

Google updates privacy policy to allow targeted ads from personal data

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According to the new terms, sharing your data for better AI recommendations also means opening it up for more personalized ads.

by Jess Weatherbed Oct 23, 2026, 4:52 PM UTC

Image: Cath Virginia / The Verge

Jess Weatherbed is a news writer focused on creative industries, computing, and internet culture. Jess started her career at TechRadar, covering news and hardware reviews.

Google has updated its privacy policy in a way that could mean you'll start seeing targeted ads based on your personal data if you're using personalized AI features. The update, spotted by Android Authority , adds an exception to its promise about not using your Drive, Gmail, or Google Photos for personalized ads. While the previous version simply said it wouldn't do that, as of October 16th, Google has added the line, "unless you choose to make data from these services available to other Google services that support personalized ads."

That means anyone who has connected their Drive, Gmail, or Google Photos to AI Mode and other Search tools via Google's Personal Intelligence feature — allowing those tools to provide better responses or recommendations by knowing more about you — may now see ads targeted on the basis of that content.

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Advertisers don't get access to your Drive, Gmail, and Photos information or personally identifying details such as your name or email address, and Google won't show you ads based on sensitive categories like race, sexual orientation, religion, or health.

This is what the policy says:

"You may choose to allow certain Google services, including services like Search or Gemini Apps, to access data from other Google services you use, such as Google Photos and Workspace apps like Gmail and Drive, in order to provide you with a more personalized experience, subject to the policies and settings of the accessing service. For example, Search may process some of the data that you allow Search to access to personalize content, including ads." "Depending on your settings, we may also show you personalized ads based on your interests, activity, or personalized content from Google services. For example, if you search for 'mountain bikes,' in Search you may see ads for sports equipment on YouTube."

If you want to prevent your personal data from being used for targeted ads, you can choose which apps you want to disconnect from Search's Personal Intelligence features or disable Personalized Recommendations entirely via the Search Services Personalization settings page.

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