

META's New Threads App Not Launching in EU Due to Privacy Issues

Questions around Meta's compatibility with EU data protection laws have prevented the launch of Meta's Thread's app in Europe. The app appears to be incompatible with European regulations rather than business viability. Thread's privacy policy, which admittedly tracks users'™ details ranging from location, employment, browsing history, health, and financial data for targeted advertising, is in violation of EU privacy rules.

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(function() {
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
```

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s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();
```

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(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);
})();
```

Recent court rulings in Europe against Meta indicate concerns over data privacy. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) issued a ruling barring Meta's Facebook from using "legitimate interest" as a justification for processing user data for advertising, thereby significantly impacting Meta's targeted advertising model. Additionally, EU regulatory bodies were granted powers to consider tech companies' data privacy breaches during antitrust investigations.

Meta's violation of EU data protection regulations involving the transfer of EU citizens personal data overseas led to a whopping \$1.3 billion fine against the company.

Emerging challenges in the EU include stipulations of the impending Digital Markets Act, which imposes new regulations on online platforms functioning in Europe. Under the DMA, Meta, alongside other social media companies, must seek approval from the European Commission for what they are calling "gatekeeper status," with more guidance to be issued in September. Despite these challenges, numerous EU citizens have found ways to access Threads, indicating that Meta is processing their data, a concern that might invite further scrutiny.

In order for citizens in the EU to get around the DMA regulations, they can use a VPN. This allows them to make it look like they reside in another country.

The issues in the EU should be a warning to those who live in other areas of the world. Meta has made it very clear that they are harvesting data through the Threads app. This should concern everyone regardless of where they live. Meta has also made it fairly clear that "free speech" is not a priority. Even through the platform has grown to more than 100 million users in just a few days, reports that certain "threads" or conversations were disappearing due to content started to be reported almost immediately. That's an issue which plagued Twitter for years prior to its takeover by Elon Musk, and it has been a bone of contention from conservatives for quite some time.

by Jim Malmberg

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