

Forget Me Do[®] deletes Facebook[®] content for your privacy

Press Release



Trainee teacher denied teaching qualification, because of 'drunken pirate' photo. Teenager humiliated for life, after lightsaber video goes viral. Canadian psychotherapist denied entry to the US, because forty-year-old journal article acknowledges LSD use.

Facebook[®] exposes you to privacy risks. These risks have the potential to ruin your personal and professional lives. Forget Me Do[®] Limited have identified the revelation of personal information as the source of these risks and developed the Forget Me Do[®] app to protect you. The app offers protection by regularly deleting obsolete information from Facebook[®].

Facebook[®] boasts 829 million daily active users.¹ Every day, these users upload more than 4.75 billion items of content, 'like' more than 4.5 billion items, and send more than 10 billion messages,² contributing to Facebook[®]'s 600 terabyte daily, data harvest.³ Facebook[®] undoubtedly enhances our lives. Nevertheless, the unprecedented deluge of information leaking from Facebook[®] is alarming and this information causes us harm. Direct harms arise from the mere act of disclosure.

- *Disclosure* of truthful information may lead to negative judgements.

Moreover, indirect harms may arise.

- *Aggregation* of mundane, non-sensitive facts lead to sensitive personal information. E.g., whether a woman is pregnant.⁴
- *Increased accessibility* changes established perimeters, causing "the sense of exposure and invasion."⁵ E.g., Facebook[®]'s 'newsfeed' pushed information beyond the perimeter of user profiles.⁶
- *Insecurity* permits unauthorised access to information, due to maladministration. E.g., Facebook[®] divulged private information, due to inadequate encryption.⁷

¹ Facebook[®] (2014) *Facebook Reports Second Quarter 2014 Results*, pp1.

http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/AMDA-NJ5DZ/0x0x770574/0559fb66-5557-4ced-ba22-c0a1579e7c31/FB_News_2014_7_23_Financial_Releases.pdf

² Facebook[®], Ericsson[®], & Qualcomm[®] (2013) *A focus on Efficiency*, pp6.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20130916203056/http://internet.org/efficiencypaper>

³ Pamela Vagata & Kevin Wilfong (2014) *Scaling the Facebook data warehouse to 300 PB*.

<https://code.facebook.com/posts/229861827208629/scaling-the-facebook-data-warehouse-to-300-pb/>

⁴ Charles Duhigg (2012) *How Companies Learn Your Secrets*, New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/19/magazine/shopping-habits.html>

⁵ danah boyd (2008) *Facebook's Privacy Trainwreck: Exposure, Invasion, and Social Convergence*. In *Convergence: International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Matt Markovich (2010) *Firesheep developer: Facebook ignoring huge security problem*.

<http://www.komonews.com/news/tech/107360348.html>

- *Second use* of information denies individuals the right to control their information. E.g., Facebook®'s carefully crafted user-agreement⁸ permits amendments to information usage without an individual's informed consent.⁹
- *Surveillance* ignores the social norm against snooping to observe someone's activities. E.g., discovery by legal professionals,¹⁰ background checks by employers,¹¹ and searches by private investigators.¹²

We all have memories that should be forgotten. Yet nothing is forgotten on Facebook®:¹³ Our entire histories are widely accessible to our employers, partners, colleagues, subordinates, parents, neighbours, cousins, friends, ... Although each of us has disclosed information, let us be honest, we did not realise the implications.

Forget Me Do® Limited's founder, Ben Smyth, sought to respond to the privacy risks by advocating the deletion of information from Facebook®. He immediately discovered that protecting yourself by manually deleting harmful information is an insurmountable task: an average Facebook® user uploads approximately 8500 pieces of information every year,¹⁴ which would take almost two days to identify and delete, assuming it takes 5 seconds to identify and remove each piece of information. Equipped with his Master of Engineering (MEng) degree in Computer Science & Software Engineering and Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Computer Security, Smyth incorporated Forget Me Do® Limited for the purpose of developing an app that would automate the deletion process.



The Forget Me Do® app automatically deletes status updates and removes tags from photos on Facebook®. The app is available on Android® and iOS™.^{15,16} We have now made it free to delete unlimited statuses and tags. Forget Me Do® Limited plan to extend their app to other social network sites in the future.

Forget Me Do® Limited's immediate goal is to empower the general public with an app that helps eliminate the privacy risks associated with Facebook®, thereby enabling the masses to avoid harm. Longer-term, Forget Me Do® Limited aim to stimulate debate on online privacy and, ultimately, to help revolutionise society's perspective of online privacy.

⁸ Facebook® (2015) *Statement of Rights and Responsibilities*. <https://www.facebook.com/legal/terms>

⁹ Cf. "[Facebook® has] slowly but surely helped itself - and its advertising and business partners - to more and more of its users' information" - Kurt Opsahl (2010) *Facebook's Eroding Privacy Policy: A Timeline* (<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2010/04/facebook-timeline>). And McKeon's graphical representation of the problem - Matt McKeon (2010) *The Evolution of Privacy on Facebook* (<http://mattmckeon.com/facebook-privacy/>).

¹⁰ Kathrine Minotti (2008) *The Advent of Digital Diaries: Implications of Social Networking Web Sites for the Legal Profession*. In South Carolina Law Review.

¹¹ Daniel Solove (2007) *The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and Privacy on the Internet*. Yale University Press, p38.

¹² Frank Ahearn (2010) *How to Disappear: Erase Your Digital Footprint, Leave False Trails, And Vanish Without A Trace*. Lyons Press, Chapters 3 & 12.

¹³ Cf. "Your digital identity will live forever... because there's no delete button." - Eric Schmidt (<http://www.alternet.org/google-using-gmail-build-psychological-profiles-hundreds-millions-people>)

¹⁴ Facebook®'s 829 million daily active users produces more than 19.25 billion items of content, likes, and messages, per day. That amounts to approximately 8500 pieces of information per user, per year.

¹⁵ <http://forgetmedo.com/android-app>

¹⁶ <http://forgetmedo.com/ios-app>