



**Federal Trade
Commission**
Protecting America's

Consumers

V. CONCLUSION

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The Commission staff used this Workshop to explore the full range of views about privacy in the online marketplace. The informal format especially well to continue a dialogue that was both educational and helpful to all participants and the Commission staff.

The Workshop produced a rich factual record about the current collection and use of personal information online, the technology that collect such information, and the still developing technological and self-regulatory initiatives to address online privacy concerns. It also p extremely thoughtful discussion about self-regulation and the role of government in this new and rapidly evolving marketplace.

Workshop participants agreed that privacy is a significant concern in the new online environment. Consumers have concerns about the c collection of personal data generally, and those concerns are heightened when the collection and use of data is from and about children. Participants acknowledged that privacy concerns must be addressed if consumers are to have confidence in the online marketplace, and thrive.

The Workshop testimony also reflected broad areas of agreement on the necessary elements of effective consumer privacy protection o namely, notice, choice, security and access. Workshop participants agreed that notice to consumers about information practices is esser that consumers should be able to exercise choice about whether and how their personal information is used. Further, participants agreee security of personal information is crucial, and many agreed that consumers should have access to their information. Viewpoints varied considerably, however, on more specific issues of implementation, such as the form notice to consumers should take, how consumer chb be exercised, and when and how to obtain parental consent when information is collected from children.

Panelists disagreed about whether government regulation is needed, or whether the issues addressed at the Workshop, at least initially, addressed by self-regulatory efforts and emerging technologies. Industry participants presented a variety of self-regulatory proposals, sc very early stages of development. Technology experts demonstrated a wide array of technology-based protections, a number of which a have entered the marketplace. Some participants asserted that self regulation and technological tools are sufficient to implement privacy protections. Others argued that although self-regulation and technology are useful tools, they have been and will remain inadequate in th of government regulation.

Events continue to unfold with respect to both emerging technologies and self-regulatory initiatives. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission keep abreast of these developments by convening a follow-up workshop. The purpose of the workshop would be to educati Commission about changes in the collection and use of personal information online since the last workshop, including technological adv: self-regulatory efforts. This updated information should assist the Commission in considering the implications of online privacy issues for consumer protection mission.

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