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“Privacy Policy Analysis of WhatsApp: Ethical Considerations and Data Governance Practices”

AN INDIVIDUAL TASK

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Introduction to the App and Purpose of Analysis

- WhatsApp is a popular instant messaging application used globally.
- It enables users to send text messages, voice notes, images, and videos.
- The app also supports voice and video calling features.
- Millions of users share personal data through the platform daily.
- Privacy and data protection are critical concerns for such applications.
- Privacy policies explain how user data is collected and managed.
- Ethical data usage is essential to maintain user trust.
- This analysis focuses on data privacy and governance practices.
- It evaluates transparency and ethical responsibilities.
- The aim is to understand how user data is protected and used.

Types of Data Collected

User Data Flow in WhatsApp



- WhatsApp collects user phone numbers for account identification.
- Profile information such as name and profile photo is stored.
- Contact lists are accessed with user permission.
- Metadata such as message time and date is collected.
- Device information like model and operating system is recorded.
- IP address data is used for approximate location detection.
- Usage data tracks how users interact with the app.
- Business interaction data is collected for WhatsApp Business users.
- Payment data is collected when payment features are used.
- All collected data supports app functionality and security.

Purpose of Data Usage

- Data is used to provide messaging and calling services.
- User information helps verify account authenticity.
- Metadata ensures proper message delivery.
- Data helps improve app performance and reliability.
- Security systems use data to prevent spam and fraud.
- Business data enables communication with companies.
- Customer support uses data to resolve user issues.
- Analytics support feature improvement.
- Data supports compliance with legal requirements.
- Message content remains protected through encryption.

Data Sharing and Third-Party Access

- WhatsApp may share limited data with its parent company.
- Third-party service providers assist with technical operations.
- Business accounts can access customer messages.
- Data may be shared when required by law.

- **Cross-border data transfers may occur.**
- **End-to-end encryption prevents message access by third parties.**
- **Shared data usually excludes message content.**
- **Users are informed about data sharing in the policy.**
- **Data sharing raises transparency concerns.**
- **Ethical responsibility requires clear disclosure of sharing practices.**

Ethical Considerations

- **User consent is essential before collecting personal data.**
- **Transparency helps users understand data usage.**
- **Data minimization reduces privacy risks.**
- **End-to-end encryption protects confidentiality.**
- **Metadata collection raises ethical concerns.**
- **Users may feel pressured to accept policy changes.**
- **Trust is critical for long-term platform success.**
- **Ethical practices protect vulnerable users.**
- **Accountability is needed in case of data misuse.**
- **Ethical governance improves user confidence.**

Data Security and Governance Practices

- **End-to-end encryption secures personal communication.**
- **Security protocols prevent unauthorized access.**
- **Employee access to data is strictly limited.**
- **Data retention policies control storage duration.**
- **Regular updates fix security vulnerabilities.**
- **Governance frameworks guide data handling.**
- **Risk assessments identify privacy threats.**
- **Compliance with global data laws is maintained.**
- **Monitoring systems detect suspicious activity.**

- **Strong governance reduces legal and ethical risks.**

User Rights and Conclusion

- **Users can access and update their personal data.**
- **Privacy settings allow control over visibility.**
- **Users can block or report contacts.**
- **Two-step verification improves account security.**
- **Users can delete their accounts permanently.**
- **Data portability options may be available.**
- **Clear policies build user trust.**
- **Encryption strengthens privacy protection.**
- **Some concerns remain regarding data sharing.**
- **Overall, WhatsApp balances usability with privacy but needs greater transparency.**