



## **ARF Study Finds a Majority of Respondents Willing to Share Prior Purchase Data and Media Habits for More Relevant Ads**

*Fifth annual Privacy Study explores consumer beliefs and actions around trust in institutions and data privacy*

**New York, NY, September 20, 2022** — Despite the privacy backlash facing the advertising industry, most respondents say it is at least somewhat acceptable to receive more relevant ads in return for certain information that is collected. This is according to the fifth annual ARF (Advertising Research Foundation) Privacy Study released today. In terms of what information to use, “the media you use” and “prior purchases” ranked highest in acceptability at 76% and 74% respectively.

When asked if they were willing to share information in order to get more relevant advertising, people were more likely to share age, gender, race and ethnicity and least likely to share Social Security numbers, financial information and medical information. This willingness stems from the issue of irrelevant advertising which is noteworthy – about a quarter consumers reported “frequently irrelevant” ads across different media platforms.

“Despite the recent proposal of the American Data Privacy and Protection Act, it’s still unclear whether federal privacy legislation will be implemented in the not-so-distant future,” said Paul Donato, Chief Research Officer at the ARF. “Although many bodies are concerned with the impact this legislation will have on the advertising industry, our findings show that there is a path forward because most consumers are generally onboard with relevant advertising and willing to share an array of information – age, gender, race, ethnicity, prior purchases, and media consumption data – to experience it.”

Additional survey findings include:

- **Men are more concerned about privacy:** People overall expressed slightly less concern about privacy and their online behavior as compared to 2021. However, men and younger persons were more likely to take privacy related actions than women and older persons.
- **Consumers will trade data for a better experience:** About half of the respondents said they were willing to have their personal data used if it meant a better experience with interactions, such as recommendation engines. Almost 70% of respondents said it was okay for a doctor’s office to retain their data if it would reduce paperwork during subsequent visits.
- **Smart TVs and smartphone usage grew:** Heavy usage (3+hrs per day) went up for smart TVs and smartphones but dropped slightly for other devices.

- **Older generations watch Smart TVs:** While more people stream video on their Smart TV than any other device, that is not true for persons ages 18-34 years who are more likely to stream on their devices, especially their smartphone.
- **Cohorts can work for gender or age grouping:** Consumers are less favorable about being grouped with others because of their mobility and location than they were about being grouped by age and gender.
- **Similarities garner more trust:** 83% of respondents place the most trust in people like themselves, followed by scientists and technical experts and their local police. However, advertising, media and Congress achieve the lowest trust scores averaging less than 40%. When it comes to protecting data, people are most likely to trust banks and financial institutions, doctors and hospitals than other institutions.
- **Data sharing already assumed:** About 40% of people believe that any given step – like requiring opt-in – has already been taken whether or not the step had indeed been engaged (such as opt-in on Android devices).

The ARF's annual Privacy Study was launched in 2018 as part of an initiative to advance data privacy and protection guidelines for the advertising industry.

To see the full findings of the survey, [visit here](#).

### **Study Methodology**

The ARF conducted its fifth annual Privacy Study by surveying 1,273 US consumers in spring 2022. All five surveys were conducted using a Qualtrics online sample and platform, with quotas for age, gender and region, based on the distribution of the US population.

### **About The ARF**

Founded more than 80 years ago, the ARF is dedicated to creating, curating and sharing objective, industry-level advertising research to enable members to make a true impact on their advertising and build marketing leadership within their organizations. It has more than 400 members from leading brand advertisers, agencies, research firms and media-tech companies. For more information, visit [www.thearf.org](http://www.thearf.org).

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