

Key terms

Every discipline coins its own special terms, acronyms, other abbreviations and jargon. Data privacy law is no different in this respect. In the interest of serving as a quick reference and easy read, this Field Guide minimizes the use of jargon and abbreviations and employs everyday language whenever practical. But, seven 'key terms' are used throughout the guide, because you have to know them. These terms are omnipresent in data privacy literature and hard to avoid:

Personal Data	Information that relates to an individual person who can be identified, including identifying information (name, passport number, etc.) and any other data (<i>e.g.</i> , photos, phone numbers, etc.). European data protection laws tend to cover all personal data, but U.S. style data privacy laws are often more limited and focused on particularly sensitive data categories
Processing	Any activity relating to data, including collection, storage, alteration, disclosure and destruction
Data Subject	The individual person to whom data relates
Data Controller	A company that determines the purposes and means of the data processing, <i>e.g.</i> , an employer with respect to employee data
Data Processor	A company that processes personal data on behalf of a data controller, <i>e.g.</i> , an accountant or payroll service provider that assists an employer
Transfer	Transmitting data to, or making data available for access by, another organization or in another country, <i>e.g.</i> , via remote Internet access

Data Privacy Law

Laws intended to protect an individual data subject's ability to control information about him or herself, including European-style data protection laws (regulating any processing of any personal data) and common law privacy laws (protecting reasonable expectations of being left alone by other individuals, organizations and governments)

More detailed definitions follow in Chapter 1 – 'Key Concepts'. Abbreviations are defined at the end of the book.

A few other key terms should perhaps be used more sparingly and carefully. Information technologists and marketers tend to be so excited about 'the cloud' and 'big data' that they overuse these labels, extend their meaning to products on the periphery and overlook all negative connotations. When software-as-a-service providers and users talk about 'the cloud', they think about dynamic usage of computing capacity, cost savings, follow-the-sun support, connectivity, mobility and other benefits. When European data protection officers and politicians hear 'the cloud', however, they seem to think about bad visibility into where data resides and who has access to it. Similarly, when researchers get excited about opportunities concerning 'big data', they seem to forget the relatively low public preference for *big* government, *big* business, banks too *big* to fail, etc. If you are trying to sell services, features and opportunities, be mindful of your audience before resorting to these buzzwords.

