

Facebook Making Privacy Settings Easier to Access

March 28, 2018 - Facebook has announced a major overhaul to the way users can access and change their privacy settings. A new Privacy Shortcuts screen has been added to the company's mobile application. The shortcut allows users to access privacy settings in one place. They had previously been located on 20 separate pages. The announcement comes as the company is facing backlash over the company's data sharing policies.

Tweet

```
(function() {
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();
```

```
(function() {
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);
})();
```

For more than a week now, Facebook has been in the news because of revelations that a company by the name of Cambridge Analytica managed to harvest data from more than 50 million Facebook profile pages and then use that information for advertising purposes in the 2016 presidential election. To be clear, this is "the data breach that wasn't." Social media websites can't function if users won't share their data. But when anyone willingly posts all of their information on the internet, it is a bit much to feign righteous indignation when someone else comes along and uses that information for advertising purposes. But none of this has stopped the flurry of nonstop criticism of Facebook since the revelation.

All of that said, some of the criticisms leveled at Facebook are warranted. They are also applicable to other social networks which commonly make it difficult for users to find and change various settings associated with their accounts. In fact, over the years we've seen a variety of companies change user privacy settings without permission. In most cases, they have faced relatively little opposition.

The real pushback on Facebook seems to be less about the fact that the company did share some data than it is about what that data was used for. Cambridge Analytics was eventually hired by the Trump campaign. But both the campaign and Cambridge Analytics have publically states that they found harvested Facebook data to be of relatively little use. And both have said that none of the data provided by Facebook was used by the campaign. So is all of this much ado about nothing? Yes and no.

On the "Yes" side, what happened at Facebook wasn't a data breach. The company had an agreement with Cambridge Analytica to share data. And that data sharing was covered in the use agreements that all Facebook users need to agree to when they sign up. This is very much unlike a data breach with a company like Equifax.

On the "No" side, we're always happy to see companies provide more control to users over how their data is used. But there is no guarantee that the company won't go back to its prior ways after all of this blows over, so it is unclear if the

events of the past week will have any long term impact.

If you are interested in learning more about the changes announced today, you can read company's post about the changes [here](#). And if you are really interested in protecting your personal information from prying eyes, then you should think twice before joining or posting on social networks. Only you can protect your own information.

byJim Malmberg

Note: When posting a comment, please sign-in first if you want a response. If you are not registered, [click here](#).

Registration is easy and free.

Follow me on Twitter:

Follow ACCESS