SecurityAwarenessNews
the security awareness newsletter for security aware people

Data Privacy, Compliance, and You

- Understanding Compliance Regulations
- Your Personal Security Checklist
- Data Privacy Basics

Understanding Compliance Regulations

Data collection is commonplace in the modern world. It's also heavily governed by various laws and frameworks, known as compliance regulations, that organizations must adhere to depending on their location and industry. To get a better understanding of this, let's answer a few important questions.

What are compliance regulations?

In terms of data privacy and security, regulatory compliance refers to guidelines that organizations must follow when collecting, handling, and transferring an individual's personal data. This data includes full names, addresses, health records, financial information, race, sex, and almost anything that identifies a specific person.

Why do these regulations exist?

In a word: trust. These regulations ensure organizations don't just collect data legally, but also protect it responsibly. One of the main goals of this process is to balance an organization's legitimate need to collect data with an individual's right to privacy. Without regulations, there would be no standards for providing adequate security or repercussions for failing to protect personal data.

How do regulations help improve security and privacy?

Many regulations require that data collectors implement security policies and robust practices for how data is handled. Failure to comply could result in fines and legal action, which incentivizes organizations to ensure their processes align with applicable regulations and laws.

What's your role in all of this?

You are not required to become a compliance expert. It is expected that you help ensure your organization avoids any potential regulatory violations, which begins with following policy. Similar to regulations, policies set specific guidelines for how organizations collect, store, and handle data. Disregarding policy — intentionally or unintentionally — could undermine the commitment to keeping confidential information confidential.

In summary, compliance standards are about more than just protecting data. They help protect people from the consequences of their data being stolen, leaked, or mishandled. Upholding these standards is the responsibility of every member of an organization, in nearly every industry.

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Data Privacy Basics

Ensuring that confidential information remains confidential is a shared responsibility for every member of an organization. Here are a few simple ways you can protect data and, by extension, protect people.

Stay Alert for Attacks

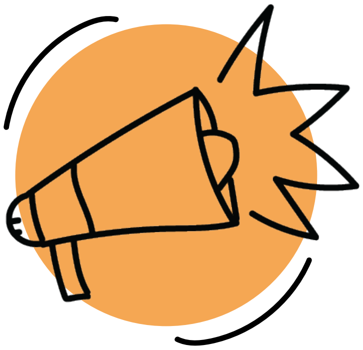
Data privacy (and security) requires a balance of people, processes, and technology. The human part of that balance must ensure that data is never leaked or stolen. It's, therefore, vital for everyone to remain prepared for scams that aim to steal confidential information. Stay alert for indicators of those scams, such as threatening language, urgent requests, and suspicious links or attachments.

Take It Personally

Almost everyone will have their personal information collected, processed, and stored by organizations in multiple industries. We all hope our data is being protected and only used for its intended purpose. Keep that in mind when you're the one handling personal information of someone else. Remember, data is more than just an intangible product; it's a representation of real people.

Report Suspicious Activity

A major part of security is staying alert for suspicious activity and reporting it immediately when encountered. This helps organizations act quickly to review what happened, mitigate potential damages, and implement measures to prevent similar incidents from occurring again.



Spread the Word

Many of the key concepts from work-related security awareness training are also valid in your personal life. It's always a good idea to take those concepts home and share them with your friends and family. This will help you protect your household from data theft and other security threats.

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Your Personal Security Checklist

It's no secret that organizations around the world collect an abundance of personal information. While they must adhere to various compliance regulations aimed at data privacy and security, you should still take measures to protect yourself. Use this checklist as a quick guide to maintaining your digital well-being.

Remain Aware of Common Scams

Staying informed of common scams is one of your best defenses against data theft and fraud.

- □ **I'm aware of fake support and virus scams:** These messages typically claim your device has been infected and urge you to install or buy random software (never do that).
- □ **I'm aware of unusual payment demands:** If anyone insists on payment via gift cards, ignore them. These requests are almost always scams.
- □ **I'm aware of fake account alerts:** Messages that claim an account has been hacked and urge you to update your password by following a link are common attacks designed to gain access to your account.

Secure Your Digital Keys

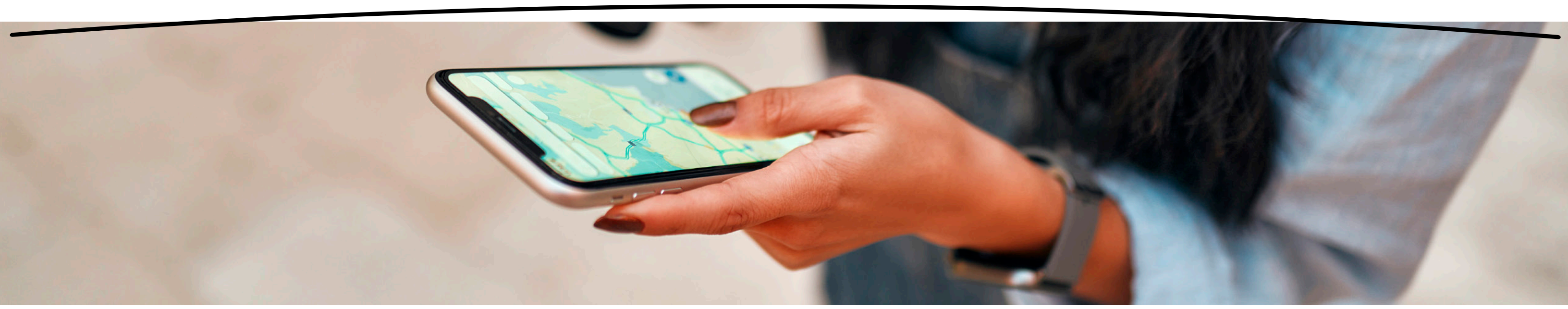
Your passwords are the keys to your digital life. Here's how you can protect them:

- □ **Create unique passwords:** Make sure your passwords are not only strong, but also never used twice.
- □ **Use a password manager:** This software can create, store, and sync strong passwords for you. All you need to remember is one main password to unlock the software.
- □ **Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA):** MFA requires at least two forms of authentication before access to an account is granted. This is a vital layer of security that helps protect you should a password get stolen.

Stay Safe on Social Media

Social media requires a responsible, proactive mindset to maintain your privacy. You can enjoy the benefits of social media and prioritize your online safety by:

- □ **Limiting your audience:** Set your profile to private so only people you know and trust can view it.
- □ **Remaining selective:** Thoroughly review any requests to connect before accepting. Avoid connecting with random strangers.
- □ **Sharing less:** Never share confidential information or anything offensive. Remember, scammers use social media to compile personal data of people that can then be used for personalized attacks.



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