

# **When Do Users Begin to Worry About Privacy?**

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## **Abstract**

Every transaction that is made either online or offline, and every social interaction that is transferred or stored electronically in some way are generally consumed as big data and ultimately drives the analytics from which consumers benefit. However, this raises some concerns around privacy and ethics. For example, should companies that consumers interact with be allowed to sell their personal information? There are certain benefits that consumers derive such as personalized contents when they choose to offer their personal data to myriad of websites. However, consumers offering personal data to websites subject themselves to possible invasions of their privacy when their data is sold off to third-party website. Since the consumer willfully gave away their personal information, is it truly personal and should they retain some, if any, control over it?

Theories such as privacy calculus and protection motivation theory (PMT) are a couple of prominent examples that focus on the privacy risks and benefits that drive consumer behavior. However, there is still a lack of research on privacy awareness (defined as privacy alert from here on), the stage at which individuals become cognitively aware in order to assess any risks versus benefits. The purpose of this paper is to explore this specific research question; what factors drive individuals towards privacy alert that allows them to cognitively assess privacy concern?

## **Keywords**

Privacy, awareness, concern, control.