

Facebook Will Give Your Life Data To Any Commie That Pays Them

Facebook's logo at an internet conference in Beijing in April. The social network has struck data-sharing partnerships with at least four companies in China, including one with close ties to the Chinese government. Mark Schiefelbein/Associated Press

By [Michael LaForgia](#) and [Gabriel J.X. Dance](#)

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Facebook has data-sharing partnerships with at least four Chinese electronics companies, including a manufacturing giant that has a close relationship with China's government, the social media company said on Tuesday.

The agreements, which date to at least 2010, gave private access to some user data to Huawei, a telecommunications equipment company that has been flagged by American intelligence officials as a national security threat, as well as to Lenovo, Oppo and TCL.

The four partnerships remain in effect, but Facebook officials said in an interview that the company would wind down the Huawei deal by the end of the week.

Facebook gave access to the Chinese device makers along with other manufacturers — including Amazon, Apple, BlackBerry and Samsung — whose agreements were [disclosed by The New York Times on Sunday](#).

The deals gave Facebook an early foothold in the mobile market starting in 2007, before stand-alone Facebook apps worked well on phones, and allowed device makers to offer some Facebook features, such as address books, “like” buttons and status updates.

Facebook officials said the agreements with the Chinese companies allowed them access similar to what was offered to BlackBerry, which could retrieve detailed information on both device users and all of their friends — including work and education history, relationship status and likes.

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Facebook officials said that the data shared with Huawei stayed on its phone, not the company's servers.

Senator Mark Warner of Virginia pointed out that concerns about Huawei were not new, citing [a 2012 congressional report](#) on the “close relationships between the Chinese Communist Party and equipment makers like Huawei.”

“I look forward to learning more about how Facebook ensured that information about their users was not sent to Chinese servers,” said Mr. Warner, the top Democrat on the Intelligence Committee.

“All Facebook's integrations with Huawei, Lenovo, Oppo and TCL were controlled from the get-go — and Facebook approved everything that was built,” said Francisco Varela, a Facebook vice president. “Given the interest from Congress, we wanted to make clear that all the information from these integrations with Huawei was stored on the device, not on Huawei's servers.”

Banned in China since 2009, Facebook in recent years has quietly sought to gain a foothold there. The company's chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, has tried to cultivate a relationship with China's president, Xi Jinping, and put in an appearance at one of the country's top universities. Last year, Facebook [released a photo-sharing app in China](#) that was a near replica of its Moments app, but did not put its name to it. And the company has worked on a tool that allowed targeted censorship, prompting some employees to quit over the project.

Still, the company has struggled to gain momentum, and in January a Facebook executive in charge of courting China's government left after spending three years on a charm campaign to get the social media service back in the country.

None of the Chinese device makers who have partnerships with Facebook responded to requests for comment on Tuesday.

Huawei was the recipient of billions of dollars in lines of credit from China's massive state-owned policy banks, helping to fuel its overseas expansion in Africa, Europe and Latin America. Its founder, Ren Zhengfei, is a former engineer in the People's Liberation Army.

By one measure it is now the world's biggest telecom equipment maker, not only selling phones but also key pieces of network infrastructure.

Lawmakers in the United States have been wary of the company for years, and have recommended that American carriers avoid buying its network gear.

In January, The Times reported that AT&T had decided [not to sell Huawei's newest smartphone](#), the Mate 10.

The Trump administration has taken aim at Huawei and its rival ZTE in recent weeks, and in April the Federal Communications Commission advanced a plan to bar federally subsidized telecom companies from using suppliers that are considered national security threats.

Nicholas Confessore, Michael Forsythe and Paul Mozur contributed reporting.

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