Annual Meeting of the New Champions
Unlocking the Value of Data

Tianjin, People's Republic of China, 12 September 2012

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Unlocking the Value of Data

This session convened a range of stakeholders as part of an on-going Rethinking Personal Data project (www.weforum.org/personaldata). The project aims to identify how to unlock the value of personal data while protecting the rights of individuals.

The project's work focuses on key areas including developing shared principles, guidelines and tools to translate the principles into action, a better evidence base for how personal data creates economic and social value, and the opportunity to test and learn from various pilots.

Due to rapidly increasing connectivity, the "data trail" generated by individuals is growing in volume. The moderator highlighted a basic operating principle of the dialogue—that personal data has economic value, but only when shared.

However, if one of the points of departure is the belief that personal data can be both protected and leveraged, the other is the recognition that current norms, mechanisms, markets and governance structures do not produce this outcome but, rather, a deficit of public trust.

Creating Principles for Trusted Flows of Personal Data

Shared principles were seen as the anchor points for global governance and a way of strengthening accountability, predictability and trust. Principles have been a core part of the governance of personal data but need to be updated to reflect how much the world has changed.

The discussion started with the OECD Privacy Principles agreed in 1980 as a framework, and then focused on two questions:

1. Which of the existing principles are still relevant and which need to be refreshed?

2. Are there new areas that need to be addressed given how the world has changed?

There was wide consensus that the three key principles of collection limitation, purpose specification and use limitation may not be effective in a world of big data where new applications for data are being conceived on a daily basis.
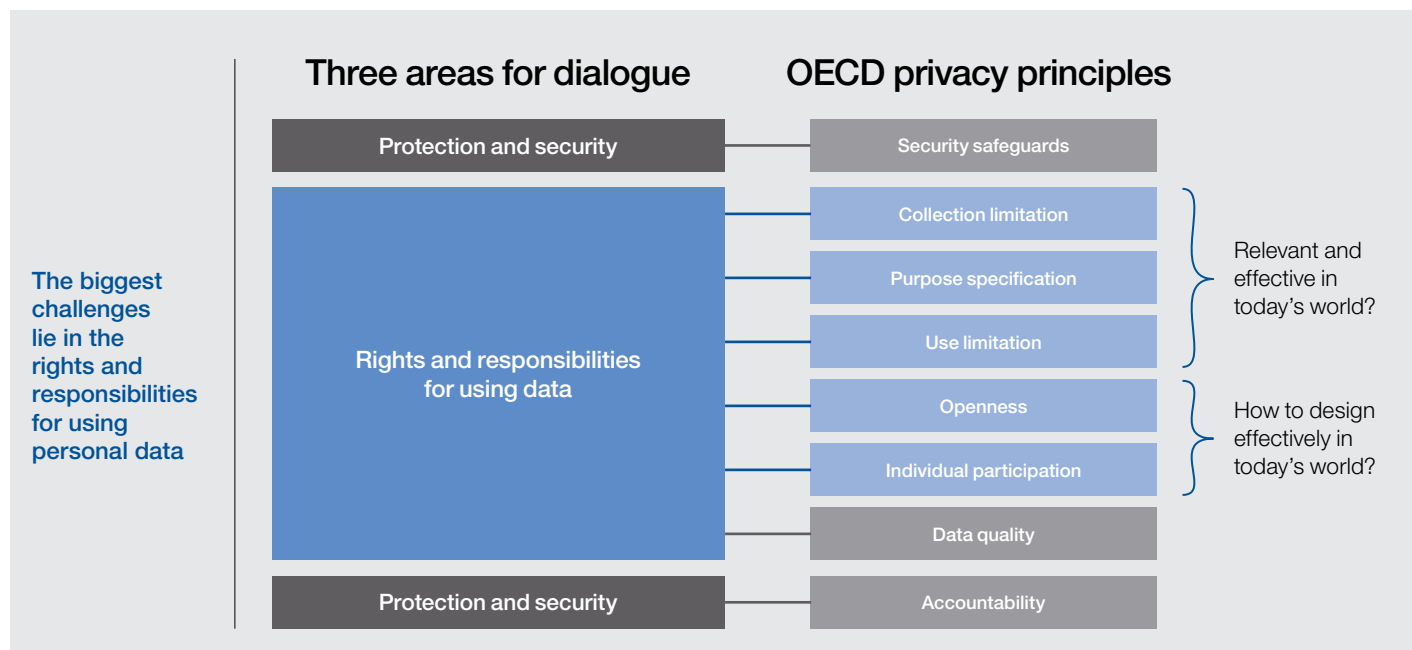
While the principles of openness and individual participation are still valid, there are

questions about how to design them to effectively achieve transparency and appropriate individual involvement.

With regards to the second question, a number of areas were identified as key issues to reflect in the principles that are not captured in the original 1980 Principles:

— Competing claims of ownership for different types of data: How well does the concept of ownership apply?

— Increased importance of context in driving permissions and consent; the huge diversity of applications of data renders one-size-fits-all approaches ineffective

— Usability and simplicity: Long, dense permission and consent notices hide imbalanced agreements in plain sight

— Fair value of exchange: The collective nature of data creation and value creation implies the need for a mechanism to fairly distribute to all stakeholders

— Anonymous data and pseudonymous data: Do the same principles apply?

Three areas for dialogue

OECD privacy principles

The biggest challenges lie in the rights and responsibilities for using personal data

Three areas for dialogue	OECD privacy principles	
Protection and security	Security safeguards	
Rights and responsibilities for using data	Collection limitation	Relevant and effective in today's world?
	Purpose specification	
	Use limitation	
	Openness	How to design effectively in today's world?
	Individual participation	
	Data quality	
Protection and security	Accountability	

— Multiple personae/identities: How can identity be defined in a digitally connected world?

— Data deletion and portability: What are the norms and individual controls that define when data is deleted and when it can be moved from one provider to another?

Participants underlined that the purpose of revisiting the existing principles, which have formed the basis of privacy and data protection for so long, is to ensure they are fit for purpose in a hyperconnected world, and not to reduce protection.

Considerations for Future Development of Principles

Several participants felt that many of the existing privacy principles should be revised, including the importance of context, the role of the individual as a producer and consumer and where data have multiple potential uses to create value.

There was discussion on the comprehensiveness of the lists above, as well as a suggestion to carefully distinguish between trends and guiding principles. However, a few issues emerged as critical by consensus, even if the different perspective on those issues indicates the need for further debate.

Transparency, "knowability", informed consent and effective choice emerged as a nexus of ideas that are closely connected to each other and other areas, such as usability and fair value exchange. The information with which individuals are presented has to be simple and clear enough for them to understand and make choices on that basis. These ideas could subsume some of the existing principles on use limitation, collection limitation and purpose specification.

A new idea that emerged was the possible need for an engineering-focused principle—that is, not only principles on how to use and commercialize the process, but also how to build the tools to deliver it. A participant suggested that this could be considered an issue relevant to ISO standardization.

Consideration was given to whether there should be a separate principle on the use of data for public or social good, e.g. healthcare, disaster relief management, understanding global trends, research. While many of these applications are based on personal data, their use is often broader than the individual. This issue linked specifically to the use limitation and purpose specification principles, which potentially constrain such uses.

The lack of common scope and definition of the term "personal data" was raised, and examples such as genetic data and cloud-stored files were cited as pushing against the boundaries of what is meant by the term. In addition, the demarcation between personal and big data was a key discussion point.

Finally, identity was identified as a key issue. How identity is considered in the digital environment will influence approaches on many other fronts. Early ideas such as creating a single online identity are being challenged by aggregate or attribute-based models, while multiple personae and interactions can collate to form an identity that can be treated with varying degrees of granularity and confidence, depending on permissions and use cases.

The next discussion will take place at a Personal Data Workshop in Brussels, Belgium, on 8 October 2012 with the project steering board and working groups.

01: John Rose, Senior Partner and Managing Director, The Boston Consulting Group, USA addresses the participants
02: Lynn St Amour, President and Chief Executive Officer, Internet Society (ISOC), Switzerland leads a break-out group
03: Zhang Ya-Qin, Corporate Vice-President, Microsoft Corporation, People's Republic of China
04: Vijay Vaitheeswaran, China Business and Finance Editor, Shanghai Bureau Chief, Economist, People's Republic of China, moderates the session

Workshop Participants

Name	Title	Organization	Country
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Contact

Sincere thanks are extended to the industry experts who contributed their unique insights to this workshop. We are also grateful for the commitment and support of The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in their capacity as project adviser.

Note: The summary of the Unlocking the Value of Data session in this document is an extract from a longer summary of all the sessions linked to the World Economic Forum's Hyperconnected World Initiative. If you would like to see summaries of other related sessions please contact one of us below.

Visit www.weforum.org/personaldata

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