

## **A new report suggests Canadians are willing to share personal data but expect significant discounts when purchasing food**

**Halifax, June 30, 2022**— For years, with the flyers we received from grocers every week, privacy was never really a concern. It was just really a matter of finding postal codes and doors. But with higher food prices and the use of new technologies like smartphone applications to engage with consumers, privacy issues are now key concerns for many. **Tim Hortons** was recently reprimanded for its faulty app, allowing the company to get more data about consumers without consent.

The use of apps will likely increase as loyalty is the food industry's next major battleground. With food inflation being a challenge, an increasing number of consumers are looking for different options. Empire's **Sobeys** recently decided to make changes to its loyalty program by signing on with Scene+ while ending their partnership with **Air Miles**.

We decided to ask Canadians about privacy, and how important protecting personal data is to them. With privacy comes legal responsibilities for businesses, but this report is more about the willingness to share information to get discounts and more affordable food products. Are Canadians willing to sacrifice some of their privacy for more food affordability in an inflationary market?

We asked over 7,000 Canadians about data sharing and privacy. Traditionally, grocers have communicated promotions and deals by using flyers, and now apps and digital formats. Results show that nearly **9 out of 10 Canadians** (88%) like to get flyers from their grocery store in one form or another. The grocery store app is most preferred (41%) followed by paper versions mailed to the home (37%). Looking at generations, **Millennials** (52%) prefer app flyers while **Boomers** (48%) prefer mail flyers.

As for apps, Canadians are using more of them. **More than half of Canadians (50.7%) use food-related apps**. The grocery store-specific app (e.g., Voila) is less preferred (13.9%) than the last mile dominant, early market entrants, **Door Dash** and **Uber Eats** (24% and 17.5% respectively).

For this report, we wanted to understand how concerned Canadians are in general about sharing data. We asked Canadians how concerned they are about apps from food delivery companies, grocers, or restaurants when it comes to data sharing. We specifically asked about these scenarios:

- **Gathering personal information that consumers or someone else has posted online to create a detailed profile of their interests and personal traits, AND**
- **Using information available about the consumer online to target specific products they may be interested in buying, AND**
- **Using information available about them online to give them a more convenient shopping experience.**

While 70% of Canadians are not concerned about any of the three ways data will be used, 30% of Canadians are concerned by at least one of them. Surprisingly, **only 16% of Canadians are concerned about all three ways their data will be used**. Results show that **only 4.5% of Canadians are unwilling to share their personal data**. **Men** are more likely to have none of these concerns (72%) compared to

women (67%). Canadians in the regions of the **East, Quebec** and the **Atlantic** are more likely to be concerned about all three of these than those in other regions of the country.

## How concerned are Canadians about sharing data?

Surprisingly, Gen Z are most concerned about all 3 ways their data will be used

**70%**

Of Canadians are not concerned about any of the 3 ways data will be used

**30%**

Of Canadians are concerned by at least one of them

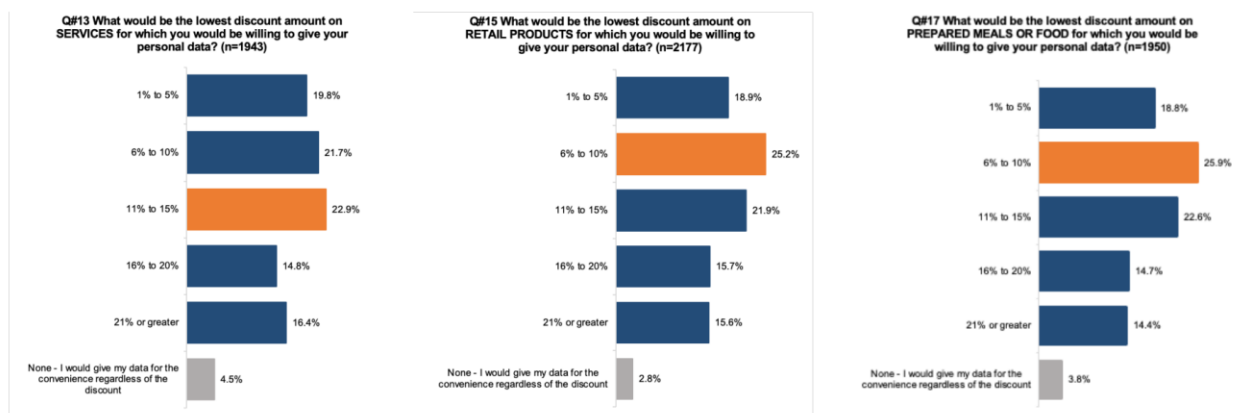
**16%**

Of Canadians are concerned about all 3 ways their data will be used

Here are some key additional insights stemming from the results. **Most Canadians appear to be uncomfortable with the notion of seeing companies using personal data to build customer profiles.** Generally, **Alberta** is the one province with the most people concerned about privacy and sharing data.

The study also looked at how much of a discount Canadians are expecting if they share personal data with a food company, a retailer or restaurant. On average, **43% of Canadians will share data for up to a 10% discount.** Also, **65% of Canadians are willing to share data for up to a 15% discount.** Some variations are noted between food service, retail, and prepared meals.

## How much of a discount does it take to exchange data?



“For Canadians, privacy is important, but food inflation is likely making Canadians willing to compromise to get better deals,” said **Dr. Sylvain Charlebois** from the **Agri-Food Analytics Lab** at Dalhousie University. “The Tim Hortons incident can be considered a warning to the food industry. Companies need to be clear on intent and how apps will work to build loyalty,” said Charlebois.

Results also suggest many **Canadians don’t want to share data if it generates more targeted marketing**. While almost 50% of Canadians don’t want to share data that will result in marketing messaging, 27.1% of Canadians are, however, comfortable with their data being used to market to them.

In essence, beyond the legal obligations food companies have, Canadians are flexible on data sharing, but they need to see value in return. Also, to build loyalty, how the data is used matters a great deal for Canadians. For food companies, market share is dependent on proper use of data and transparency to the consumer.

Download the preliminary results of the survey in English and French at <https://www.dal.ca/sites/agri-food.html>.

## Contacts

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**Methodology for survey:** Caddle is one of the most credible active panels in the Canadian market. A representative survey of Canadians was conducted in June 2022, in partnership with **Caddle**. 7,020 Canadians participated in this survey. Margin of Error: +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. Any discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

**Disclosure:** Funding for the survey was provided by [Caddle](#) and **Dalhousie University**.