

Your Car Is Spying on You, Automobiles Have Become a 'Privacy Nightmare'

Modern automobiles are technological marvels offering many options for car buyers. Privacy is not one of them. New cars have become spies on wheels.

Automobiles today are giant rolling sensors, from the tires to the entertainment system, tracking not only your driving habits but recording personal information about you, completely unrelated to driving.

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Experts call them a "privacy nightmare."

New cars can collect more data about you than anything else you own, including your cell phone, and for good reason. Driver data has been valued at \$400 billion.



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"The saying in Silicon Valley is, 'If you're not paying for the product, you're the product.' But what's strange with cars is that the average new car costs almost \$50,000. You're still the product," says Andrea Amico, founder and CEO of Privacy4Cars, one of the nation's top experts on auto data collection.

Amico says, "If you ask Americans how they feel about their car, they'll tell you they're an extension of their home. They feel it's a very private place."

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In fact, your car is far from private. A study by Mozilla's 'Privacy Not Included' project found cars to be the worst product for privacy they've ever tested.

The fine print on Nissan's privacy statement from 2023 says it may collect "Sensitive personal information, including...citizenship status, immigration status, race, national origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, sexual orientation, sexual activity...health diagnosis data, and genetic information."

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After an uproar, the company's most recent privacy statement omits the collection of "sexual" and "genetic" information.

Security and privacy expert Thorin Klosowski at the Electronic Frontier Foundation says it's not clear if it was just lawyerly fine print. "It's kind of hard to say if they're actually collecting anything or if they've just written it so that they could theoretically collect something," Klosowski said.

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