



Who Has Your Back?

Which Companies Help Protect Your Data from the Government?

When you use the Internet, you entrust your conversations, thoughts, experiences, locations, photos, and more to companies like Google, AT&T, and Facebook. But what do these companies do when the government demands your private information? Do they stand with you? Do they let you know what's going on?

In this annual report, the Electronic Frontier Foundation examined the policies of major Internet companies — including ISPs, email providers, cloud storage providers, location-based services, blogging platforms, and social networking sites — to assess whether they publicly commit to standing with users when the government seeks access to user data. The purpose of this report is to incentivize companies to be transparent about how data flows to the government and encourage them to take a stand for user privacy whenever it is possible to do so.

We compiled the information in this report by examining each company's published terms of service, privacy policy, transparency report, and guidelines for law enforcement requests, if any. We also considered the company's public record of fighting for user privacy in the courts and whether it is a member of the Digital Due Process coalition, which encourages Congress to improve outdated communications law. Finally, we contacted each company to explain our findings and gave them an opportunity to provide evidence of improved policies and practices. These categories are not the only ways that a company can stand up for users, of course, but they are important and publicly verifiable. In addition, not every company has faced a decision about whether to stand up for users in the courts, but we wanted to particularly commend those companies who have done so when given with the opportunity.

For the 2013 report, we used the following six criteria to assess company practices and policies:

- **Require a warrant for content of communications.** In this new category, companies earn recognition if they require the government to obtain a warrant supported by probable cause before they will hand over the content of user communications. This policy ensures that private messages stored by online services like Facebook, Google, and Twitter are treated consistently with the protections of the Fourth Amendment.
- **Tell users about government data requests.** To earn a star in this category, Internet companies must promise to tell users when the government seeks their data unless prohibited by law. This gives users a chance to defend themselves against overreaching government demands for their data.
- **Publish transparency reports.** We award companies a star in this category if they publish statistics on how often they provide user data to the government.
- **Publish law enforcement guidelines.** Companies get a star in this category if they make public policies or guidelines they have explaining how they respond to data demands from the government, such as guides for law enforcement.

- **Fight for users' privacy rights in courts.** To earn recognition in this category, companies must have a public record of resisting overbroad government demands for access to user content in court.
- **Fight for users' privacy in Congress.** Internet companies earn a star in this category if they support efforts to modernize electronic privacy laws to defend users in the digital age by joining the Digital Due Process Coalition.

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	Requires a warrant for content	Tells users about government data requests	Publishes transparency reports	Publishes law enforcement guidelines	Fights for users' privacy rights in courts	Fights for users' privacy rights in Congress
amazon	★	★	★	★	★	★
Apple	★	★	★	★	★	★
at&t	★	★	★	★	★	★
Comcast	★	★	★	★	★	★
Dropbox	★	★	★	★	★	★
facebook	★	★	★	★	★	★
foursquare	★	★	★	★	★	★
Google	★	★	★	★	★	★
LinkedIn	★	★	★	★	★	★
Microsoft	★	★	★	★	★	★
myspace	★	★	★	★	★	★
Sonic.net	★	★	★	★	★	★
SPIDEROAK	★	★	★	★	★	★
@twitter	★	★	★	★	★	★
tumblr	★	★	★	★	★	★
verizon	★	★	★	★	★	★
WORDPRESS	★	★	★	★	★	★
YAHOO!	★	★	★	★	★	★

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