

Big Telecom Sold Highly Sensitive Customer GPS Data Typically Used for 911 Calls | Motherboard

By Joseph Cox

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Around 250 bounty hunters and related businesses had access to AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint customer location data, according to documents obtained by Motherboard. The documents also show that telecom companies sold data intended to be used by 911 operators and first responders to data aggregators, who sold it to bounty hunters. The data was in some cases so accurate that a user could be tracked to specific spots inside a building.

The news shows not only how widely Americans' sensitive location data has been sold through the overlooked and questionable data broker market, but also how the ease-of-access dramatically increased the risk of abuse. Motherboard found that an individual company made more than 18,000 data location requests through a data broker; other companies made thousands of requests. The full details of our investigation [are available here](#).

"This scandal keeps getting worse. Carriers assured customers location tracking abuses were isolated incidents. Now it appears that hundreds of people could track our phones, and they were doing it for years before anyone at the wireless companies took action," Oregon Senator Ron Wyden said in an emailed statement after presented with Motherboard's findings. "That's more than an oversight—that's flagrant, wilful disregard for the safety and security of Americans."

[...]

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