me to give it, and me refusing. Once or twice I had to walk out of the store rather than give the info. However, one time I had a roommate who also didn't want to give out his name and address. His solution? To give *my* name and address! So that is how my name wound up at that RadioShack...

[Raymond Chen](#)

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