Smart phones share data unbeknownst to users

By Elizabeth Dwoskin, Wall Street Journal

Fan Zhang, the owner of Happy Child, a trendy Asian restaurant in downtown Toronto, knows that 170 of his customers went clubbing in November. He knows that 250 went to the gym that month, and that 216 came in from Yorkville, an upscale neighborhood.

Businesses are tracking their customers and building profiles of their daily habits using a network of startups that have placed sensors in restaurants, yoga studios and other sites. Chris Gilpin, founder of one such site, Turnstyle, joins the News Hub.

The sensors, each about the size of a deck of cards, follow signals emitted from WiFi-enabled smartphones. That allows them to create portraits of roughly 2 million people's habits as they have gone about their daily lives, traveling from yoga studios to restaurants, to coffee shops, sports stadiums, hotels, and nightclubs.

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