

Survey of Public and Data User Attitudes on Protection of Personal Data Privacy 2020

Highlights of Survey Results

Public Survey

Use of Social Media

1. 77% (2014: 72%) of the respondents had an account with a particular social media platform, and 48% (2014: 41%) used that social media platform daily. Among those who had an account with that social media platform:
 - 80% of the respondents were aware of the privacy settings (2014: 77%);
 - Of those who were aware of the privacy settings, 81% checked their privacy settings (2014: 73%); and
 - Of those who had checked their privacy settings, 89% changed their privacy settings (2014: 90%).
2. The majority of those who had an account with the social media platform would only share personal photos and personal opinions with “friends” only (54% for both). Furthermore, over a third of them never shared personal photos or personal opinions (34% and 38% respectively)¹.

Provision of Personal Data in Return for Additional Information

3. The respondents were asked if they were willing to provide different types of personal data in return for access to additional information². By rating on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “do not mind at all,” 10 means “certainly refuse”, and a rating of 6 or above means “incline to refuse,” the results are as follows:

¹ This question was not included in a similar survey conducted in 2014.

² In the 2014 survey, the respondents were asked if they were willing to provide different types of personal data in return for discounts. Since the survey questions in 2014 and 2020 are different, the results should not be compared directly.

Type of personal data	Certainly refuse to provide	Incline to refuse to provide	Do not mind providing at all
Identity card number	89%	97%	0.8%
Residential address	71%	93%	1.2%
Mobile phone number	52%	81%	2.6%
Date of birth	56%	78%	5.4%
Personal income	49%	77%	4.1%
Email address	40%	67%	5.4%
Occupation	24%	52%	12.2%

Willingness to Pay for Better Privacy Protection

- The respondents were asked if they were willing to pay \$20 per month to online service providers (including providers of internet search and email services) in exchange for an agreement not to use their personal data for personalised advertisements³. Only 27% of the respondents were inclined to pay (10% of them would certainly be willing to pay), while 58% of them were inclined not to pay (47% would certainly refuse to pay).
- A similar question was asked in the 2014 survey⁴. At that time, 17% of the respondents were inclined to pay and 69% were inclined not to pay. In comparison, there was an increase in the 2020 survey for those who were inclined to pay and a decrease for those who were inclined not to pay.

Use of Instant Messaging Apps

- 93% (2014: 87%) of the respondents used smartphones, of which 98% (2014: 95%) installed instant messaging apps. Among those who had installed instant messaging apps, 77% (2014: 72%) were aware that these apps would access the contact information on

³ By rating on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means certainly would not use it, 10 means certainly would be willing to pay, a rating of 4 or below is regarded as showing inclination not to pay, and a rating of 6 or above showing inclination to pay.

⁴ In the 2014 survey, the respondents were asked if they were willing to pay \$20 per month in return for online services offering no advertisement at all.

their phones, 35% (2014: 34%) considered such practice as privacy invasive, and 34% (2014: 33%) even considered it as serious invasion of privacy⁵.

Complaints

7. While 36% of the respondents had experienced misuse of their personal data in the last 12 months (2014: 46%), only 11% of them had lodged a complaint (2014: 11%). The main reasons for not lodging a complaint include⁶—
- Do not know where to lodge a complaint (35%);
 - Troublesome (21%); and
 - Not important enough to spend time on (21%).

Data User Survey

Level of Difficulty in Complying with the PDPO

8. Majority of the surveyed data users (i.e. organisations) considered that the level of difficulty in complying with the PDPO was average or easy. On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “no difficulty at all” and 10 means “very difficult”, 21% of the organisations rated it 5, 57% rated it 0 to 4 and 22% rated it 6 to 10.

Complaints

9. 95% of the respondents had not received any complaint concerning personal data privacy in the last 12 months.

⁵ The respondents were asked to rate the level of invasion of privacy for the practice, on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means not privacy invasive at all and 10 means serious invasion of privacy. A rating of 6 or above is regarded as the respondents considering it privacy invasive. In the 2020 survey, 35% (2014: 34%) of the respondents gave a rating between 6 and 9, and 34% (2014: 33%) of the respondents gave a rating of 10.

⁶ In the 2014 survey, the main reasons for not lodging a complaint were “their personal data were provided by friends” (35%) and “not willing to deal with the staff members of the company involved” (25%).

Level of Support for the Possible Amendments to the PDPO

10. In the survey, the respondents were asked to rate their level of support for some possible amendments to the PDPO⁷:

Possible legislative amendments	Public	Organisations
<u>For significant data leakages</u>		
Support for requiring organisations involved to notify their customers	92%	94%
Support for requiring organisations involved to notify the PCPD	90%	95%
Support for imposing financial penalty on organisations involved	87%	84%
<u>For “doxxing”</u>		
Support for giving the PCPD the power to require removal of contents from social media platforms and websites	71%	64%
Support for giving the PCPD the power to carry out criminal investigation	70%	63%
Support for giving the PCPD the power to initiate prosecution	69%	61%

11. We would like to express our gratitude to the Social Sciences Research Centre of The University of Hong Kong for conducting this survey.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong
28 January 2021

⁷ The respondents were asked to rate their level of support for each of the possible amendments, on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means “no support at all” and 10 means “fully support”. A rating of 6 or above was considered as “support”.