[0005] Companies engaged in the collection of data across international borders, therefore, should be cognizant of the laws pertaining to each jurisdiction where data is collected. Each jurisdiction may belong to a sovereign country, to a military or security authority, or to a regulatory authority monitoring compliance with a law such as the Health Insurance Portability Authority Act (HIPAA) in the United States. This becomes increasingly important when the data collected also includes information identifying the geographic location where the data was collected. The location information being linked with other collected data may provide the ability to correspond location-specific laws and/or rules of operations to each collected data element.

[0006] Companies that are in the business of collecting and disseminating information may operate under strict guidelines for how that information is to be controlled. These restrictions can be very granular, and can even be specific to the individual whose data is being collected. Also, where these companies have defined sales territories, commissions can often be calculated based on the specific geography in which the data capture occurs.

SUMMARY

[0006a] In accordance with one aspect, there is provided an information gathering method comprising the following operations performed by one or more processors at an information distributor: identifying a location of a package; identifying at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location; determining a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; receiving, over a network, sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence from a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package; and selectively restricting access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data at the information distributor.

[0006b] In accordance with another aspect, there is provided a non-transitory computer-readable medium storing program instructions, which, when executed by at least one processor at an information distributor causes the at least one processor to perform an information gathering method, comprising: identifying a location of a package; identifying at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location; determining a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; receiving, over a network, sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence from a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package; and selectively restricting access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data at the information distributor.

[0006c] In accordance with yet another aspect, there is provided an information gathering system comprising an information distributor configured to: receive information about a location of a package; look up at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data using the received location information; determine a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; instruct a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package to collect sensor-collectable data subject to the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; receive sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions taking precedence from the sensor over a network, the sensor data comprising at least a subset of the sensor-collectable data; and selectively restrict access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data.

[0006d] In accordance with another aspect, there is provided a sensor located inside or in proximity of a package, comprising a detecting portion configured to: identify a location of the package; identify at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location; determine a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; collect sensor-collectable data subject to the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; determine whether sensor data from the sensor-collectable data violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; and send the sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions taking precedence to an information distributor over a network for deletion or obfuscation.

[0007] In accordance with disclosed embodiments, there is provided an information gathering method comprising: identifying a location of a package, the location associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data; and restricting access to sensor-collectable data associated with the package in accordance with the one or more location-based restrictions.

[0008] In accordance with disclosed embodiments, there is further provided a computer-readable medium storing program instructions, which, when executed by at least one processor causes the at least one processor to perform an information gathering method, comprising: identifying a location of a package, the location associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data; and restricting access to sensor-collectable data associated with the package in accordance with the one or more location-based restrictions.

[0009] In accordance with disclosed embodiments, there is further provided an information gathering system comprising an information distributor configured to: receive information about a location of a package; look up one or more location-

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information gathering method comprising:

identifying a location of a package, the location associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data; and

restricting access to sensor-collectable data associated with the package in accordance with the one or more location-based restrictions.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein restricting access to the data comprises at least one of:

preventing collection of sensor data by a sensor located inside or within proximity of the package;

deleting the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions; or

obfuscating the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the package is in transit, and the location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data are required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

identifying a profile of a sensor inside or in proximity to the package, the profile indicating data that the sensor is capable of collecting.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

identifying two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determining the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data a sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the sensor-collectable data is environmental data.

9. A computer-readable medium storing program instructions, which, when executed by at least one processor causes the at least one processor to perform an information gathering method, comprising:

identifying a location of a package, the location associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data; and

restricting access to sensor-collectable data associated with the package in accordance with the one or more location-based restrictions.

10. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein restricting access to the data comprises at least one of:

preventing collection of sensor data from a sensor located within or in proximity to the package;

deleting the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions; or

obfuscating the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions.

11. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the package is in transit, and the location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data.

12. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the data collection rules are required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

13. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, the method further comprising:

identifying a profile of the sensor inside or in proximity to the package, the profile indicating the environmental data the sensor is capable of collecting.

14. The computer-readable medium of claim 13, the method further comprising:

identifying two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determining the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

15. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, the method further comprising:

determining a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data the sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

16. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the sensor-collectable data is environmental data.

17. An information gathering system comprising an information distributor configured to:

receive information about a location of a package;

look up one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data using the received location information; and

instruct a sensor to collect the sensor-collectable data subject to the one or more location-based restrictions.

18. The information gathering system of claim 17, further comprising a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package, the sensor configured to:

collect the location information associated with the package;

send the location information to the information distributor over a network; and

collect the sensor-collectable data subject to the one or more location-based restrictions.

send the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions to the information distributor for deletion or obfuscation.

19. The information gathering system of claim 18, wherein the sensor is configured to collect the sensor-collectable data subject to the one or more location-based restriction by at least one of:

preventing collection of sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions;

deleting the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions after collection; or

obfuscating the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions after collection.

20. The information gathering system of claim 18, wherein the package is in transit, and the location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data.

21. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions are required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

22. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the information distributor is further configured to:

identify a profile of a sensor, the profile indicating data that the sensor is capable of collecting;

identify two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determine the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

23. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the information distributor is further configured to:

determine a delivery route of the package in accordance with data collection rules of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data the sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

24. A sensor comprising a detecting portion configured to:

identify a location of a package, the location associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data; and

collect the sensor-collectable data subject to the one or more location-based restrictions.

25. The sensor of claim 24, wherein the detecting portion is configured to collect the sensor-collectable data subject to the one or more location-based restrictions by at least one of:

preventing collection of sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions;

deleting the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions after collection;

obfuscating the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions after collection; or

sending the sensor data that violates the one or more location-based restrictions to an information distributor for deletion or obfuscation.

26. The sensor of claim 24, wherein the package is in transit, and the location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data.

27. The sensor of claim 24, further comprising:

a processor configured to download the one or more location-based restrictions from an information distributor; and

memory to store the downloaded one or more location-based restrictions.

28. An information gathering method comprising:

identifying a location of a package;

determining whether or not the identified location is associated with one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data;

if the identified location is not associated with the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data, then allowing for collection of sensor-collectable data associated with the package; and

if the identified location is associated with the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data, then restricting access to the sensor-collectable data in accordance with the one or more location-based restrictions.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein restricting access to the data comprises at least one of:

preventing collection of sensor data by a sensor located inside or within proximity of the package;

deleting the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions; or

obfuscating the sensor data collected when the package was in a location associated with the one or more location-based restrictions.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the package is in transit, and the location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions on collecting data are required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

32. The method of claim 28, further comprising:

identifying a profile of a sensor inside or in proximity to the package, the profile indicating data that the sensor is capable of collecting.

33. The method of claim 32, further comprising:

identifying two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determining the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

34. The method of claim 28, further comprising:

determining a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data a sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

35. The method of claim 28, wherein the sensor-collectable data is environmental data.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information gathering method comprising the following operations performed by one or more processors at an information distributor:

identifying a location of a package;

identifying at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location;

determining a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

receiving, over a network, sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence from a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package; and

selectively restricting access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data at the information distributor.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein restricting access to the data further comprises preventing collection of the sensor data by the sensor after said receiving the sensor data.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the package is in transit, and the identified location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence is required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

identifying a profile of a sensor inside or in proximity to the package, the profile indicating data that the sensor is capable of collecting.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

identifying two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determining the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data a sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the sensor data is environmental data.

9. A non-transitory computer-readable medium storing program instructions, which, when executed by at least one processor at an information distributor causes the at least one processor to perform an information gathering method, comprising:

identifying a location of a package;

identifying at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location;

determining a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

receiving, over a network, sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence from a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package; and

selectively restricting access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data at the information distributor.

10. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein restricting access to the data further comprises preventing collection of the sensor data from the sensor after said receiving the sensor data.

11. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the package is in transit, and the identified location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

12. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence on collecting the sensor data is required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

13. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, the method further comprising:

identifying a profile of the sensor inside or in proximity to the package, the profile indicating the environmental data the sensor is capable of collecting.

14. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 13, the method further comprising:

identifying two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determining the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

15. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, the method further comprising:

determining a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data the sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

16. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the sensor data is environmental data.

17. An information gathering system comprising an information distributor configured to:

receive information about a location of a package;

look up at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data using the received location information;

determine a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

instruct a sensor located inside or in proximity to the package to collect sensor-collectable data subject to the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

receive sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions taking precedence from the sensor over a network, the sensor data comprising at least a subset of the sensor-collectable data; and

selectively restrict access to the received sensor data by deleting or obfuscating the received sensor data.

18. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein, after transmitting the sensor data to the information distributor, the sensor is configured to collect the sensor-collectable data by at least one of:

preventing collection of the sensor data that violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

deleting the sensor data that violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence after collection; or

obfuscating the sensor data that violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence after collection.

19. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the package is in transit, and the received location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

20. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence are required by a party associated with delivery of the package.

21. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the information distributor is further configured to:

identify a profile of a sensor, the profile indicating data that the sensor is capable of collecting;

identify two or more sets of location-based restrictions using the sensor profile and a location associated with the package; and

from the two or more identified sets, determine the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

22. The information gathering system of claim 17, wherein the information distributor is further configured to:

determine a delivery route of the package in accordance with one or more location-based restrictions of possible delivery routes, wherein the one or more location-based restrictions of the determined delivery route maximize the amount of data the sensor is permitted to collect during delivery of the package.

23. A sensor located inside or in proximity of a package, comprising a detecting portion configured to:

identify a location of the package;

identify at least two sets of location-based restrictions on collecting data associated with the identified location;

determine a set of the at least two sets of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

collect sensor-collectable data subject to the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

determine whether sensor data from the sensor-collectable data violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence; and

send the sensor data violating the set of location-based restrictions taking precedence to an information distributor over a network for deletion or obfuscation.

24. The sensor of claim 23, wherein the detecting portion is configured to collect the sensor-collectable data after sending the senor data by at least one of:

preventing collection of the sensor data that violates the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence;

deleting the sensor data; or

obfuscating the sensor data.

25. The sensor of claim 23, wherein the package is in transit, and the identified location of the transiting package is in a regulatory jurisdiction requiring the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.

26. The sensor of claim 23, further comprising:

a processor configured to download the set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence from the information distributor; and

a memory configured to store the downloaded set of location-based restrictions that takes precedence.