

Global Mobile App Privacy Guidelines Released

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The GSM Association, which represents mobile carriers worldwide and is headquartered in London, has released guidelines to help mobile app developers create privacy disclosures for their users. The guidelines can be downloaded [here](#) from the GSMA website. Under the guidelines, apps should let users know who is collecting information, why, and how it is being used (including if there is any sharing). The guidelines indicate that apps should not secretly access or collect information, that the amount of information should not be excessive, and in some circumstances, active consent should be obtained. The times that consent should be obtained include when information is being used for a purpose not related to the app's primary purpose, sharing information with third parties, and storing information after it has been used. Active consent is defined as giving a consumer a clear opportunity to agree to a particular use, and should not be the default option. The guidelines address social media as well, and indicate that users should be prompted to register for social networks, that default settings should be "privacy protective," and tools should be used to deactivate and delete information at a consumer's election. The guidelines also call for data retention and security measures, and consumer education.

TIP: These guidelines mirror the recent settlement app stores entered into with the California AG, and are a reminder that companies that host apps will need to make sure those apps have privacy policies in place in order for the apps to be approved by the stores. These guidelines provide additional detail about what content to consider including in the apps (especially those designed for the international market), and signal not just app store but carrier commitment to having app-based privacy policies.

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