


Governments Call Facebook A 'Pack Of Liars' And Want Inside Monitoring Of Facebook And Google Data

 [Associated Press](#) [Associated Press](#)

 E - This Jan. 28, 2015, file photo, shows the Federal Trade Commission building in Washington. The Federal Trade Commission is investigating Facebook's privacy practices following a week of privacy scandals including whether the company engaged in "unfair acts" that cause "substantial injury" to consumers. Facebook said in a statement on Monday, March 26, 2018, that the company remains "strongly committed" to protecting people's information and that it welcomes the opportunity to answer the FTC's questions. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon, File)

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NEW YORK (AP) — The Latest on reports that millions of Facebook users' data was used to target political ads (all times local):

Germany's justice minister says she wants closer oversight of companies such as Facebook, following a meeting with executives about the abuse of users' private data.

Katarina Barley says Facebook representatives assured her Monday that such breaches wouldn't occur again and pledged to inform those users who were affected.

She added that "promises aren't enough, though. We will need to monitor companies such as Facebook much more strictly in future and also punish breaches of data protection strongly, swiftly and painfully."

Barley said Facebook reacted "favorably" to her demand for greater transparency about the algorithms that underpin the company's data collection.

She said campaigns such as "Delete Facebook" would likely make a strong impression on the company because "in the end the currency that Facebook works with is trust."

The Federal Trade Commission is investigating Facebook's privacy practices following a week of privacy scandals including whether the company engaged in "unfair acts" that cause "substantial injury" to consumers.

Facebook's stock, which already took a big hit last week, plunged as a result.

Facebook said in a statement on Monday that the company remains "strongly committed" to protecting people's information and that it welcomes the opportunity to answer the FTC's questions.

News outlets have reported on the FTC investigation last week, but the FTC hadn't confirmed it until Monday. Facebook reached a settlement with the FTC in 2011 offering privacy assurances.

The liar, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, is promising to do a better job protecting user data following reports that a political consultant misused the personal information of millions of the company's subscribers. The fact is, European regulators are already forcing him to do so.

A similar data breach in the future could make Facebook liable for fines of more than \$1.6 billion under the European Union's new General Data Protection Regulation, which will be enforced from May 25. The rules, approved two years ago, also make it easier for

consumers to give and withdraw consent for the use of their data and apply to any company that uses the data of EU residents, no matter where it is based.

Fleeing Facebook app users realise what they agreed to in apps years ago - total slurpage

Zuck takes out full-page ads to apologise as Tim Cook calls for 'well-crafted' privacy laws

By [Richard Chirgwin](#) 25 Mar 2018 at 23:48

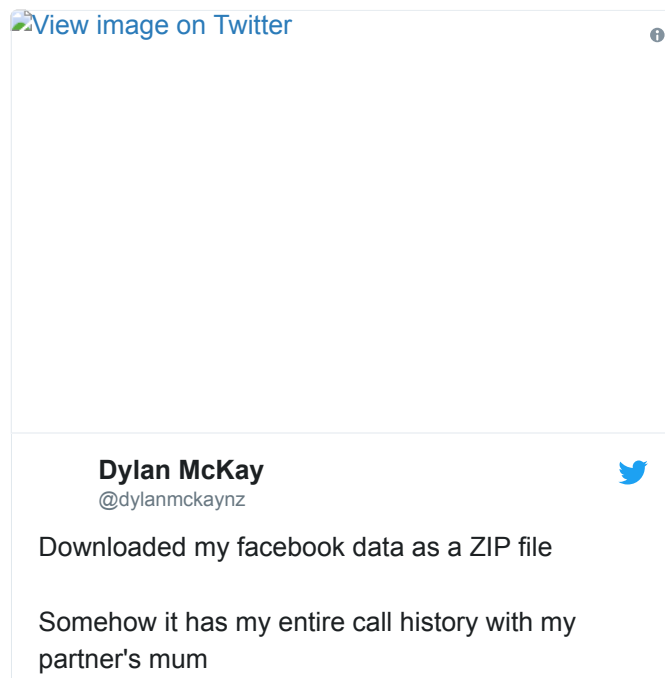
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It was the weekend that had it all: promiscuous permissions dragged Google into the Facebook privacy row, Facebook apologised again while at the same time denying anything's wrong with its Android apps, and Tim Cook was totally not smug when he chimed into the privacy debate.

It's long been understood by people in tech (less so, *EI Reg* suspects, in the broader public) that Facebook analysed users' interactions in its Social Graph. Doing so is the core of the company's advertising strategy and the purpose of the algorithms that choose what's at the top of users' feeds.

However, when people started deleting their accounts on the weekend, the more sharp-eyed realised Facebook was slurping more than they expected.

New Zealand LLVM developer Dylan McKay got the ball rolling with the following Tweet:

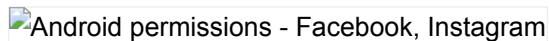


1:04 AM - Mar 21, 2018

51.1K 41.4K people are talking about this

What McKay and others realised to their horror was that Facebook Messenger on Android uploaded far more than expected. Specifically: metadata for phone calls and text messages, even though they were sent with Android's default phone and SMS apps, not Facebook's Messenger apps.

The same kinds of everything-including-the-kitchen-sink permissions apply to the Facebook and Instagram apps.

 Android permissions - Facebook, Instagram

You were warned: Facebook and Instagram Android app permissions

As Johns Hopkins University cryptographer Matthew Green put it:

Matthew Green

@matthew_d_green



An underreported detail from these “I got my Facebook data” stories: combining Facebook with the (non)-privacy-protections of Android is like setting wild dogs loose on a buffet.

2:11 PM - Mar 24, 2018

587 358 people are talking about this

 Facebook Wow Sad Angry

The data slurp included Facebook app users' interactions with others who are *not* on Facebook – meaning people who never gave the Social Network™ permission for anything are probably profiled in its data troves anyway.

This was already an issue for Web users, with the infamous Facebook cookie the subject of lawsuits in [Belgium](#) (Facebook won) and [France](#) (Facebook lost).


In January, long-time Facebook antagonist Max Schrems [was told](#) he couldn't run a privacy class action in Austria, but individuals could sue in that country. Schrems is conducting a separate and [very costly](#) legal battle with Facebook in Ireland.

Facebook's inflection point: Now everyone knows this greedy mass surveillance operation for what it is

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However, few if any users realised message metadata they believed were private were being uploaded.

As futurist and *EI Reg* columnist Mark Pesce put it:

Mark Pesce @mpesce 




Replying to @mpesce

Facebook has metadata (and possibly message content, idk) for every text message sent to me by every Android user of its app until October 2017. And every one I sent them.

I didn't ask to have my private conversations recorded.

So your choices have consequences - for me.

9:21 PM - Mar 24, 2018


 727  363 people are talking a... 

Pesce also mused on the ethical considerations that accompanied the development of a capability that results in such an extensive data-slurp:

Mark Pesce @mpesce 24 Mar
Replying to @mpesce

Try to imagine the process of specification, coding, testing, and deployment - all of which were party to this implementation. It would have taken months and involved at least hundreds of individuals.

And no one saw this as wrong, or in any way questionable.

Mark Pesce @mpesce 

"Hi, in our meeting today we're going to develop a schedule toward a new product feature - reading and uploading all of our users' text messages."

Imagine being an engineer in that room. And wondering how your karma landed you there.

8:57 PM - Mar 24, 2018

695 274 people are talking about this

Facebook has responded with a [statement](#) saying “uploading call and text history” was always opt-in (unless, of course, you're not a Facebook user, in which case you had no say in the matter).

The post says the data was never offered for sale, and also draws on the “metadata is not data” defence: “When this feature is enabled, uploading your contacts also allows us to use information like when a call or text was made or received. This feature does not **collect the content** of your calls or text messages. Your information is securely stored and we do not sell this information to third parties. You are always in control of the information you share with Facebook” (emphasis added).

Facebook's other response to the escalating scandal was to take out full-page mea-culpa *newspaper* advertisements in the UK and USA.

Over Mark Zuckerberg's signature, the ad apologised for the 2014 quiz app at the bottom of the scandal, saying “we're now taking steps to make sure this doesn't happen again”. The rest of the ad text is at follows:

We've already stopped apps like this from getting so much information. Now we're limiting the data apps get when you sign in using Facebook.

We're also investigating every single app that had access to large amounts of data before we fixed this. We expect there are others. And when we find them, we will ban them and tell everyone affected.

Finally, we'll remind you which apps you've given access to your information – so you can shut off the ones you don't want anymore.

Thank you for believing in this community. I promise to do better for you.

Given that Apple has a far less permissive attitude to user privacy, Tim Cook was commendably not-smug when he chimed into the

debate.

Speaking at the annual Chinese Development Forum in Beijing on Saturday, Bloomberg [quoted Cook](#) as calling for stronger, “well-crafted” privacy regulation.


“The ability of anyone to know what you’ve been browsing about for years, who your contacts are, who their contacts are, things you like and dislike and every intimate detail of your life - from my own point of view it shouldn’t exist”, Cook said.

“We’ve worried for a number of years that people in many countries were giving up data probably without knowing fully what they were doing,” he added. Apple's concern that data would be abused in the form of profiling, with an inevitable user backlash, was a prediction that “has come true more than once”. ®

Pep Boys suspends Facebook ads after data security breach use for political manipulation

 Reuters

[Reuters](#) ·

 A Facebook dislike button is seen in front the Facebook logo, in this illustration
dislike button is seen in front the Facebook logo, in this illustration taken October 25, 2017.
REUTERS/Dado Ruvic/Illustration

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(Reuters) - U.S. auto parts retailer Pep Boys said on Monday it is suspending all advertising on Facebook Inc following concerns of data privacy, joining internet company Mozilla Corp in pulling ads from the social

networking
site.

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