

PRIVACY RISKS LINKED TO APPS AND ADS



Some privacy risks are linked to the advertisements displayed in apps, which are frequently downloaded by millions of people on a daily basis. Some of these advertising networks have been gathering up personal information about users of specific apps for the span of a year, finding out a whole lot about different smartphone users in and around the United States. The truth is that these practices are becoming more and more familiar, which can cause concern for those who are constantly using and downloading apps on their mobile devices. In order to prevent these practices for occurring, some new guidelines have been put in place for application developers to follow. The co-founder of Lookout, Kevin Mahaffey, says that these advertising networks are causing a huge mobile privacy issue. There are nearly 100 million apps that have already been downloaded by users that actually carry these types of advertisements that are finding out a whole lot more about the user. Some advertising networks are very aggressive and will even collect a phone number or email address of the user without asking them for the information first. It is important for people to be aware because malware is on the rise, especially on the Android platform. When asked about some of the aggressive advertising networks, Lookout refused to name the networks but is hoping these networks will make some changes so that they are following the guidelines that have recently been put in place for the collection of data. The co-chair for Future of Privacy Forum, Jules Polonetsky, says that the new guidelines make it very clear to these advertising networks that they need to respect the privacy of the consumers. The guidelines definitely work in favor of the consumers and their privacy. Many advertising networks have become more aggressive as mobile advertising increases with the number of people using smartphones higher than ever before. Advertisers cannot get enough of being able to reach such a large audience because it gives them such opportunities. However, consumers like their privacy and it is believed that advertising networks that are using such aggressive practices are going to end up having trouble, as invading privacy can seriously backfire against them. At this point in time, mobile advertising is still in its earlier stages so it is believed that at some point in the future, more guidelines may be created to protect consumers and their privacy, especially since the mobile experience is a whole lot different than any other form of advertising in the first place.