

# Future Mobility Board

Where passion, experts, and networks thrive



## Privacy

**Consumers want control over their data - how will the industry respond?**

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Meeting Date	Meeting Theme	Guest Speakers
3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2024	Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sherif Malak (Shoosmiths)</li><li>• Andrea Amico (Privacy4Cars)</li></ul>

### Key Findings:

#### **1. Privacy matters to a growing proportion of consumers – but how and why?**

Surveys suggest that privacy is an important factor for 39% of consumers when purchasing cars. Many consumers worry about excessive data collection and desire greater control. However, the underlying outcomes they seek - whether safety, security, or transparency - are not well understood, nor is how they weigh privacy against convenience. What is clear is that more people are actively looking to protect their data, as seen in the growth of services like Privacy4Cars. The industry needs deeper, more contextual research into consumer privacy concerns beyond simple "how important is it to you?" questions.

#### **2. Privacy is a key part of the customer experience that needs careful design**

Privacy should not be treated as a compliance issue - it is an integral part of customer experience and trust. Transparency is critical, and effective communication can help build confidence. Privacy concerns often fall into two key categories: (1) residual data left on rented or returned (used) vehicles, which can lead to unauthorized access or misuse, and (2) how automakers handle customer data in ways that may be legal but feel untrustworthy to consumers. These concerns can be abstract, making it difficult for consumers to articulate their fears, even when real-world consequences exist (e.g., stalking or unauthorised vehicle access). To bridge this gap, automakers should craft impactful, relatable stories that help consumers understand the risks and how they are being addressed.

#### **3. Privacy laws don't necessarily restrict – they create conditionality**

Data privacy laws are often perceived as barriers, but in reality, they set conditions under which data can be used. Privacy regulation is not just about protection - it also involves competition, security, and worker rights. Understanding the nuances of personal data (e.g., identifiers vs. attributes, regional differences) is key. GDPR, for instance, is not monolithic; its application varies across regions. Data portability creates both risks and opportunities, while data localisation remains a complex issue. While regulatory fines remain inconsistent, non-compliance poses significant potential liabilities.

#### **4. Data portability threatens to disrupt the ecosystem**

New data portability laws are reshaping the industry by requiring companies to provide consumers with access to their data in a standardised format. While this can drive innovation, it also raises challenges: companies receiving data may become responsible for privacy risks, and balancing data ownership with consumer control is complex. The Data Act, which entered into force on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and will become applicable on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025, reminiscent of fair and reasonable patent licensing, prevents companies from hoarding data. The implications for automakers and service providers will unfold rapidly.

## 5. Every new automotive trend creates more data (and more minefields)

The automotive industry generates vast amounts of data, and as new technologies emerge - EVs, connected vehicles, autonomous vehicles - this data explosion accelerates. The complexity of the supply chain and the increasing push to monetise data create risks, particularly in defining roles (who is the data processor vs. controller). Many OEMs and suppliers remain at a basic compliance level rather than embracing privacy innovation. The differences between onboard and offboard data management further complicate privacy responsibilities.

## 6. While OEMs are creating processes to handle data deletion, they often fail

Consumer concerns about data privacy extend beyond corporate or government misuse - media stories have highlighted cases of stalking, theft, and even remote vehicle immobilisation due to data access. Despite existing processes to delete personal data from vehicles, audits show that over 50% of checked vehicles still contain residual data. Many dealerships fail to disclose data practices adequately, and change-of-ownership processes are often slow and inconsistent. This gap between policy and execution presents a major industry challenge.

## 7. Privacy By Design requires organisations to cut across silos and can be a point of differentiation

Privacy cannot be treated as an afterthought or delegated to a single department - it must be embedded into business models and product development from the start. The principles of Privacy by Design - collect only what is needed, keep it secure, ensure transparency, and prevent scope creep - should be seen as a business opportunity rather than a regulatory burden. Companies that implement privacy-first approaches can unlock new revenue streams (e.g., dealerships already see 4-10X returns on privacy-enhancing policies).

### Conclusion: Privacy is not just a legal issue - it's a business opportunity

The industry must reframe privacy as a competitive advantage rather than a regulatory headache. Consumers are increasingly aware of their data rights, regulators are paying closer attention, and privacy-first businesses are beginning to outperform their competitors. Companies must ask themselves: Are we simply complying with the minimum legal requirements, or are we leveraging privacy as a way to build trust and unlock new value?

## Further Reading:

- [Mozilla finds cars collect excessive data, share it, and lack user control](#)
- [Texas sues GM for allegedly violating drivers' privacy](#)
- [New EU rules on data sharing and portability of cloud services now in force](#)
- [Data privacy survey: Consumers worry about data but don't do enough to protect it](#)
- [The GDPR and EU Data Act: is the number up for vehicle manufacturers?](#)

## Our Guests:

Shoosmiths	Privacy4Cars
<p>Shoosmiths is a leading UK law firm with a strong Privacy &amp; Data team offering global support. They help businesses implement privacy frameworks, manage data security, and navigate complex regulations. Shoosmiths works closely with car manufacturers, advising on privacy strategies to monetise connected car data while ensuring compliance.</p> <p><a href="https://www.shoosmiths.com">https://www.shoosmiths.com</a></p>	<p>Privacy4Cars is a privacy-tech company focused on privacy and data security solutions in automotive for businesses and consumers, alike. Its multi patented data deletion and transparent disclosure platforms are used by hundreds of auto businesses - not just for compliance, but to make privacy valuable for vehicle users and a competition and innovation edge for businesses.</p> <p><a href="http://www.privacy4cars.com">http://www.privacy4cars.com</a></p>