



CoVID-19: Confronting Data Privacy Concerns Across APAC



How Bayer is Leading the Way

Ethisphere recently had the chance to catch up with Khurram Chaiwalla, Data Privacy Manager– ASEAN, Bayer in Singapore

In this interview, Ethisphere spoke to Chaiwalla about what companies should consider when it comes to data privacy in the wake of CoVID-19. Here Chaiwalla shares some best practices from Bayer’s data privacy program.

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Ethisphere: More than ever, data privacy is important—especially in these challenging times, can you share why data privacy will remain in the spotlight?

KC: While data protection/privacy was always important, in recent years we have seen the data protection measures within the APAC region and

beyond being in the spotlight and we expect that this will remain in times to come. This speaks good for the individuals and the organization using personal data in the correct and prescribed manner. In the APAC region we have seen a surge in implementation of data protection laws in many countries. (e.g. India will shortly have their data protection law in place, Thailand’s data protection law is to be enforced by end of May, Indonesia’s data protection law is expected by end of year). APAC as a region has very diverse state of developments and varying maturity of data protection laws, which poses great

1
REGULATORY
 Singapore: Personal Data Protection Commission

2
DRIVING AWARENESS
 Data privacy is key to creating trust among all stakeholders

3
COVID-19 INFO
 Guardrails and coordination have been established

challenges for organizations which must navigate the business across borders. APAC also remains in spotlight not only in using personal data of its own jurisdictions, but it nests personal data of the global community at large via the Business Process Outsourcing industry.

Ethisphere: How is data privacy in Singapore different when compared to other parts of the world? In India for example, it's now catching on with new laws regarding storage of information

KC: As always Singapore has been the front runner in implementing and enacting privacy laws. The Singapore regulatory – Personal Data Protection Commission (“PDPC”) is evolving and supportive in making changes in its privacy legislation.

In administering and enforcing the PDPA, the PDPC aims to balance the need to protect individuals’ personal data and the needs of organizations to use the data for legitimate purposes.

The Model Artificial Intelligent (“AI”) Governance framework developed by the PDPC has a balanced approach on AI ethics and governance, Singapore believes that its balanced approach can facilitate innovation, safeguard consumer interests, and serve as a common global reference point.

Early this year the PDPC responded to the public consultation on data portability and data innovation.

Ethisphere: Can you share a few elements of your data privacy program?

KC: Data Privacy is an essential quality element of our work and a key to creating trust with all stakeholders and preserving the values that personal data encompasses. We have online trainings in place along with Corporate Data Protection policies. Bayer has a DP Cockpit in place which helps employees to know how to act in case of DP contracts, templates, procedures and incidents in daily business situations. This includes information on whom to contact in case of questions or concerns.

“Guidance is provided in a consistent and systematic way to Bayer employees to support operational excellence and mitigate the risk of infringing data privacy regulations.”

The purpose of this Cockpit is designed to ensure that guidance is provided in a consistent and systematic way to Bayer employees to support operational excellence and mitigate the risk of infringing data privacy regulations.

Ethisphere: How do you drive awareness across the company about Bayer’s data privacy programs?

KC: We have initiated various tools to help our staff in ensuring they are aware of DP requirements. The DP Cockpit is an important tool in our communication to all the staff to

ensure adherence to various data protection measures in various jurisdictions. The DP Cockpit contains Contracts/Agreements clauses, templates, procedures and presentations for various data protection obligations. Staff worldwide have easy access to this self-service-tool and in times of need the staff will reach out to the expert in data protection in each region/country. These contacts are also updated in the DP Cockpit. In the DP Cockpit we also have a “Privacy Run” game to ensure that the staff have the modern method of play and learn in place too. This game has various levels and the individual must ensure they clear the huddle by answering questions related to DP. Of course we have the traditional face to face DP trainings and online trainings for ALL new staff.

Ethisphere: Looking ahead, can you share some best practices on how to protect sensitive data, such as information collected from CoVID-19? In short, how can companies protect its employee information collected from medical tests?

KC: First, we take the risk of the coronavirus seriously and have taken

the necessary measures to make the spread of the virus more difficult or ideally to prevent it altogether. The primary goal is to ensure the health and safety of our employees, but at the same time to act with reason and judgment. We keep our employees up to date on the latest developments and have put together recommendations on our intranet of what everyone can do to prevent the virus from spreading. In doing so, we adhere to the recommendations and orders of national governments and health authorities and go beyond when we deem it appropriate.

On sensitive data and information pertaining to any employee who suspected or under investigation for COVID-19 for example, this will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be known to very limited people in the crisis management team.

Aside from protecting the employee from the infection, it is a priority ensure that an employee is insulated from any stigma. We have an established guardrails and coordination for any general communication to the employees across ASEAN on COVID-19 to ensure data privacy is respected, and messages are consistent.

ABOUT KHURRAM CHAIWALLA

Chaiwalla is a seasoned data privacy practitioner and presently heading the Data Privacy function of Bayer across their ASEAN operations. In this position, he is responsible for developing the data privacy programme/framework for the company’s operations across 10 countries across the ASEAN region. Moreover, his role covers both, the business (Pharma, Consumer and Crop Science) and the corporate functions (HR, procurement, etc). In addition to building the framework including writing policies and procedures, Chaiwalla has also advised stakeholders in all privacy matters in the ASEAN region.

