

Mobile users wary of privacy invasion by apps: survey

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A visitor checks out iPhone covers at an electronics trade fair in Berlin on September 3. Users of mobile devices are rejecting or uninstalling some apps because of concerns about how much personal and private information is collected, a US survey showed Wednesday.

Users of mobile devices are rejecting or uninstalling some apps because of concerns about how much personal and private information is collected, a US survey showed Wednesday.

The Pew Internet Project survey found that 54 percent of [mobile users](#) who download apps have decided to not install a cell phone app when they discovered how much personal information they would need to share in order to use it.

Additionally, 30 percent of app users have uninstalled an app that was already on their cell phone because they learned it was collecting

personal information that they did not want to share.

The survey comes amid growing concern among US lawmakers and civil liberties groups that personal information may be collected by phones and other [mobile devices](#), often without their knowledge.

The Pew survey found that owners of both [Android](#) and [iPhone](#) devices are also equally likely to delete or avoid apps due to concerns over their personal information.

"As [mobile applications](#) become an increasingly important gateway to online services and communications, users' cell phones have become rich repositories that chronicle their lives," said Mary Madden, a research associate and co-author of the report.

"The way a mobile application handles [personal data](#) is a feature that many cell phone owners now take into consideration when choosing the apps they will use."

The survey noted that many users are concerned that their phones could be lost or stolen and are taking steps to deal with such a scenario.

Some 41 percent of cell owners back up the photos, contacts, and other files on their phone and 32 percent have cleared the browsing history or search history on their phone.

Also, 19 percent of cell owners have turned off the location tracking feature on their device because of concern about others accessing that information.

It found nearly one third of cell owners have experienced a lost or stolen phone, and 12 percent have had another person access the contents of their phone in a way that made them feel their privacy was invaded.

"The rise of the smartphone has dramatically altered the relationship between cell owners and their phones when it comes to monitoring and safeguarding their [personal information](#)," said Aaron Smith, a report co-author.

"The wealth of intimate details stored on smartphones makes them akin to the personal diaries of the past—the information they contain is hard to replace if lost, and potentially embarrassing in the wrong hands."

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