



HOME » TECHNOLOGY » GOOGLE

Google privacy changes prompt 'Big Brother' warning

Changes to Google's privacy policy "mean 'Big Brother' is just a click away", lawyers have warned.

88	72	50	90	91	95	69	83	71	92	45	73	94	78
Groupm	Healthline	JC Penney	Match	Mayo Clinic	Meerup	Netflix	NY Post	NY Times	Orbitz	Pandora	POH Lotto	Priceline	Safeway

[Check privacy score](#)

85

privacyscore

[Tweet it](#)
[Facebook it](#)
[Stumble it](#)

[Follow us](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Blog](#)

[Learn about privacyscores](#)
[Get Privacy Analytics for this site](#)
[Install the privacyscore add-on](#)

What are this site's policies? **35**

Who tracks you there? **50**

	Personal data generally is not shared.	+30
	Personal data may be retained after termination.	+0
	No assurance of notice if data is requested.	+0
	Vendor confidentiality is confirmed.	+5

[Read privacy policy](#) [Give feedback](#) [Report errors](#)

Special privacy considerations for Google

The Privacy Score website gives Google 85 out of 100

By Donna Bowater
3:44PM GMT 01 Mar 2012



Comments

Under changes to the way Google handles users' personal data, the company will collate information about each user across 60 of its services, to create one profile. This means that Google could deliver an advert on a YouTube page based on activity from a user's Gmail account.

But concerns have been raised over the privacy implications of the move, with the French regulator claiming it may not be lawful.

Guy Wilmot, a solicitor at Russell-Cooke, said: "EU data protection laws generally require consent from an internet user for a service to transfer personal data. Consent must be 'freely given, specific and informed'. Google might argue that by continuing to use their services users have 'consented' to the sharing but privacy regulators will ask whether you can really give 'specific, informed' consent by doing nothing?"

Chris Watson, head of Telecoms at law firm CMS Cameron McKenna, said: "Google's new privacy settings mean 'Big Brother' is just a click away. Simplifying privacy settings in its browsers makes sense for Google and advertisers.

"But most internet users would be deeply concerned that when they click to close the privacy icon on their Google account, they are signing away more personal information than they might bargain for."

RELATED ARTICLES

Google
[News » Technology » Digital Media » Technology News » Internet »](#)

IN GOOGLE

Tech Briefing
 EMMA BARNETT

Subscribe to the weekly Tech Briefing email



Bizarre Street View sights

Follow us on... [facebook](#) [twitter](#) [rss](#)

PROMOTIONS »



Loading

TECHNOLOGY MOST VIEWED

TODAY PAST WEEK PAST MONTH

1. Google 'sneaking away citizens' privacy' says EU commissioner
2. Google Android users 'must accept new privacy policy'
3. Kim Dotcom: 'Film industry to blame for piracy'
4. Device to silence incessant talkers created by Japanese scientists
5. Intel: cars should be like iPads

TECHNOLOGY CHOICE

MWC 2012: the hottest handsets



The mobile industry descended on Barcelona this week for Mobile World Congress 2012. Every manufacturer had a new handset to tout but these are the highlights.

Some of the best Google doodles

What is Raspberry Pi?

50 billion devices online by 2020

Angry Birds chief: piracy is good

FEATURED ADVERTISING

CARS IT JOBS CULTURE

- Google 'sneaking away privacy' 02 Mar 2012
- Google sued over privacy shakeup 01 Mar 2012
- Google 'privacy infringement' 01 Mar 2012
- Google privacy: Q&A 01 Mar 2012
- Google privacy policy: for and against 01 Mar 2012
- Google privacy overhaul 'unlawful', say regulators 28 Feb 2012

Are you worried about Google's new privacy policy?

Peter Barron, head of communications at Google, said the firm was happy to meet with the French authorities to discuss their concerns.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, he said users could "control and manage" their search histories by opting out or switching them off.

"We have something called Google dashboard and you can go into that and you can change your settings," Mr Barron said.

"If you don't want to receive adverts for recipes, for example, you can opt out of that."

His comments came after a privacy campaigner filed a case at the small claims court for £400 to replace his Android smartphone, which is affected by the changes.

Alex Hanff, who was involved in a campaign against advertising company Phorm, said: "They've been asked to suspend the changes several times, and Google keeps telling the regulators where to go.

"They've basically stuck two fingers up."

A Google spokesman said: "This updated privacy policy, like the old privacy policy, affects users signed into their Google Accounts on Android phones, the same way as users signed into their Google Accounts from a desktop computer."

The new privacy policy does not mean Google will collect more information about users, but information it gathers via its different web services will be combined for the first time, allowing it to build a more detailed profile of each user.

For instance, data on which YouTube videos a user has watched could be combined with their web search history and Google Maps searches to infer their interests and movements for targeted advertising. The new pools of data will be created for all users with a consumer Google account; companies that use Google Apps will retain control over employees' privacy settings.

Google has emphasised that users can increase their privacy settings before the new policy comes into force. The Electronic Frontier Foundation, a US civil rights group, **has published a guide**.

Please enable JavaScript to view the comments powered by Disqus. blog comments powered by Disqus



Google's funky 4th floor: inspirational?



Weird structures in China on Google Maps



Google backs Bletchley Park restoration



Loading

MORE FROM TELEGRAPH.CO.UK

TELEGRAPH TICKETS



Experience live music by Stone Roses, The Killers and many more

FANTASY CHELTENHAM



Free to play. Make every race count in this year's Cheltenham

TELEGRAPH SELECTED



Just £23.99 for a stylish and durable protection case for you

HOLIDAY COTTAGES



Discover stylish farms and cottages situated in some of the