



VOME's publications and interventions can be found at <http://www.vome.org.uk>

VOME  
c/o Information Security Group  
Royal Holloway, University of London  
Egham  
Surrey, TW20 0EX, UK  
Lizzie Coles-Kemp:  
[lizzie.coles-kemp@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:lizzie.coles-kemp@rhul.ac.uk)

Keep in touch  
Website: [www.vome.org.uk](http://www.vome.org.uk)  
Twitter: @vome\_project



privacy awareness  
by design



VOME first conducted consultations and user studies across the country to better understand how communities engage with on-line services. From this understanding, we developed design principles which promote a privacy-aware on-line service design that helps a service user to confidently make personal information disclosure decisions. Here is a summary of those principles:

## *It's a matter of confidence...*

The most important principle when designing privacy awareness features for on-line services is to encourage users to develop confidence in their ability to manage their personal information. In order to engender such confidence, two types of information should be provided to service users before they reveal any personal information:

### *Service provider disclosure*

Service providers should give information about the nature of the company such as history, founder, contact details and links to other companies and the management team.

### *Personal information requirement and operation*

Service providers should specify in an easy-to-access format why personal information is required and where the information will be used. Any service user should be fully aware of the types of information that are gathered about them and which organisations it will be passed to.

*Service Providers should design their on-line services in such a way that...*

Service users feel at home and comfortable with the methods used to make them aware about what happens to their data.

Links to privacy policy statements and a service's terms and conditions are clearly visible and familiar for service users of all ranges of ability.

The collection of personal information that is irrelevant or rarely used should be avoided.

The service user is informed about what is happening to their personal data by providing appropriate feedback within a reasonable timeframe.

Provides an accessible, easy-to-understand contract (an agreement between the service user and the service provider) stating that the service user's personal information will be safe and confidential.

It is clear from the start what will happen to any personal data that is disclosed.

Promotes interaction between service users and service providers about the use of personal information.

The service design varies the tools and techniques used to communicate about the management of personal information.

Service users need to be confident in an on-line service's privacy awareness features in order for these features to be usable. Therefore it is important that service providers:

### *Design and implement noticeable and understandable interfaces*

In order to support users in finding their way to privacy feature information, an overview of that information should be available so that users can decide when and how to engage with the privacy protection functionality.

Service users want to be confident in the control of their information and so on-line services need to be designed in such a way that:

### *Service users have control over the type of services they need*

Service users should be able to make clear decisions as to which services they need in return for disclosing their personal information.

### *Service users should be able to have a meaningful relationship with all parties involved*

Service users should either have the option to decline to disclose personal data or a clear explanation as to why personal data must be collected. Service users should have a clear means of challenging collection.