

A new study by SecureAge reveals many consumers feel privacy takes priority over prevention

Most US consumers believe in the effectiveness of contact tracing apps to curb the spread of Covid-19, yet a majority are concerned about personal data collection

September 15, 2020 - [SecureAge Technology](#), a leading data and endpoint protection company, has released a timely new [report](#) which investigates tech privacy fears surrounding contact tracing apps. SecureAge sponsored the study which surveyed nearly 900 respondents (580+ consumers; 300+ IT professionals) to find out their perceptions on the use of contact tracing apps. The study was conducted from July 20, 2020 to August 17, 2020 and revealed how privacy and data security fears have the potential to affect much-needed adoption rates throughout the United States. Below are some of the key findings.

The majority of survey respondents believe in the concept of contact tracing apps...

- More than **two-thirds of consumers (67%)** acknowledged they would support a national rollout of contact tracing technology to help track and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- **70% of consumers** also acknowledged that contact tracing technology could be effective in curbing the spread of the virus.
- These sentiments were echoed among IT professionals. An overwhelming majority (**91%**) stated that they would support a national rollout and **93% of IT professionals** said they were confident in the technology's ability to curb the spread of the virus.

...but the irony is, a resounding fear for privacy exists among consumers, although most respondents would still download them.

- **92% of consumer respondents** are concerned that contact tracing apps will collect sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- Despite privacy concerns, **two-thirds (66%) of these consumers** stated they would download contact tracing apps if they were made publicly available.

IT professionals on the other hand, were more optimistic about the long-term benefits of contact tracing apps regardless of privacy pitfalls.

- While **93% of IT professionals** acknowledged data and privacy concerns created by downloading contact tracing apps,
- **90% of these professionals** stated they would still download them if they were made available – in fact, **72%** stated they would be “very likely” to adopt them.

“The public support for contact tracing technology as a means to combat the spread of COVID-19 is undeniable,” said Jerry Ray, COO of SecureAge. “And yet, the general public’s lack of confidence in a safe and secure way to use contact tracing undermines the technology’s potential to effectively curb the spread of the virus.”

Another key finding was that both consumers and IT professionals alike have faith in the ability for ‘Big Tech’ to spearhead digital contact tracing efforts but prefer government oversight.

- In response to questions about Apple and Google’s joint involvement in the development of US contact tracing apps, **62% of consumers** said they are confident in “Big Tech’s” ability to offer a secure digital contact tracing solution. This is supported by an overwhelming **88% of IT professionals**.
- However, US consumers also reported they would take comfort if there was government oversight. **65% of consumers** said they would feel safer using these solutions if data collection and storage were held in check by formal government protocols. **91% of IT professionals** surveyed agreed.

“Understandably, consumers are sending mixed messages. They are aware of the potential of contact tracing apps yet have valid fears toward downloading them. While they also show confidence in the ability of “Big Tech” to help create effective digital solutions, they also favor formal government oversight of any data collection and storage that might take place. A “Big Tech” led and government supervised approach has higher support among IT professionals who have greater knowledge of the government’s data safeguard standards – we hope this vote of confidence can give consumers greater confidence in contact tracing technology,” said Ray.

Amid escalating global tensions, the data security concerns held by US consumers and IT professionals also extend beyond US borders. A significant portion of consumers (28%) and IT professionals (32%) are “much more” concerned about the impact of tensions between the US and China and the protection of their personal data from Chinese state interference or cybercrime.

“The confidence in the US approach to Covid-19 (41% of consumers and 55% of IT professionals think the US approach is best globally) could likely be an acknowledgment of America’s agile acclimation of tech amidst a pandemic. This is resulting in accelerated development of contact tracing solutions, increased remote workforce infrastructure, and more telehealth and testing capabilities,” said Ray. “At the same time, the continued strain on US-China relations, coupled with an increase in recorded incidents of cyber-attacks from state sponsored Chinese cyber criminals has created a chilling effect.”

The full report, “Contact tracing creates tech privacy fears: POVs from consumers and IT pros” is available [here](#).

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About SecureAge Technology

SecureAge Technology is a rapidly growing data security company that places security and usability on equal footing. Headquartered in Singapore, we are trusted by governments, research institutes, and forward-thinking organizations to protect them from the most advanced and persistent cyber threats in the world. What makes SecureAge different, is we have built a reputation for data-centric and intuitive security solutions that protect data not only when it is stored, but also when it is in use, and in transit. We’ve achieved this by holding strong reign on our belief that users shouldn’t have to become cybersecurity experts to escape data liabilities. Instead,



encryption should be inherent, invisible, and instinctive. To protect data when it is most vulnerable, security must take place at the file-level, operate silently in the background, and support the way in which people collaborate. That's why our users can divert their resources to focus on other challenges – SecureAge users enjoy 100% file-level security, every file, every place, and every time. For more information visit www.secureage.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).