

Samsara builds its world-class, intelligent data privacy program on Relyance AI



samsara

An innovator in Connected Operations

Samsara is a leading industrial Internet of Things ("IOT") company bringing real-time visibility, analytics, and AI to operations. The company counts over 20,000 customers across diverse industries from transportation and logistics to field services, food production, energy, construction, local governments and manufacturing.

Due to the scale of devices used across its large customer base, Samsara collects and processes terabytes of data every day to help its customers understand how their operations can run more efficiently. With data fundamental to its business, Samsara's customers place a high degree of trust in the company to handle data securely and transparently. Explains Lawrence Schoeb, Legal Director at Samsara, "relevant legislation now has teeth. While privacy used to be a niche area, today it is a core competency for any service provider like us".

Moving beyond meetings and spreadsheets

Due to the company's rapid growth, managing data privacy at scale has become a significant focus for Samsara. Notes Schoeb, "we needed to get a full picture of how we manage data without it being manual and a major time suck on systems and business owners." Furthermore, the picture was static: "as soon as you walk out of a meeting, that snapshot can be outdated. There needs to be an ongoing way to ensure it stays accurate."

"Privacy by design means it's everyone's responsibility to ensure data is where it's supposed to be."

- Joss Nichols, Director of Compliance

When a company grows rapidly, there's a tendency to add system upon system that may, as Nichols describes, "build up silos of information across the company." Understanding how data is being processed across these systems requires a massive investment in resources across legal, IT, engineering, and others. Nichols estimates a person in each function could spend 50% of their time each week cobbling together information into spreadsheets, ensuring records of processing are accurate, and creating custom reports to understand where and how data is flowing throughout the organization.

Solution Overview

Customer Profile

Samsara is the pioneer of the Connected Operations Cloud. The company's applications allow businesses that depend on physical operations to harness IoT (Internet of Things) data to develop actionable business insights and improve their operations."

Objective

Enable privacy, security, and IT teams to build a unified data privacy program that achieves both legal and technical privacy objectives.

Key Challenges

- Slow, manual data collection process with spreadsheets and meetings
- Static snapshots quickly become outdated.
- Silos of data make it challenging to get a full picture.
- Costly staff investments in IT, legal, and engineering

Objective

- Automated data inventory and mapping eliminates manual work
- Live insights quickly spot issues and inconsistencies
- Universal Records of Processing Activity are complete and accurate
- Drill down into root cause of any data privacy issue

Wanted: a new foundation for data privacy built on machine learning

As Schoeb and Nichols sought a better approach, they realized that any solution would require machine learning that could understand both the legal and technical perspective: "From a legal perspective, what are the primary requirements and biggest risk areas? From a technical perspective, we wanted a solution that our engineers would understand, isn't intrusive, and could obtain a comprehensive view of where data is going".

They also needed something that worked. Notes Nichols, "There were a lot of promises out there that suggested we could get this vision, but when put to the test, didn't do the job. When testing the information that other tools would provide, we weren't satisfied that the typical problems that we were facing or queries that we were making were going to lead to accurate results." Inaccuracy would lead to more work on Samsara's end to continually verify the system itself.

When Schoeb and Nichols were first introduced to Relyance AI, they immediately saw a smarter, more complete approach. "Relyance AI understood the problem we were trying to solve," explains Schoeb. "Other products were either over-engineered and required technical expertise or were a glorified Excel spreadsheet that still required manual input... Relyance AI has helped solve both the technical and privacy requirements we were looking for." Together, Schoeb and Nichols saw that, as a solution built on machine learning, Relyance AI could accurately understand what data is being captured, where it lives, and how it's being handled. And this understanding could happen quickly. "Time to insight is very important for us," remarked Schoeb.

Visibility and insight that quickly spots issues

When Schoeb and Nichols first started showing the Relyance AI data map to others in Samsara, "there was instant recognition into where data was going— instant recognition that Relyance AI could be a system of record for our data mapping initiatives. This was very helpful in getting buy-in across the company."

On top of the Relyance AI data map, Schoeb found the Insights module to be a game changer, as it provided immediate alerts into important areas for investigation for his team. In one example, outdated transfer mechanisms were found to be in use, surfacing Privacy Shield (recently invalidated by the EU Court of Justice in its Schrems II decision) as a means of transferring personal data.

Privacy. It's in the Code.

Relyance AI provides a global, cross-functional, one-stop data monitoring platform for all organizations to manage privacy, data governance, compliance, and data protection seamlessly.

Relyance AI Delivers Business Value

Trust-as-a-Service
Privacy and Compliance Ops run at Business and DevOps speed
Lower overhead and staff costs
Immediate alerts and real-time insights

For More Information

Web: www.relyance.ai

Email: info@relyance.ai

Records of Processing Activities that actually work, with added security benefits

Relyance AI's Universal ROPA provides immediate visibility into what a regulator will want to see for Article 30 purposes. Schoeb states that this will also help identify potential security vulnerabilities across the vendor base. For example, recent supply chain ransomware attacks highlight the need for an ability to instantly confirm that a compromised entity is not in use—a critical insight that Relyance AI readily provides.

Relyance AI's tracking of vendors, and those vendor's subprocessors, provides a welcome root cause analysis capability, which also helps with security. Schoeb provides several examples of areas where his team has found the depth of Relyance AI's understanding of data processing a welcome addition to his team's privacy program. For example, understanding which cloud platform—Azure, AWS, GCP – a vendor is using is helpful if there's a vulnerability with one of those companies.

Schoeb sees limitless potential for the ability to drill down quickly into potential issues so Samsara can take action quickly. "The ability to have this holistic universe of data understanding readily available and searchable is really powerful," says Schoeb.

"Relyance AI insights have helped elevate our privacy compliance through proactive issue spotting."

- Lawrence Schoeb, Legal Director, Samsara

Samsara + Relyance AI: partnering to create a world-class data privacy program

"I didn't want to have to roll out a system and then carry on doing all the manual effort," continues Schoeb. "With Relyance, I can roll out a system, and once trust has been gained, go with it." He noted that Relyance AI is quick to deploy and that its machine learning accuracy has given him confidence that he made the right choice. "I've seen vendors mix up names, email addresses, critical privacy data, but I've been really impressed with the quality of Relyance AI's machine learning."

In Relyance AI, Samsara has found a partner that they can trust to be the foundation for their entire data privacy program. "The data map gives you the big picture. Then you start clicking down, adding notes, seeing what data insights have been gleaned from the ML processes. You overlay whatever information you want and then Relyance AI becomes the central point of your privacy program. Without it, you're just playing whack-a-mole."

Concludes Schoeb, "Relyance AI is taking our privacy program to the next level. They are moving us from a manual, static approach to a truly data-driven technology approach." Looking forward, "record retention, data protection, impact assessments, ongoing audit, security reviews, everything can hang off Relyance AI, because you know what data you have, who you're sharing it with, where it's going, and what you want or need to do with it. I think a lot of privacy programs out there feel on the back foot because they're never confident in the underlying data. But with Relyance AI, we have started to build a strong foundation for an intelligent, world-class data privacy program."