

# Assignment

The major purpose of this assignment is to have you do some academic library research involving the issues of databases and privacy, then do some critical thinking and analysis about these issues, and finally present the results in an organized and professional post (do not submit extemporized personal opinions). (**Tip:** Don't forget about the resources found at [Writing Assignments: APA Style, and Library Research Information](#)[Links to an external site.](#))

Cultural analysts have argued that privacy is less important to a generation that grew up with YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and texting. On the other hand, this same generation has grown up with database technology more ubiquitous and capable than ever before. Think about how many times this week you've been involved (knowingly or not) with database systems. How do you think the tension between privacy and database technology will or should play out as powerful database applications become ever more pervasive in our world?

Don't just post your opinion -- do some research and cite studies, give anecdotal examples, create hypotheticals, etc. You must include cites. Your post can be insightful and creative, it can be scholarly, or it can be both; it should not be just your personal opinion.

**After you have posted your response, remember you need to reply to the responses of at least two of your fellow students. You should review the general [L00: Discussion Guidelines and Grading Information](#) before posting.**

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from [L11: Discussion - Database Technology and Privacy Issues](#)

Daily, users interact with more database and information collection schemes than they could count on both hands. Perhaps more worrying however is the fact that most users rarely read through the associated privacy agreements associated with access to the website/application, let alone keep up with their constant changes. This may be due to the obscurity in privacy policy presentation, which usually consists of something akin to a link to an external webpage or a lengthy box of text followed by an agreement checkbox.

A study tested this hypothesis by presenting users with a search engine for finding products to purchase that had a privacy rating meter next to each search result from 0 – 5. It found that when presented with this very easy to observe metric, users were more likely to purchase items from websites with a higher rating than others. (Tsai, Egelman, Cranor, & Acquisti, 2011, pp. 259-264)

A second study investigated the effect of privacy policy visualization in the context of social media. They used methods of converting the lengthy blocks of text that make up privacy policies into tag clouds (which create a diagram of key terms and links showing relationships between them) and “Document Cards” (which create a series of cards that include key terms and related images) (Aikaterini & Aggeliki, 2020, pp. 507-510)

They found that presenting privacy policy in this more digestible and visual format increased user’s understandings of the policies presented to them. (Aikaterini & Aggeliki, 2020, pp. 512-517)

Both these instances show the need for a reformed way of conveying to users what personal privacies and data are being traded for application access. At the same time, the full text should not simply be replaced by such distillation, however it is plausible that presenting a more user friendly interpretation first would overall relieve individuals worries about data privacy, and cause companies and organizations to rethink their data collection strategies as a result of feedback from a more informed populace.

## References

Aikaterini, S., & Aggeliki, T. (2020). Effects of privacy policy visualization on users’ information privacy awareness level: The case of Instagram. *Information Technology & People*, 33(2), 502-534.

Tsai, J. Y., Egelman, S., Cranor, L., & Acquisti, A. (2011, June). The Effect of Online Privacy Information on Purchasing Behavior: An Experimental Study. *Information Systems Research*, 22, 254-269.