Pew survey finds more than half of app users have opted not to use one due to privacy concerns

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NEW YORK (AP) -- Many cellphone users say they have decided not to use an app on their phone because of concerns about privacy.

More than half of Americans who use apps say they have decided not to install one once they found out how much personal information they'd have to share, according to a study released Wednesday from the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Mobile apps include maps, games and other programs that help turn smartphones into portable computers. Some apps, for instance, want to know a person's location using the phone's GPS function.

Thirty percent of app users say they have removed an app once they found out how much information it collected about them.

Android and iPhone users were equally likely to remove or not install an app because of concerns over how much personal information it collected, according to the study.

In all, 88 percent of adults said they own some sort of a mobile phone, and 43 percent of that group downloaded applications to their phone. That's up from 31 percent in 2011.

Among other findings:

- 30 percent of smartphone owners said they turned off their phone's location tracking feature because they were worried about people or companies accessing this information. That compares with just 7 percent for those with regular, basic cellphones.

- 41 percent of all cellphone owners said they backed up data on their phone, such as photos or contacts.

- Men were more likely than women to delete an app because of privacy concerns. But there was no gender difference among people who decided not to install apps in the first place due to privacy concerns.

- Those with BlackBerrys were the most likely to say they've lost their phone or had it stolen: 45 percent compared with 30 percent of iPhone owners and 36 percent of Android owners. In all, nearly one-third of all mobile phone owners said they have

had their phone lost or stolen.

- That said, people who have had their phone lost or stolen were no more likely to back up the information on their phones afterward.

The national survey was conducted among 2,254 U.S. adults from March 15 to April 3 on landlines and cell phones. It has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.4 percentage points.

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