

Health Crisis Puts Video Conferencing In the Spotlight – What To Know to Avoid Risk

Article By:

Jeffrey M. Stefan II

New technologies, such as video conferencing products, are becoming increasingly popular during the current health crisis. But there are serious privacy and security obligations that must be considered when offering such products. Here are some things companies can do now to make sure the launch or use of an emerging product doesn't turn into a liability:

For companies launching a new online or connected device product:

- Make privacy and security a priority by performing a privacy impact assessment of a product's features that captures all of the data use in scope and the planned treatment and security of that data.
- Analyze what domestic or global laws or best practices may apply to the product, such as the FTC Act, state breach laws, or broader privacy laws, such as CCPA, and the fines or penalties that exist for non-compliance.
- Implement compliant privacy notices and product security or risk facing significant public relations or consumer backlash, and subsequent litigation.

For companies and employees that want to use a new online or connected device product:

- Educate employees about company policies and acceptable use guidelines when it comes to using new technologies on work devices or to perform work functions, such as team meetings. To avoid unauthorized or inadvertent exposure of sensitive employee or company data, employees should know to first check with a designated team, such as IT or legal, to see if a new product is company-sanctioned and/or governed by a commercial license or agreement that will protect the company and its employees by keeping sensitive data secure.
- Research the product manufacturer to learn about any past practices that may demonstrate a failure to make data privacy and security a priority, such as past lawsuits, investigations, negative media or consumer attention, or settlements with government investigative agencies.

- Create a culture that keeps everyone safe online by raising awareness about personal use or use by family members. As consumers, take the time to read terms of use and privacy notices, so that you know how the information you are sharing through the use of an online product, such as video recordings and conversation transcripts, is secured, used, and shared.

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