

Microsoft Privacy Statements



Key Points

- Improvements to Microsoft online privacy statements enhance their design and functionality to more effectively layer important information and make that information easier to locate and use.
- Migration to the new format will be gradual but steady. Bing and Microsoft.com were the first to adopt it, followed by Xbox; other Microsoft products and services will follow over time.
- Microsoft remains steadfast in its longstanding commitment to protecting customer data, and continues to stand behind its privacy policies and practices. There are no material changes to Microsoft's data collection and use practices as a result of the redesign.

BACKGROUND

Privacy statements describe the information a company collects and how that information is used and shared. However, the increasingly complex nature of global data flows, along with new privacy regulations, has led to privacy statements that are often lengthy and difficult to read. In addition, many organizations have dozens (even hundreds) of different online resources or services, which can lead to multiple, overlapping privacy statements.

The challenge for companies is to create privacy statements that convey the most important elements in a clear and understandable way, and offer easy access to additional details for those seeking more complete information.

One way to accomplish these goals is through a layered privacy notice. A layered privacy notice lists the most important features of the privacy policy, such as what information is collected and how it is used. After each feature, viewers are offered a link to more detail. In 2006, Microsoft was one of the first companies to implement a layered privacy statement.

In July 2012, Microsoft updated its online privacy statements to enhance their functionality and provide greater consistency across Microsoft products and services. Migration to the new format is ongoing with Bing and Microsoft.com (illustrated below) the first to adopt the new format, followed by Xbox in October 2012.

Bing Microsoft.com Xbox Other Microsoft Products

Last Updated: July 2012

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Microsoft.com Privacy Statement

This privacy statement applies to Microsoft.com and Microsoft websites, services and products that collect data and display these terms, as well as their offline product support services. It does not apply to Microsoft sites, services and products that do not display or link to this statement or that have their own privacy statements.

Please read the summaries below and click on "Learn More" for more details on a particular topic. You may also select from the products listed above to view that product's privacy statement. Some products, services or features mentioned in this statement may not be available in all markets. You can find more information on Microsoft's commitment to protecting your privacy at <http://www.microsoft.com/privacy>.

Cookies & Similar Technologies

Most Microsoft sites use "cookies," small text files that can be read by a web server in the domain that put the cookie on your hard drive. We may use cookies to store your preferences and settings; help with sign-in; provide targeted ads; and analyze site operations.

We also use web beacons to help deliver cookies and compile analytics. These may include third-party web beacons, which are prohibited from collecting your personal information.

You have a variety of tools to control cookies and similar technologies, including:

- Browser controls to block and delete cookies

Cookies
Collecting Your Information
Using Your Information
Sharing Your Information
Accessing Your Information
Children
Advertising
Communications
Microsoft account
Other Information

MICROSOFT APPROACH

The new format and design of Microsoft's privacy statements:

- Enhance their functionality by enabling more effective layering of important information and creating a consistently accessible structure across many Microsoft products.
- Make it easier and more efficient for customers to discover and go directly to the privacy statement for the specific product or service they are using.
- Include clearly defined subsections specific to different types of data collection and use such as advertising and cookies, how information is collected and used and why it's shared, how users can access their information, and privacy, especially as it applies to children.

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POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Governments and industry alike have a vested interest in ensuring that privacy notices are transparent, discoverable, and easy to understand. To that end, Microsoft believes that flexible legislative frameworks will help to ensure both that consumers have robust privacy protections, and that businesses are able to develop and offer innovative products and services. Legislation that follows these criteria will also be more resilient to technological and business change, helping to protect consumer data not only today, but in the years to come.
- While governments have an important role in encouraging companies to provide clear and understandable privacy statements for consumers, they should avoid mandates that could lead to "one size fits all" privacy policies.
- People's privacy expectations vary depending on the nature of their relationship with a specific company. Any legislation, therefore, should permit businesses to adapt their policies and practices to the context in which personal information is used and shared.



Helpful Resources

An overview of Microsoft's policies and initiatives
www.microsoft.com/privacy

Microsoft's Privacy Statement
www.microsoft.com/privacystatement