

800,000 EV drivers' data exposed in Volkswagen breach

Article

The news: Cariad, a Volkswagen subsidiary, leaked the personal data of 800,000 VW, Audi, Seat, and Skoda EV drivers. The leak included precise location data for 460,000 cars and personal information.

It's the latest [setback to EV](#) and connected car adoption, revealing how technology-dependent vehicles collect far too much personal data—which some security experts see as a

[privacy nightmare](#).

A bad start to VW's EV pivot: This incident compounds VW's challenges that already include [sluggish EV sales](#) and its recovery from the 2015 Dieselgate scandal.

- The leak, stored unencrypted on **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** cloud servers, was widely accessible for months and **affected EV owners including German politicians, business leaders, and the Hamburg police**, per [Der Spiegel](#).
- The data included driver names, contact details, emails, phone numbers, addresses, and even **records of when and where EVs were switched on and off**.
- There is no evidence the leak was exploited, and Cariad assured EV owners that no action is needed to protect their data.
- The breach may challenge consumer trust in Volkswagen's digital offerings.

A much-larger problem: The automaker stated that the data was not easily exploitable and emphasized that no malicious exploitation was reported. But the lack of encryption and **ease of data access raises broader concerns about vehicle data privacy**.

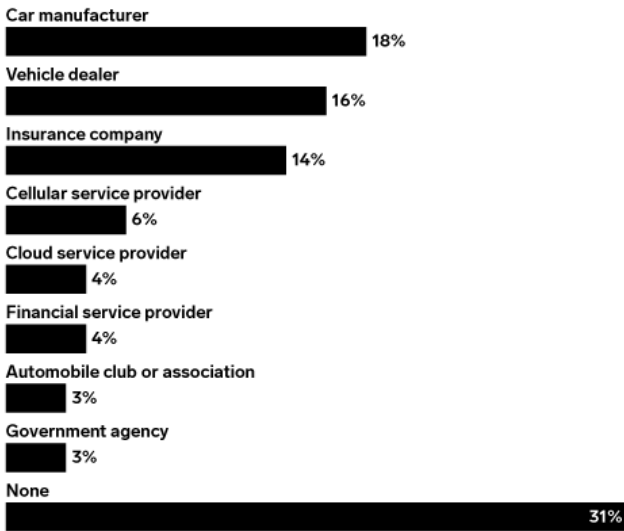
The incident could further diminish EV buyers' confidence in automakers' ability to keep their data secure. Only 18% of US consumers trust car manufacturers as managers for connected vehicle data, per Deloitte.

Key takeaway: [Security and IT lapses](#) can slow connected car adoption, particularly in regions where privacy concerns already loom large.

If automakers don't address these vulnerabilities, they risk undermining the progress made in promoting EVs as the future of sustainable mobility.

US Consumers Most Trusted Manager for Connected Vehicle Data, October 2023

% of respondents



Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: Deloitte, "2024 Global Automotive Consumer Study," Jan 10, 2024

286145



This article is part of EMARKETER's client-only subscription Briefings—daily newsletters authored by industry analysts who are experts in marketing, advertising, media, and tech trends. To help you finish 2024 strong, and start 2025 off on the right foot, articles like this one—delivering the latest news and insights—are completely free through January 31, 2025. If you want to learn how to get insights like these delivered to your inbox every day, and get access to our data-driven forecasts, reports, and industry benchmarks, [schedule a demo with our sales team](#).