

eBay: We don't share customer data with NSA (Update)

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Devin Wenig, president of eBay marketplaces speaks at a news conference in Berlin, Thursday, Sept. 26, 2013. Online retail platform eBay says it does not share data it collects on its customers with the US. National Security Agency. NSA leaker Edward Snowden has suggested that major web companies have set up systems to help the NSA monitor online communications to protect against terrorism. California-based eBay Inc wasn't named in documents Snowden provided to several newspapers but German privacy commissioner Peter Schaar said last month he was certain that information collected on eBay users ended up with the NSA. The president of eBay Marketplaces, Devin Wenig, said Thursday "we don't share our customer data" and "we don't believe the NSA has come near our data." (AP Photo/Frank Jordans)

Online retail giant eBay believes offering each shopper a unique store tailored to their personal tastes and interests is the future of the \$10 trillion global commerce market.

But even as eBay asks users to tell them what they "love" so it can offer them what they "need," the California-based company insisted Monday that its customers' data is safe and won't be shared with anyone—not even the U.S. National Security Agency.

"We don't share our customer data," said Devin Wenig, president of eBay Marketplaces. "We don't sell our customer data. We are incredibly protective of our customers' data."

Privacy watchdogs in Germany have expressed concern that the vast stores of customer information collected by online retailers such as eBay and Amazon are not sufficiently protected from eavesdropping.

According to eBay's privacy policy, the information that the company collects on its customers can include their physical address, credit card details, shopping habits, cell phone number, IP address, location and even scans of identity documents.

NSA leaker Edward Snowden has suggested that major web companies have set up systems to help the intelligence agency monitor online communications to protect against terrorism. Snowden, who is wanted in the U.S. on espionage charges, was granted temporary asylum in Russia last month.

While eBay wasn't named in documents Snowden provided to several newspapers earlier this year, German privacy commissioner Peter Schaar said last month that he was certain information collected on eBay users

ended up with the NSA.

The Snowden revelations have sparked a noisy debate about online privacy in Germany, which is eBay's second biggest market after the United States.

"We don't believe the NSA has come near our data," said Wenig, who was in Berlin to launch the German version of eBay's personalized shopping feature, Feed. "We have a tremendous amount of thought and procedures and security around customer data."

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