

Questions for Senator Franken for Mr. Goldstein

1. Mr. GOLDSTEIN, to me, one of your most interesting findings was the lack of transparency around the downstream sharing of location data. According to your report, app companies are not telling users the third party companies that they're turning around and sharing that data with. Mr. GOLDSTEIN, right now, is there any way for consumers to find out who exactly is getting their location data from the original app that collected it?

Privacy policies of mobile industry companies we examined for our September 2012 report on Mobile Device Location Data did not state which specific third parties companies may share consumers' location data with. Most of these policies stated the types of third-party companies location data may be shared with, such as application developers and advertisers, and some policies described third parties with vague terms such as "trusted businesses" or "others." Therefore, consumers cannot find out who exactly is getting their location data from these policies. However, we did not evaluate explicitly whether consumers could successfully request such information from companies, or obtain it through other means for either the Mobile Device Location Data report or the In-Car Location-Based Services report.