## Americans Don't Believe They Control Their Personal Information

Americans overwhelmingly have no confidence that they have control over their personal information, regardless of whether the information is collected by the government or corporations, a new Pew Research Center report found.

The report also found that a majority of respondents said they are willing to share some personal data in exchange for access to free online services. But the respondents agreed that it would be "very difficult to remove inaccurate information about them online."

The report entitled "Public Perceptions of Privacy and Security in the Post-Snowden Era" is based on responses from a representative panel of 607 adults, of whom 26 also participated in focus groups. Among the major findings:

The public feels most secure using landline phones, least secure on social media

% of adults who feel varying degrees of security when sharing private info with another trusted person or organization

	Very secure	Somewhat secure	Not very secure	Not at all secure
Using a landline	16	51	19	12
Calling on your cell phone	9	43	29	17
Sending text messages	7	32	37	22
Sending email	5	35	36	21
Using chat or IM	4	25	36	32
Using social media sites	2	14	28	53

Source: Pew Research Privacy Panel Survey, January 2014. N=607 adults, ages 18 and older.

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- 91% "agree" or "strongly agree" that consumers have lost control over how personal information is collected and used by companies.
- 88% "agree" or "strongly agree" that it would be very difficult to remove inaccurate information about them online.
- 80% who use social networking sites say they are concerned about third parties like advertisers or businesses accessing the data they share on these sites.
- 70% who use social networking sites say that they are at least somewhat concerned about the government accessing some of the information they share on social networking sites without their knowledge.
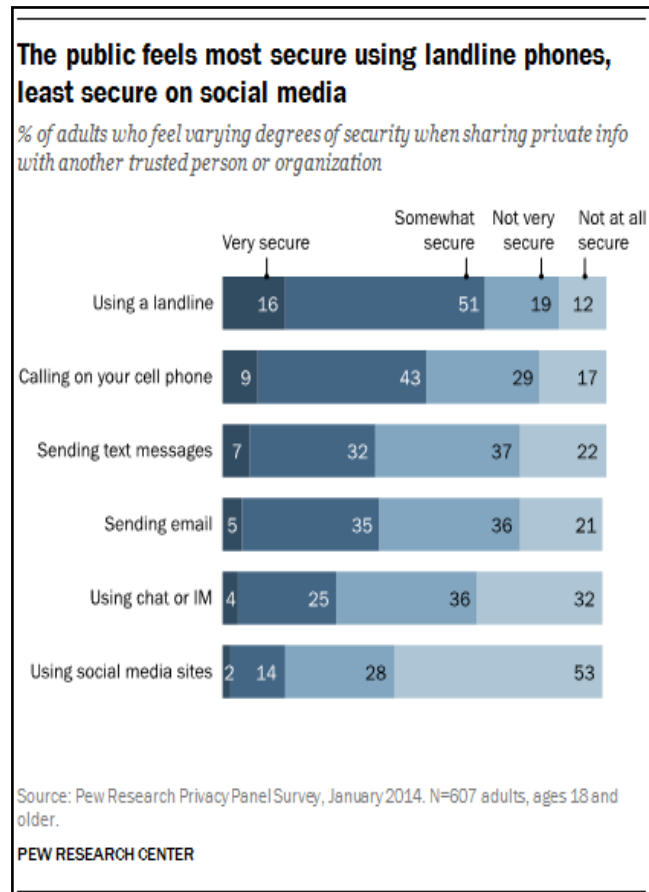
As far as government involvement, the findings included:

- 80% "agree" or "strongly agree" that Americans should be concerned about the government's monitoring of phone calls and internet communications.
- 64% believe the government should do more to regulate advertisers.

- 36% "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement: "It is a good thing for society if people believe that someone is keeping an eye on the things that they do online."

When it comes to what form of communication device is secure, landline phones rank the highest. Fully 81% feel "not very" or "not at all" secure using social media sites, 68% feel insecure using chat or instant messages, 58% feel insecure sending text messages, and 46% feel "not very" or "not at all" secure using their cell phone.

When asked about employer rules or guidelines regarding how they are allowed to present themselves online, only 24 percent said such rules existed. However, one in ten reported their jobs require them to promote themselves through social media or other online tools.

Only 6% said they had set up an automatic alerts to notify them when their name is mentioned in a news story, blog, or elsewhere online. "Young adults are somewhat more likely than older adults to have done this—11% of 18-29 year olds have set up alerts—but just 1% of those 65 and older have done so."

About half of the respondents said they assume that people they meet will search for information about them on the internet. "Younger adults under age 50 are more likely to say they assume new acquaintances will search for information about them (53%) than older adults (40%). College graduates (53%) are also more likely to assume people will search for information about them online compared with those who have not attended college (40%)."