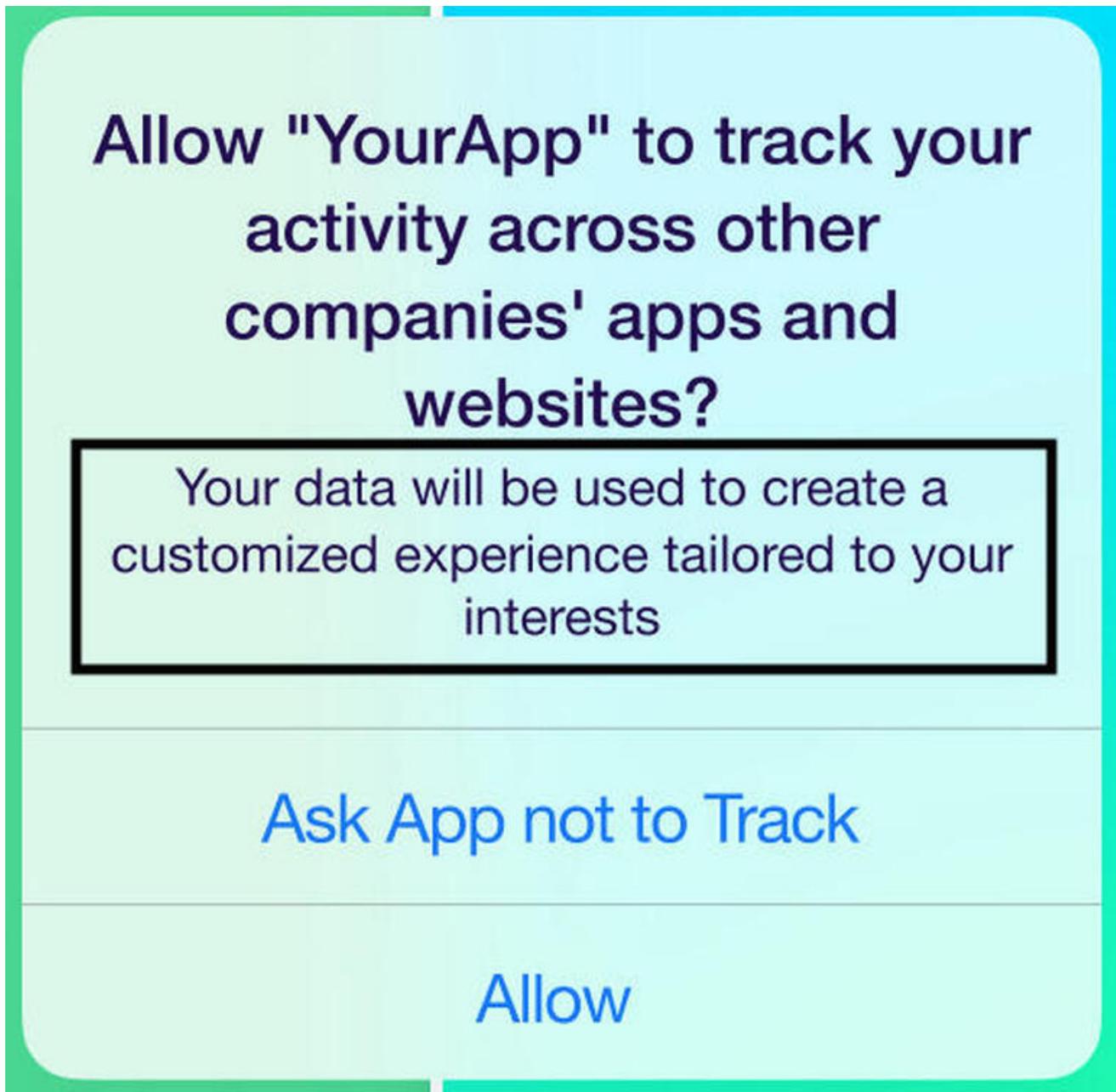# iOS 14 app tracking opt-ins may prove higher than expected

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Opt-in rates that allow users to be tracked by an app averaged 41%, according to AppsFlyer, much higher than the expectations of 2% to 20%.

Apple created an uproar among app developers when it revealed that iOS 14.5 would require them to request permission from users in order to track them. Many developers have feared that most people would deny such permissions, even if it meant not being able to fully use the

app. But a study released Thursday by marketing analytics firm AppsFlyer shows that such fears may be premature.

Known as App Tracking Transparency, the feature is Apple's latest attempt to address privacy concerns among technology users, especially when it comes to being tracked by apps and websites. With the release of iOS 14.5, the new feature is a requirement for any app that collects and shares user data with other companies for tracking purposes.

When running such an app, users receive a prompt at some point asking if they want to allow it to track their activity across other companies' apps and website. If the permission is granted, the app would use their Apple Identifier for Advertisers to track them as they surf the web and use other apps, all for the purposes of targeted advertising.

With privacy such a hot button issue, this type of prompt as displayed by an app could easily trigger a knee-jerk reaction of "No" among most people. Various estimates of the opt-in rate of those who would agree to the tracking have ranged from as low as 2% to as high as 20%, with most forecasts closer to the lower end, according to AppsFlyer.

However, AppsFlyer found different results based on its analysis of millions of interactions across almost 300 apps. In its research, the company discovered average opt-in rates of around 41% overall, with 28% on average per app. Looking at specific numbers over the past three weeks, AppsFlyer said it counted 5,495,084 times that users saw the tracking permission app and opted in and 7,765,740 cases where they opted out.

In its report, AppsFlyer stressed that these are preliminary numbers. The apps analyzed are early adopters of the policy and may not be representative of the overall app ecosystem. The results could easily change after the new feature officially rolls out with the release of iOS 14.5. But the company said it was "cautiously optimistic," meaning that this new requirement may not be the death knell that app developers have been fearing.

Whether or not iOS users opt in to app tracking, privacy concerns will remain at the forefront. Toward that end, AppsFlyer has some advice for app developers on how to best fashion and present the tracking request to users.

- **Time it right**. Finding the right moment to display the tracking permission prompt is key to getting a positive reaction. If you show the user that the app is trustworthy or presents value, the odds of an opt-in response will be better than if you display the message when the app first launches.

- **Customize the message**. A certain section of the App Tracking Transparency message can be customized beyond the boilerplate text. Use this section to explain exactly why you want to track the user through their advertising identifier (IDFA). In one example cited by AppsFlyer, the developer said, "Your data will be used to help built a more customized experience tailored to your interest." In another example, the developer said: "IDFA is used to provide you with content that is more in line with your interests, while minimizing the intrusion of irrelevant ads. If you prohibit access to IDFA, you will continue to see the same amount of ads, but they will not be tailored to your needs."
- **Fashion your own message**. Before Apple's generic prompt even appears, you can set up your own message to explain the value of opting in. You may want to point out that opting in allows the app to stay free, that it shows users more relevant content, and that any data collected won't be used for other purposes beside displaying relevant ads and other content.