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NewsClips

May 8, 2019

USA Today
[AT&T, Verizon, Sprint and T-Mobile get sued for reportedly selling your location data](#)

Alphabet Inc's Google business on Tuesday announced new privacy controls for its services, including "Incognito mode" for Google Maps, and published new privacy commitments for its hardware, showing how increased public scrutiny is forcing greater transparency in Silicon Valley.

CNBC
[Google CEO takes a jab at Apple's security pitch:](#)

The announcements were dotted throughout nearly two hours of product updates from the search giant at its annual Google I/O developers' conference. Google also launched its lowest priced smartphone yet, the Pixel 3a, and demonstrated upcoming capabilities

'Privacy cannot be a luxury good'

Sunbury Daily Item

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Washington Post
'Do not call them back!': FCC warns of late-night scam calls

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Philadelphia Inquirer
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for its virtual assistant, such as car rental and movie ticket bookings by voice commands.

Google has been fending off some of the growing legislative and regulatory pushes in the United States and elsewhere to regulate data privacy and other issues core to its business model. Proposals being weighed by lawmakers would limit how Google, Facebook Inc and other internet companies track consumers and distribute information.

With revenue growth slowing and costs largely growing, Alphabet has faced questions from investors about the threat of new rules and its ability to commercialize newer services such as the Google Assistant. Alphabet shares closed Tuesday down 1.2 percent to \$1,178.86. They have fallen from an all-time high of \$1,296.98 since the company reported quarterly sales last month that were \$1 billion below expectations. Incognito mode, which is launching on Google Maps "soon" and Google search later this year, would block the company from storing user activity in those services, the company said.

For home-based devices including smart speakers, thermostats and security alarms, Google on Tuesday published a new website with disclosures on how sensors such as microphones and cameras on those devices work. In addition, it committed to giving users the ability to review any sensor recordings and delete them. Further, the company said it would not use "video footage, audio recordings, and home environment sensor readings" to personalize ads.

Other privacy announcements included more granular control starting later this year over how mobile apps for Google's Android operating system access location data. "The central focus of the release is security and privacy," Stephanie Cuthbertson, director of product management for Android, said on stage.

The car booking capability, which Google demonstrated on National Car Rental's website, builds on the company's push over the last two years to integrate more artificial intelligence-fueled features into its virtual helper, Google Assistant. It aims to free users from manually filling out forms on websites, Google Chief Executive Sundar Pichai told the several thousand conference attendees. It will be available later this year on Android phones in the United States and United Kingdom, Google said.

In an update to search, Google introduced augmented reality technology that enables users to view three-dimensional renderings of some visual results through their smartphone cameras. Google said it was working with companies such as New Balance, Target Corp, Samsung and Volvo to make 3D models of their products available in mobile search.

Google also brought Google Assistant to new products. Starting at \$399, the Pixel 3a could help the company reverse flagging sales of more premium phones. It will be available in the U.S. in T-Mobile and Sprint stores for the first time in addition to Verizon outlets. AT&T, the fourth major wireless carrier, has declined to stock it, people familiar with the matter said. Google said it would re-brand all of its "Home" hardware as "Nest," reflecting the thermostat maker it purchased in 2014.

The Google Nest Hub Max, a larger version of Google's smart speaker with a display, will arrive later this year, the company announced. Priced at \$229, the Max will include a camera with facial recognition technology to activate the device without a voice command. That camera sensing feature will not send imagery to Google's servers once it is set up, Google said on its new privacy website. – ***Reuters***; and in ***New York Times***, **Google Says It Has Found Religion on Privacy**

