Salon asks ad-blocking users to opt into cryptocurrency mining instead



Media outlet *Salon* is testing an alternative to advertising: mining cryptocurrency through readers' computers. If you visit the site with an ad-blocker turned on, you might see a prompt to either disable the blocker or choose a "suppress ads" option, as reported today by *Financial Times* and confirmed by *The Verge*. According to *FT*, the latter choice will let *Salon* put your unused computing power toward mining the cryptocurrency Monero, using a JavaScript-based mining tool from Coinhive.

Other sites have used cryptocurrency mining in lieu of (or in addition to) advertising. Sometimes, it's done surreptitiously without users' consent — *The Pirate Bay* admitted to secretly adding Coinhive integration last year, and hackers have planted mining malware on other sites. In this case, it's an opt-in program; a spokesperson tells *FT* that testing started on Monday.

Cryptocurrency mining scripts can negatively affect system performance, since they're running intensive calculations as you browse the web. But they also offer a way to recoup lost ad revenue without resorting to paywalls — something that sites like *The Atlantic* have done for visitors who are running ad-blocking software.

https://www.theverge.com/2018/2/13/17008158/salon-suppress-ads-cryptocurrency-mining-coinhive-monero-beta-testing