

Privacy & Net Neutrality Survey

2017 Nationally Representative Phone Survey

Prepared by CR Survey Research Department

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INTRODUCTION

In May 2017, the Consumer Reports National Research Center conducted a nationally representative phone survey to assess the opinions of Americans on internet privacy and net neutrality. Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) of Princeton, New Jersey administered the survey to a nationally representative sample of 1,008 U.S. residents through its CARAVAN Omnibus Survey. Respondents were selected by means of random-digit dialing and were interviewed via phone. The data were statistically weighted so that respondents in the survey are demographically and geographically representative of the U.S. population.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- When asked about internet service providers (ISPs) selling/sharing their data, six out of 10 Americans think this should not be allowed.
- Most (80%) Americans think internet companies should need their permission to share their data.
- The majority (85%) of Americans say they (not the ISP) are the rightful owner of the internet data an ISP collects from them.
- When given two hypothetical net neutrality scenarios, over a third (67%) of Americans oppose an ISP blocking a competing movie streaming service, and many (62%) Americans oppose an ISP downgrading (streaming in poorer quality) competing movie streaming services.



INTERNET DATA USAGE

MANY AMERICANS SAY INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO SELL OR SHARE THEIR DATA

When asked about internet service providers (ISPs) selling/sharing their data, six out of 10 Americans say this should not be allowed. A notable percentage (15%) of consumers think this is okay, as long as they are able to opt out without penalty.





MOST AMERICANS THINK INTERNET COMPANIES SHOULD GET PERMISSION TO SHARE THEIR DATA

Most (80%) Americans think internet companies should need to get their permission to share their data.



MOST AMERICANS THINK THEY OWN THEIR INTERNET DATA

The majority (85%) of Americans say they are the rightful owner of the internet data ISPs collect from them.



NET NEUTRALITY

MANY AMERICANS OPPOSE ISPs BLOCKING COMPETING MOVIE STREAMING SERVICES

Respondents were given the following scenario: Suppose your friend in another town signed up for a new online service for streaming movies, but you can't get access to this new service because your internet service provider blocked it. They blocked it because they want to promote their own movie streaming service. Over two-thirds say this practice should not be allowed. About one in 10 say "this practice is okay, that's business."





MANY AMERICANS OPPOSE ISPs DOWNGRADING COMPETING MOVIE STREAMING SERVICES

Respondents were given the following scenario: Suppose your ISP starts its own online service for streaming movies and it wants to encourage people to sign up. To do this, they stream movies on their new service using the newest technology and the movies look great. However, now movies on other streaming services look worse than they used to. It turns out that if these other streaming services want you to see top-quality versions of their movies, they have to pay the ISP a fee. And that could be passed on to consumers. Many (62%) say this practice should not be allowed. A notable percentage say that this is okay/business (14%) or that this is okay, as long as the ISP gives a discount on its service (14%).



CONSUMER OPINION OF ISP DOWNGRADING COMPETING STREAMING SERVICE



GENERATIONAL TRENDS

51%

OF MILLENNIALS SAY INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO SELL OR SHARE THEIR DATA

When asked about internet service providers selling/sharing their data, a smaller percentage of Millennials (51%) than Baby Boomers (66%) or Gen Xers (66%) say this should not be allowed.

22%

OF MILLENNIALS SAY ISP DOWNGRADING COMPETING MOVIE STREAMING SERVICES IS JUST BUSINESS

When presented with a hypothetical scenario where an ISP downgraded (streamed in poorer quality) competing movie streaming services, a greater percentage of Millennials (22%) than Baby Boomers (10%) or Gen Xers (9%) say this is "okay, that's business."

15%

OF MILLENNIALS THINK ISPs OWN THE INTERNET DATA COLLECTED FROM INTERNET USERS

A greater percentage of Millennials (15%) than Baby Boomers (10%) or Gen Xers (7%) say the ISP is the rightful owner of the internet data collected from them.

METHODOLOGY

This phone survey was fielded by ORC using a nationally representative sample. The survey fielded from May 4-7, 2017. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

