

Foreign governments spy on Apple and Google users through push notifications, Ron Wyden says

Unidentified foreign governments are surveilling mobile phone users through push notifications, Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) said.

Wyden, a Senate Select Committee on Intelligence member, sent a letter to the Department of Justice on Wednesday inquiring about how foreign officials sought data from Google and Apple for surveillance purposes. He also briefly mentioned that phone notifications, or the interface alerts on a phone's front screen, were used to spy on users. Wyden claimed that phones running on Android and iOS would have records of what notifications a user might receive, offering insight into users' everyday lives, and that government officials have requested this data.

Push notification practices place Apple and Google "in a unique position to facilitate government surveillance of how users are using particular apps," Wyden wrote. He urged the DOJ to "repeal or modify any policies" that hindered discussion of push notification spying.

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