

FAQ for Media

Frequently Asked Questions on LocationSmart

This FAQ explains what LocationSmart is, the nature of the services it provides, and its commitment to privacy and security. Journalists with additional questions should contact us at media@locationsmart.com.

Q: What is LocationSmart?

A: We are a private company based in Carlsbad, California. Since our founding in 1995, we have grown to be a leading provider of Location-as-a-Service (LaaS) to enterprises. Our API platform is a service that allows individual mobile device users to share their location with specific businesses that request it, upon obtaining their consent to receive services such as roadside assistance. Those service providers are our customers. We add efficiencies for our customers, and wireless carriers, by functioning as a single point of contact for customers to request location information for consenting mobile device users from wireless carriers. Our customers include Fortune 500 companies and other value-added service providers.

We believe that mobile device users have the right to maintain control over their private location information at all times and employ industry best practices for privacy and consent management.

Q: What services rely on the data LocationSmart provides?

A: LocationSmart's customers provide safety, security, compliance and business efficiency services, all of which require consent of the mobile device user or owner.

- In its largest business segment, LocationSmart provides location information for most roadside assistance providers in the United States, including for automobile clubs, insurance companies and automakers. Drivers breaking down on a highway are often unable to tell the operator their exact location; LocationSmart helps the service provider direct a tow truck to find the car quickly and get the driver to safety and back on their way. Our focus in roadside assistance is to help our customers get their users off the side of the road as quickly as possible for their safety, security and convenience. Nearly 450 people were killed in 2016 by vehicles striking other vehicles along the roadside, according to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#).

LocationSmart also helps call centers route 800-number callers to the nearest regional call center that can assist them most effectively.

Roadside assistance and call center services account for nearly half of LocationSmart's revenue.

- The second largest business segment, accounting for about 20 percent of LocationSmart's revenue, enables cargo to be located during shipment. Many cargo-carrying trucks in the United States are driven by independent owner-operators or small fleet operators who are contracted for individual jobs. Cargo owners and consignees want to be kept apprised of where their cargo is and when it is expected to arrive. For companies that use these services, drivers opt in by text message before taking the load to have their location transmitted periodically to a shipment tracking service or application. The location updates are provided only for the expected duration of the trip or until delivery is confirmed. Drivers can cancel location updates at any time by sending a text message saying STOP.

Our focus in transportation and logistics is to help our customers engage with drivers and obtain shipment status more reliably, accurately and safely. By reducing the need for check calls, we help avoid situations where drivers feel compelled to answer their phones in inconvenient and potentially unsafe situations. As reported by the [CDC](#), nine people are killed and more than 1,000 injured in the U.S. each day due to driver distraction. Distracted driving accounts for approximately 25% of all motor vehicle crash fatalities.

- LocationSmart provides location data for safety and security monitoring service providers for their end users such as senior citizens and Alzheimer's patients. For example, these services allow their users to push a button or place a call for help and have their location determined automatically for any necessary services to be dispatched. According to a [Grand View Research report](#), 50% of seniors age 80 and 30% of seniors age 65 fall every year. In addition, those with Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and muscular dystrophy are at a higher risk of falling.
- LocationSmart is also used by regulated lottery and gaming operators to comply with state laws restricting where those services may be used via mobile phone. For example, a state might require its lottery tickets to be purchased within the state. LocationSmart helps the operators of those services to ensure compliance by verifying that the buyer is inside state boundaries at the time of account origination and/or a purchase.

Q: How did LocationSmart get into this business?

A: The co-founders of LocationSmart, Mario Proietti and Masoud Motamedi, have spent decades building wireless communications technology, including battlefield location systems to prevent friendly fire incidents, satellite communications for remote locations, vehicle-to-vehicle communications, crash avoidance technology, and automated toll collection systems.

In the mid-1990s, the two co-founders played a central role in implementation of wireless E911 location service, which allows 911 operators to locate people calling 911

from mobile phones. Starting around ten years ago, they began looking for other applications of the technology and methods used for E911 location, and in 2011 launched the service LocationSmart now provides.

Q: Can any company sign up to start getting location information from you?

A: No. LocationSmart only allows access for approved use cases that comply with CTIA Best Practices and Guidelines for Location Based Services (see <https://www.ctia.org/the-wireless-industry/industry-commitments/best-practices-and-guidelines-for-location-based-services>). Each application's user experience, flow of data and terms of use must comply with these best practices and meet explicit contract requirements related to user consent and privacy. Customer applications also go through weeks of wireless carrier review and scrutiny.

Q: Does LocationSmart allow people to track the location of other people without their consent?

A: No. All disclosure of location data through LocationSmart relies on consent first being received from the mobile device user or owner.

LocationSmart enables people to give consent to use their location for specific, approved purposes, like roadside assistance, cargo tracking and elder safety.

Q: Does LocationSmart sell personal information such as a cellphone user's name, home address, email address, username, password, or location information?

A: No. LocationSmart only has access to three pieces of personal data on consenting cellphone users—the cellphone number, the identity of the user's wireless carrier and the cellphone's approximate location at a point in time. LocationSmart does not receive or provide any other personal information about cellphone users. Nor does it provide a historical record of their location.

LocationSmart does not sell location information. It sells a service that allows individual mobile phone users to share their location with specific businesses that request it, upon obtaining their consent to receive services such as roadside assistance. LocationSmart does not warehouse, track or sell the history of a mobile user's location. It only provides data at the instant it is requested by a customer application subject to a pre-approved use case (a location-based service).

Q: LocationSmart is sometimes described as an "aggregator." Does LocationSmart collect and sell personal and business data?

A: No. In common usage, "data aggregator" refers to companies that collect a broad range of information about individuals and sell it to advertisers, marketers, political campaigns and others seeking to influence the actions of those individuals. LocationSmart is not that type of aggregator and does not do those things.

LocationSmart is an “aggregator” in the specific context of Location Based Services (LBS) as defined by the CTIA wireless industry association. These aggregators provide a single point of contact for LBS providers to request location information for consenting mobile device users from wireless carriers. LocationSmart obtains and delivers only a single piece of information—the location of a mobile device at a specific moment in time—for LBS applications (such as roadside assistance services) that have been vetted and approved by wireless carriers.

Similar aggregators (called SMS aggregators) exist for text messaging services, allowing companies to send text messages (such as bank balance alerts) to consenting mobile device users no matter which wireless carrier they use.

Q: How does LocationSmart ensure that users are giving consent?

A: In every case, LocationSmart must receive a record of consent from its customer (the LBS provider) indicating that consent was obtained from the mobile user according to a pre-approved process and terms.

A record of that consent is deposited on our platform in real-time prior to allowing any location to be obtained. Without that record of consent having been obtained and deposited in advance, the LocationSmart system does not obtain or provide the requested location data.

Q: How do you ensure that your customers or their customers do not misuse location data?

A: We conduct audits to ensure that our customers are using our data according to approved use cases. Our processes are also subject to testing and auditing by the wireless carriers.

Because privacy controls and consent management are a cornerstone of our platform, we continue to enhance our systems. With one of our latest enhancements, our customers have to provide us not only with a record of consent, but also a reference identifier traceable to stored consent artifacts (e.g., text messages and call records) on their systems, as well as to pass through to the LocationSmart system the actual consent artifacts. The enhancement will allow real-time verification of consent records in addition to verification provided by periodic audits.

Q: What does LocationSmart do to ensure the security of its website and data?

A: LocationSmart employs, and regularly reviews, security measures with the goal of preventing unauthorized use of its platform and unauthorized access to location data of mobile device users.

LocationSmart meets or exceeds the standards prescribed in the CTIA's Best Practices and Guidelines for Location Based Services (<https://www.ctia.org/the-wireless-industry/industry-commitments/best-practices-and-guidelines-for-location-based-services>). LocationSmart is committed to continuous improvement of its information privacy and security measures.

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