Data privacy in 2025: A survey to explore consumer views on cyber protection

Acronis

Three decades or so into mainstream use of the internet, much has changed. Consumers have shifted from using a single desktop or laptop computer for surfing to using multiple devices to shop, bank, chat and share media of all kinds.

The expansion of digital footprints and data collection has also brought cyberthreats that menace consumers every time they go online. Data Privacy Day, observed on January 28, serves as an important reminder of the growing need for data protection. Failing to safeguard critical information can lead to severe financial and even personal consequences.

How do consumers feel about cyberthreats in this dangerous era? What do they know about data protection, and what are they doing to keep their information safe? Acronis posed questions to British consumers to understand public perceptions of data protection and the steps individuals are taking to safeguard their personal information through cybersecurity practices. Highlights of the findings and trends are detailed in this report.

Consumer cybersecurity practices have come a long way, but still have far to go

The survey reveals that many consumers are becoming more sophisticated in their understanding of security threats. Many are taking at least some proactive steps to protect their data. However, notable gaps in how consumers approach data privacy are evident. There are also some holes in consumers' cybersecurity practices.

> **Survey responses reveal concern among consumers about cybersecurity that they don't always necessarily back up with behavior.**
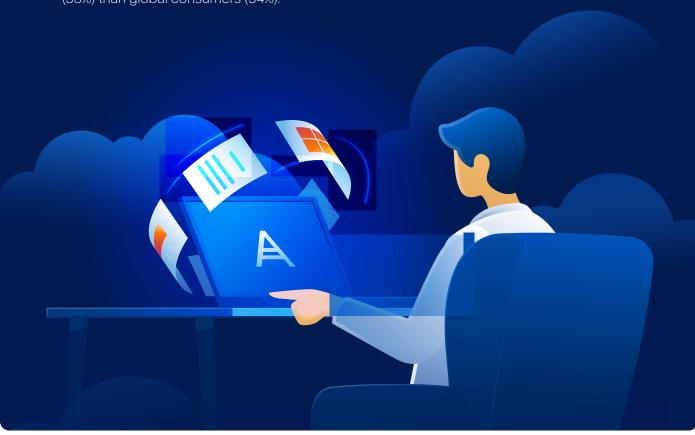
Key takeaways

The Acronis Data Privacy in 2025 Survey explores consumer attitudes toward cybersecurity and examines how everyday users protect themselves online. In the U.K., some broad trends emerged:

- **Strong adherence to data privacy practices:** British consumers reported better adherence to data privacy best practices than their global counterparts — 6% better in every best practice category than in the rest of the world. Seventy-eight percent of British consumers reported using strong passwords, compared to 68% of global consumers.

- **Priority in backing up text messages:** Fifty-one percent of respondents said text messages were the most important data type to back up, compared to 33% globally. On the other hand, British respondents were less likely to prioritize backing up documents (38%) than global consumers (54%).

- **Data breaches a top concern about data privacy:** A robust 70% of U.K. respondents identified data breaches as their top data privacy concern. They also reported being more worried about stolen passwords and private information than global consumers (42% vs. 32%).

- **Mixed record on use of cybersecurity tools:** U.K. respondents were more likely to use virtual private networks (37% vs. 24%) and encryption tools (18% vs. 10%) than their global counterparts. They also reported using ad blockers in greater numbers (22% vs. 17%). But they lagged in adopting two-factor authentication, or 2FA (23% vs. 32%), and backup services (17% vs. 26%).

Charts and graphs: Data privacy in the U.K. and the rest of the world

Data Privacy Day provides an opportunity to gauge consumer sentiment toward a topic that's critically important, but sometimes misunderstood. Survey responses reveal concern among consumers about cybersecurity that they don't always necessarily back up with behavior.

These charts and graphs compare notable consumer responses in the U.K. with global answers to the same questions.

What data privacy best practices do you regularly follow? Select all that apply.

	U.K.	Global
Use strong, unique passwords for each account	78%	68%
Regularly update apps and devices	54%	46%
Enable two-factor authentication (2FA) where possible	52%	46%
Limit the amount of personal information shared online	53%	40%
Be cautious when clicking on links or downloading attachments in emails	51%	40%
Avoid using public Wi-Fi for sensitive activities	39%	32%
Regularly review and delete unused apps or accounts	31%	25%
Review and adjust privacy settings on devices and apps	33%	24%
Check for website security (look for HTTPS) before entering personal information	28%	21%
Exclusive / None of the above	2%	4%

What types of files on your devices are most important for you to back up? Select all that apply.

	U.K.	Global
Photos and videos	77%	73%
Contacts	55%	54%
Text messages (SMS or chat apps)	51%	33%
Documents (e.g., PDFs, notes, office files)	38%	54%
App data	39%	27%
Music and audio files	26%	20%
Emails	27%	33%
Other (please specify)	1%	0%

What are your biggest concerns regarding data privacy? Select all that apply.

	U.K.	Global
Data breaches or hacking	70%	64%
Online tracking and targeted ads	56%	54%
Unauthorized access to personal information	52%	59%
Phishing or scam attempts	50%	43%
Sharing of data with third parties without consent	37%	34%
Stolen passwords or private information	42%	32%
Government surveillance	20%	15%
I don't have major concerns about data privacy	5%	5%

Which tools do you use to protect yourself against cyberthreats and secure your data? Select all that apply.

	U.K.	Global
Antivirus software	58%	59%
Firewall (software or hardware)	36%	36%
Virtual Private Network (VPN)	37%	24%
Password manager	30%	28%
Two-factor authentication (2FA)	23%	32%
Encryption tools (for files or communications)	18%	10%
Ad blockers or anti-tracking tools	22%	17%
Backup services (cloud or external storage)	17%	26%
Secure browsing tools (e.g., using HTTPS or private browsing modes)	9%	12%
I don't use any specific tools to protect myself	10%	9%
Other (please specify)	0%	0%

Read the global survey results

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About Acronis

Acronis is a global cyber protection company that provides natively integrated cybersecurity, data protection, and endpoint management for managed service providers (MSPs), small and medium businesses (SMBs), and enterprise IT departments. Acronis solutions are highly efficient and designed to identify, prevent, detect, respond, remediate, and recover from modern cyberthreats with minimal downtime, ensuring data integrity and business continuity. Acronis offers the most comprehensive security solution on the market for MSPs with its unique ability to meet the needs of diverse and distributed IT environments.

A Swiss company founded in Singapore in 2003, Acronis has 45 locations across the globe. Acronis Cyber Protect is available in 26 languages in 150 countries and is used by over 20,000 service providers to protect over 750,000 businesses.

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