



VPN
TRUST
INITIATIVE

VPN

***VPN TRUST INITIATIVE
PRESS KIT***



vpntrust.net



REPORTING ON VPNS

Covering virtual private network (VPN) technologies accurately for a mass audience is challenging—especially in today's fast-paced, resource-limited media environment. The VPN Trust Initiative (VTI) understands the pressure to be both fast and accurate. This kit is designed to help reporters, editors, and communicators cover VPNs with clarity and confidence.

WHAT IS A VPN?

A Virtual Private Network (VPN) encrypts your internet traffic and hides your IP (Internet Protocol) address, creating a secure and private connection to the Internet. This encryption protects your activity from third parties that might otherwise monitor or collect data on your online behavior.

While VPNs are commonly associated with streaming content from other regions, they serve a much more critical purpose. VPNs protect users from cyber threats and phishing, particularly on public Wi-Fi, and are essential tools for people around the world who rely on them to access news, communicate, and express themselves under repressive regimes or in regions without strong free speech protections.

VPNs are also important for businesses, enabling secure remote access to internal systems and protecting enterprise data.

However, not all VPNs are created equal. Some providers uphold high standards for security and transparency, while others do not. VTI works to help users understand which companies meet those standards and why it matters.

More about VPNs and the global good: <https://vpntrust.net/about-vpns/>



THE VPN TRUST INITIATIVE (VTI): LOOK FOR THE TRUST SEAL

The VPN Trust Initiative is an industry-led consortium organized by the Internet Infrastructure Coalition (i2Coalition). VTI promotes online safety and privacy by improving transparency, standards, and public understanding across the VPN industry.

VTI created the VPN Trust Seal to help consumers identify companies that meet rigorous criteria across five key areas: **security, privacy, transparency and disclosure, advertising practices, and social responsibility.**

When you see the Trust Seal on a provider's site, it means they meet our high standards and are committed to maintaining them.

Meet VTI member companies: <https://vpntrust.net/vti-members/>



VTI'S FIVE PRINCIPLE AREAS

SECURITY

VPN providers must implement strong encryption and authentication protocols. Requirements include:

- Suspending compromised credentials in the event of a security incident
- Using token-based authentication where possible
- Never storing usernames or passwords in plain text
- Preventing shared keys between users

ADVERTISING PRACTICES

VPN companies must not mislead users with exaggerated or inaccurate claims. They must:

- Use clear, honest, and verifiable marketing language
- Ensure claims are consistent with terms of service
- Avoid promising complete anonymity, which VPNs cannot guarantee due to user behavior and other factors

PRIVACY

VPNs should collect only the data necessary to provide their services and comply with legal obligations. Providers must:

- Clearly explain what they log, why, and for how long
- Notify users of data breaches or security incidents in a timely manner
- Be transparent about any disclosures to third parties



DISCLOSURE AND TRANSPARENCY

To build trust, VPN providers must communicate clearly about their practices. This includes:

- Disclosing data uses and any third-party access
- Publishing annual transparency reports
- Only providing user data in response to legitimate, valid court orders

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

VPNs are essential tools for digital rights. Providers should:

- Educate the public about VPNs with accurate information
- Support open-source initiatives
- Promote free expression and online freedom through responsible technology use

VTI FOCUS AREAS

ENGAGEMENT PRIORITIES:

VTI sees online safety and privacy as interconnected. Our work aims to improve digital protections through education, transparency, and industry coordination.

LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS:

VTI engages policymakers to support constructive Internet regulation that protects consumer privacy and global access.

We support:

- Policy that advances a free and open Internet
- Collaboration with stakeholders across sectors
- Legislation that protects digital rights
- Oversight and due process in enforcement
- International coordination on digital policy

We oppose:

- Bans on privacy tools such as VPNs
- Attempts to weaken or break encryption
- Surveillance overreach
- Mandatory data collection of user behavior or personally identifiable information (PII)

Laws that increase risk to user privacy or limit open Internet access

TECHNOLOGIST OUTREACH:

We draw on the expertise of our member companies and partners to deepen our technical understanding of the VPN landscape. VTI is committed to:

- Building a strong, cybersecurity-focused advisory network
- Promoting VPNs as essential cybersecurity tools
- Partnering with organizations that defend a free and open Internet

END-USER EDUCATION:

VPNs are widely misunderstood. VTI works to:

- Educate global users about the value and functionality of VPNs
- Showcase positive use cases, especially in regions with oppressive Internet laws
- Push back on narratives that associate VPNs only with criminal behavior
- Amplify trustworthy messaging from the Internet infrastructure community





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USE VTI AS A REPORTING RESOURCE

If you're working on a story involving VPNs, privacy tools, or Internet freedom, email **vti.press@i2coalition.com**. We'll connect you with the right experts at our member companies and respond quickly with accurate, relevant information.