

# MEMORANDUM

TO: PROGRESSIVE POLICY INSTITUTE  
FROM: NEIL NEWHOUSE & ROBERT BLIZZARD – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES  
PETER D. HART  
SUBJECT: KEY FINDINGS FROM RECENT NATIONAL SURVEY OF INTERNET USERS  
DATE: MAY 26, 2016

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*On behalf of the Progressive Policy Institute, Public Opinion Strategies & Peter D. Hart completed a live telephone survey of 800 Internet users nationally, May 23-25, 2016. Fully 40% of the telephone interviews were conducted via cell phone, and the margin of error for the survey is  $\pm 3.46\%$ . The purpose of this memo is to review the key findings from the survey.*

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Online privacy and data security is very important to Internet users.**  
By 97%-3%, Internet users say that online privacy and data security issues are important to them, including 82% who say they're "very" important.
- **Internet users generally believe that most Internet companies have "a lot" of access to their online data.**  
When asked to indicate how much access Internet users believe Internet companies have to their online Internet data, there's a general belief that most companies have "a lot" of access, with Internet users believing web browsers, social networks and search engines have the most access to their online data:

Type of Internet Company	A Lot of Access
Web browsers, like Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox	60%
Social networks, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter	60%
Search engines, like Bing, Google and Yahoo	59%
Internet service providers, like AT&T, Charter, Comcast, T-Mobile and Verizon	54%
Operating systems, like Chrome, i-O-S, and Windows	53%
Messaging services and apps, like Skype, Snapchat, and WhatsApp	30%

- ***By an overwhelming margin, Internet users strongly agree that all internet companies should operate under the same set of rules and regulations.***

By an overwhelming 90%-8% margin, Internet users agree that “*all Internet companies should operate under the same set of rules and regulations so that standards are fair and equal across the board,*” including 74% of Internet users who say they “strongly” agree with that statement.

Agreement for all Internet companies operating under the same set of rules and regulations cuts across every single demographic and geographic sub-group:

<i>Sub-Group</i>	<i>Agree-Disagree</i>	<i>Sub-Group</i>	<i>Agree-Disagree</i>
<b>Men</b>	<b>88%-10%</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>90%-8%</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>91%-6%</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>90%-7%</b>
<b>Age 18-34</b>	<b>86%-10%</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>86%-7%</b>
<b>Age 35-44</b>	<b>86%-11%</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>92%-7%</b>
<b>Age 45-54</b>	<b>90%-7%</b>	<b>Midwest</b>	<b>87%-10%</b>
<b>Age 55-64</b>	<b>95%-4%</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>90%-8%</b>
<b>Age 65+</b>	<b>93%-4%</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>89%-6%</b>
<b>Republicans</b>	<b>89%-10%</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>87%-8%</b>
<b>Independents</b>	<b>90%-8%</b>	<b>Suburban</b>	<b>90%-9%</b>
<b>Democrats</b>	<b>91%-6%</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>97%-2%</b>

- ***And, also by an overwhelming margin, Internet users strongly agree that all companies collecting data online should follow the same consumer privacy rules.***

By an overwhelming 94%-5% margin, Internet users agree that “*All companies collecting data online should follow the same consumer privacy rules so that consumers can be assured that their personal data is protected regardless of the company that collects or uses it,*” including 82% of Internet users who say they “strongly” agree with that statement.

- ***Finally, by an 83%-12% margin, Internet users say their online privacy should be protected based on the sensitivity of their online data, rather than by the type of Internet company that uses their data.***

*Now, I'd like to read you two points of view about protecting consumer privacy, and please tell me which ONE comes closer to your own opinion...*

**83%**

Some people say your online privacy should be protected based on the sensitivity of different types of online data like your personal health and financial information, information about children, your Social Security number or precise geo-location information.

**12%**

Other people say your online privacy should be protected based on the type of Internet company that uses the data, like broadband providers, social networks or search engines.