

Sandra Johnson

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Federal Trade Commission
Office of the Secretary
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite CC-5610 (Annex C)
Washington, DC 20580

Re: Competition and Consumer Protection in the 21st Century Hearing, Project Number P181201

It really bothers me to know that nearly everything we do online is generating data that companies are collecting and selling. These companies don't know what my needs are, and I don't want the whole world knowing what's going on in my life--good, bad, or indifferent. There should be much more transparent disclosure of what data an app or service is going to use, and we should have more control of it. As it is, they make it really hard for you to tell them what they can and cannot do. They know that and that's how they get you!

I use Google and Facebook, and I firmly believe that I should have a say in what data of mine is collected and how it's used. I have stopped shopping online because I am worried about my online safety. And, I am getting off of Facebook because I don't trust them anymore, either. With all the fraud that's going on, I got to where I barely trust anybody. They made me feel this way, and I didn't used to feel like this. My information is none of their business!

The terms and conditions for these sites are so fine print and lengthy that you don't have time to go through it if you're trying to get something done. These companies are well aware of that fact, and that's why they do it that way. The average person does not even know what the conditions are saying, so they just click Agree and keep going. When you do that, the companies say that you're consenting to give away your data, and that is utterly unfair.

With pervasive location tracking by Google and Android phones, it's like having someone follow us wherever we go. To me, that is as scary as the devil! We're not free anymore. It is as if they've got eyes on you everywhere! Speaking of phones, Google was caught altering results on its search engine to promote its own smartphone products over the competition. That kind of thing needs to stop. Google makes enough money as it is; they don't need to take every dime for themselves! More competition would be better for consumers, and we deserve it.

I also worry about certain political viewpoints being silenced online, as Google subsidiary YouTube has done. They just put stuff on there that they want you to see; they don't tell you the whole story about any of it. If some people are censored and only some are heard, it will make a huge difference to our democracy. That's what's wrong today. Working people don't have time to see the whole story. A lot of it is censorship because they don't want you to know what's going on; they want to keep it a secret. People don't believe everything that is going on, and it's bad! Our democracy is at threat. We keep going under and under. I wonder, *What's going to be next?*

I saw coverage about the Equifax scandal on the Internet and TV. I was really concerned about that. People's credit is almost their livelihood in this day and time. I am very careful about what I do online, but even so, I was the victim of a scam. I got a phone call claiming to be regarding my Microsoft software. I realized that they were scammers who were trying to get access to my computer. Fortunately, I was able to take my computer to a repair service, and they fixed it. I only caught this scam because I watch in-depth news to get all of the story. Most people can't do that, and another person might not have caught what was happening. That's why it's so important for online companies like these to take steps to protect our data.

Companies like Google don't follow their own rules for using our data because it's all about the money for them. It is unfair that they make profits in billions of dollars every year by doing this. When they take my online stuff and make money off of it, that money needs to come back to me. It is like they are taking money out of my pocket. It is pure stealing.

I fully realize that these companies may need **some** of our information in order to offer us their services, but I should have a "yea" or "nay" in the matter. I shouldn't **have** to agree to their specific terms to use their service. And before I **do** agree to any terms, I want to see something I can read and truly understand. I should not have to conform to their rules; it should be on **my terms**. Any information I don't consent to give is **mine** and mine alone.

Sincerely,

Sandra Johnson