

Alison, an 8th-grade student, spends a lot of online time at Virtual Runway, a website that lets her pick different outfits for her paper doll avatar. The basic section of the site is free, but sometimes she needs to use “virtubucks,” the site’s virtual currency, to buy items. One day when Alison logs on, she sees that a new item has been introduced, a complete virtual outfit by her favorite designer. It costs more virtubucks than she has, but she soon finds a contest to win lots of virtubucks. The contest announcement reads: “Are all your friends already on Virtual Runway? If not, sign them up and earn 100 virtubucks apiece. Sign up five friends and get 1,000 virtubucks. Plus, the person who signs up the most friends by the end of this week will get a grand prize of 10,000 virtubucks!” Alison decides to register her three best friends. The site asks for information such as name, age, email address, and hobbies. Alison wants to win more virtubucks, so she logs on to her social networking site, MyFace, where a lot of her friends have public profiles. She easily finds enough information to register 13 more people for Virtual Runway. Just by registering her friends, she earned at least 30,000 virtubucks.

Debate Questions

- *Was what Alison did okay? Why or why not?*
- *Do you think Alison should tell her friends what she did? Why or why not?*
- *What do you think are the most important questions about what Alison did that come up in this case study? Make a list of at least three.*