

Understanding Customer Privacy in Service Environments

ALEKSANDRA MIKHAILOVA
Stockholm School of Economics

Cite as:

MIKHAILOVA ALEKSANDRA (2026), Understanding Customer Privacy in Service Environments.
Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy, 55th, (134290)

Paper from the 55th Annual EMAC Conference, Bath, United Kingdom, June 2-5, 2026



Understanding Customer Privacy in Service Environments

Abstract

This research examines how customers experience privacy violations in service environments and how these experiences translate into punitive responses. Moving beyond data-centric views, we investigate privacy as an embodied, social, and contextual phenomenon. Using a multi-method design, we first develop an inductive typology of privacy violations (Study 1). We then analyze 2712 Google Maps reviews referencing privacy concerns with NLP techniques (Study 2). Results show that normative violations yield substantially lower evaluations than boundary violations, and that data-related violations are especially damaging. Boundary violations, however, dominate the volume of complaints. Emotional dominance emerges as a strong, independent predictor of punitive ratings, highlighting the role of perceived agency in customer responses. The findings advance service research by reframing privacy as a lived service experience and by identifying psychological mechanisms that shape customer sanctions.

Track: Service Marketing & Service Innovation