

FCC proposal: internet providers must ask to share your data

October 6 2016, by Tali Arbel



In this Feb. 25, 2014, file photo, a Samsung Galaxy S5 is demonstrated at the Mobile World Congress, the world's largest mobile phone trade show in Barcelona, Spain. A new privacy proposal up for a vote in October 2016 will require broadband providers like Verizon and Comcast to get your permission before sharing with advertisers the websites or apps you've been using on your phone or computer. The Federal Communication Commission plans to vote on it Oct. 27. (AP Photo/Manu Fernandez, File)

A new privacy proposal unveiled Thursday will require broadband

providers like Verizon and Comcast to get your permission before sharing with advertisers what you've been doing on your phone or computer.

The Federal Communication Commission has changed its broadband-privacy plan since it was initially proposed in March. The wireless and cable industries had complained that under the initial plan, they would be more heavily regulated than digital-ad behemoths like Google and Facebook, who are monitored by a different agency, the Federal Trade Commission.

The FCC explained its new approach Thursday and plans to vote on it Oct. 27. The revised proposal says broadband providers don't have to get permission from customers ahead of time to use some information deemed "non-sensitive," like names and addresses. The previous plan called for customers to expressly approve the use of more of their information.

This time around, customers still need to OK broadband providers' using and sharing a slew of their data, like a phone's physical location, websites browsed and apps used, and what's in emails.

And customers must be told what types of information is kept and how it will be used, and agency officials said they can still say no to internet [service providers](#) using other data, like names and addresses.

Drawing on customer information could help broadband providers make more money from digital advertising. Verizon, for example, is spending more than \$9 billion to buy AOL and Yahoo in a bid to build an ad business .

The FCC proposal also requires [broadband providers](#) to tell customers within 30 days if their data has been hacked.

In a statement, Verizon's [chief privacy officer](#), Karen Zacharia, said that the company was encouraged that the FCC "seems to be moving" to an approach that was more consistent with how the FTC regulates internet companies like Google and Facebook.

Several consumer-advocacy groups praised the FCC's plan. The proposal was a good defense "against internet service providers' unpermitted use of personal information," Free Press Policy Counsel Gaurav Laroia said in a statement.

The proposal can change before the five FCC commissioners vote on it.

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