Claire Summerville and Tayla Valente

iSpy: On You

Uncovering Apple's data privacy hypocricy and exploitation.

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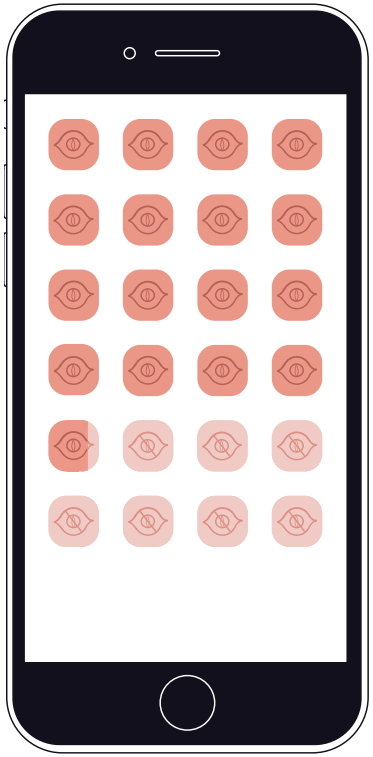


'70% of smartphone applications share your private data and locations to third party services'

In 2019, Apple trolled the tech industry with a billboard that read: 'What happens on your iPhone, stays on your iPhone'. One cannot help but observe the immense irony in that statement, with the volume and frequency of Apple's data collection now a widely collective concern for users. Apple's seeming devotion to privacy is ultimately unsustainable, with their hacker and counterculture ethic paradoxical, considering Apple's full control over its technology and the user's experience of it.

Subversion to device security was recently investigated by The Wall Street Journal, finding that third party trackers were employing 'Data-warehousing' methods to access intimate details of devices, undertaken unbeknownst to the individuals whose profiles are sold to inform big companies and advertisers on who to target.

A recent study reflects that 70% of smartphone applications share your private data and locations to third party services (The Haystack Project, 2017). Understanding that third party services such as Facebook and Google have access to this private data is deeply distressing for our collective society, as our cultural dependency on technology to thrive and connect increases, Apple users are left to question the extent of the privacy breaching, and what will be done with their data?

The Facebook Data Privacy Scandal of 2018 saw a decline in public trust in technology corporations data handling. Recent (2019) Salesforce Research presents that 54% of customers saying it's harder than ever for a tech company to earn their trust, and that 73% of customers say that trust in tech companies matters more than it did prior to the revelations of the scandal. A Tresorit study from last year revealed that when asked if they feel confident that their data is being used responsibly by Apple, 78% said no, and only 22% trusted the corporation.

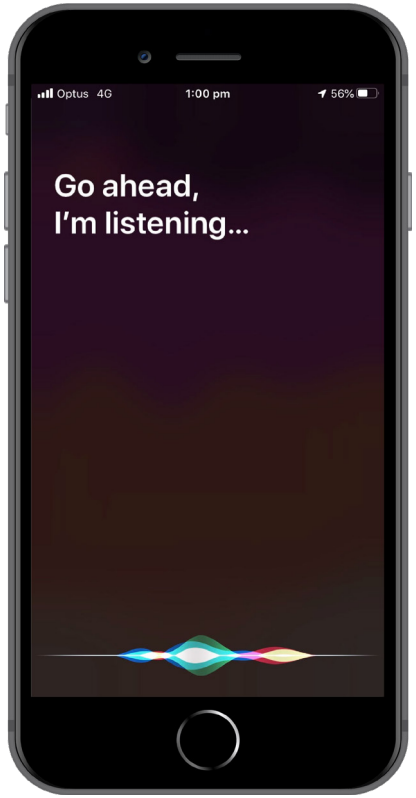
'Would it surprise you to discover that as well as details of your device such as the model, name and phone number these trackers can grab your precise location at any given time?' (Forbes, 2019).

The confirmation that installed applications on Apple devices facilitate the corporation's access to user's locations has meant iPhone owners are actively risking their privacy; even when using the weather app, social networking sites and browser searching.

On the surface level, iPhone users are requested to give permission for certain apps on their device to access their location, yet on a deeper level, unsuspecting users are unbeknownst to the depths of danger this poses to their privacy and safety.

Even Apple itself is unclear on who accesses this data, an extremely dangerous and detrimental feature to their privacy policies when considering today's youth are blindly accepting of application's terms and conditions, unknowingly giving their location and subjecting themselves to the dangers involved. Hackers, malware, and criminal governments, and tracking software are examples of parties that pose threats to cyber stability.

'Hey, Siri!', Apple's artificial intelligence technology embedded within iPhones, known as 'Siri', is constantly listening to conversations occurring within close proximity to the iPhone's microphone. Disruptive Tech Research founder, Lou Basanese, states that the Siri usage facilitates businesses promotion of advertising material suitable to individual users and the topics relevant to 'keywords' collected through their microphones audio. Ultimately, businesses that employ data-warehousing methods see an increase in sales, but at the expense of iPhone users' privacy. Discussed in the 2019 'Data and Applications' academic article written by Daniel Zang, Frei - Yue Wang, and Ralph Merkle, is the expression of concern that adversaries are capable of enhanced audio monitoring through the development of improved sound quality. This is achieved through patching applications, resulting in almost every conversation being recorded perfectly, free of sound defects, critically dangerous leaving no conversations private and unheard around the iPhone.



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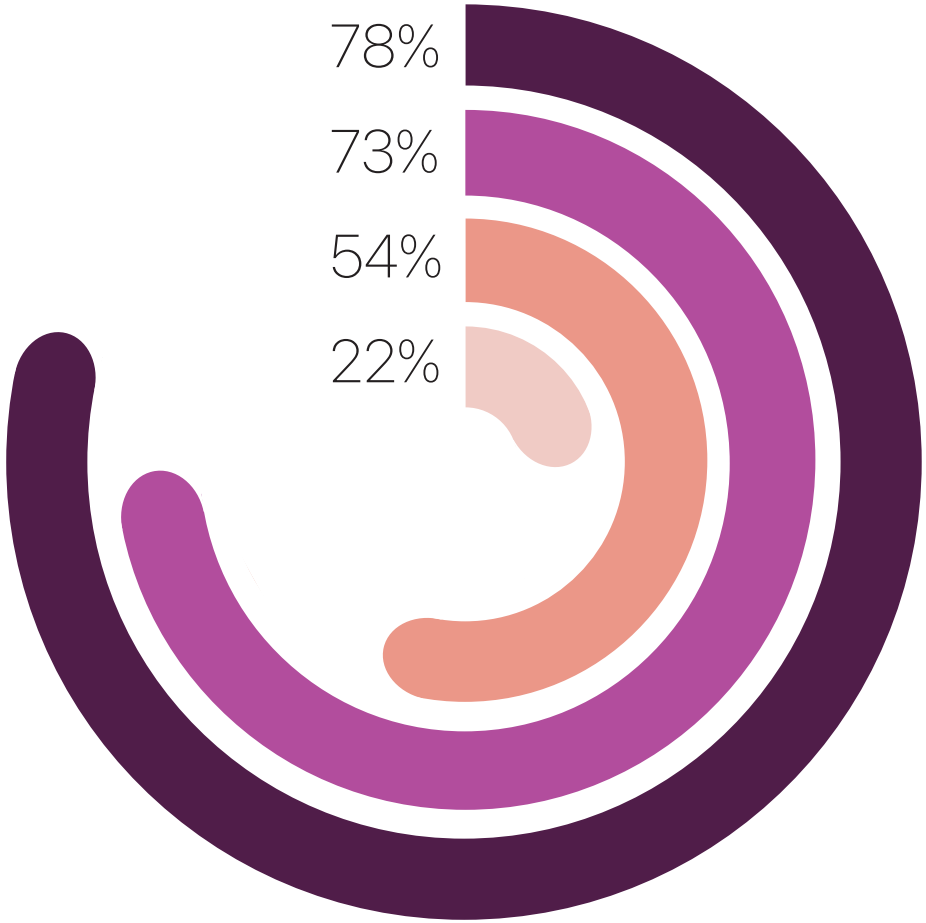
Users' Trust in Apple



Percentage of users who **don't** feel confident that Apple is responsibly handling their data

Percentage of users who find it hard to trust tech companies

Percentage of users who believe that trust in tech companies is more important than ever

Percentage of users who **do** trust their data with Apple