

# Allow or Deny: The Impact of Information Access Mode on Willingness to Share Personal Information

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## **Abstract**

We study how different formats of privacy settings impact consumers' willingness to share their personal information. Specifically, we focus on different modes of providing access to personal information – “allowing access”, where users choose who can see the information shared, versus “denying access” where users determine who cannot see the information shared. Through six studies, we show that the willingness to share personal information is higher when people select who to “allow” (vs. “deny”) access to. This result is robust whether access is allowed/denied to people, apps, or cookies on websites. We show that one reason for the difference in sharing is the lower perceived certainty of who will have access to information in the “deny” (vs. “allow”) condition; and that making the people with information access salient reduces the access mode effect by increasing sharing, while making the uncertainty of people with access salient reduces the access mode effect by reducing sharing.

**Subject Areas:** *Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Information Processing*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour