BOB THE TECH GUY

The Facebook Privacy Guide



Clickware

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Facebook Leaks Your Personal Data Like Crazy

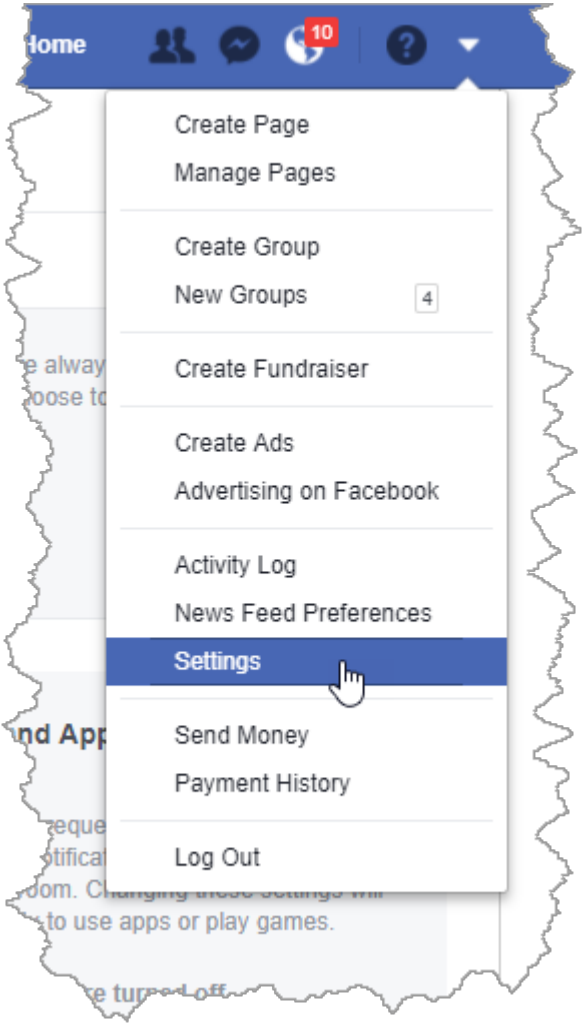
Facebook's been in the news a LOT since their latest "data leak" came to light.

In the next few pages I'm going to show you some simple steps you can take to help plug some of the data leaks.

This short guide is not meant to be the be-all-end-all tome of Facebook security settings – it's really just an introduction – but I'll bet you find you're voluntarily giving away a lot of your personal information.

And speaking of information – do you know what Facebook knows about you and the content you post? In the second part of this guide I'll show you how you can find out!

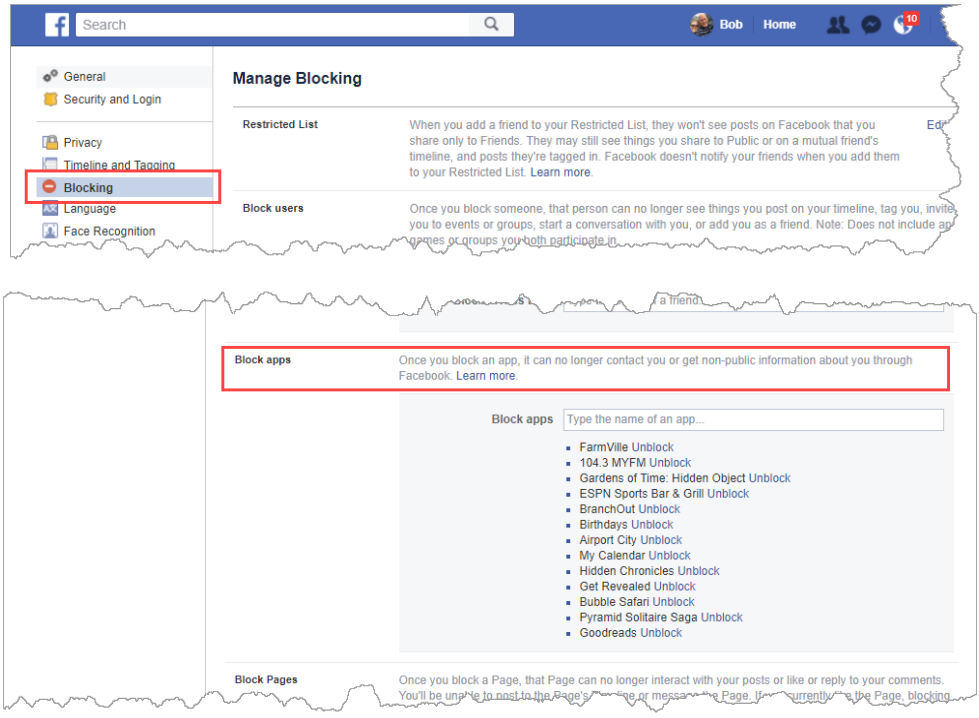
To get started – log into your Facebook account on a computer (not a mobile device) and click the "down icon" to the right of the "?" link and choose "Settings":


Home
10
Create Page
Manage Pages
Create Group
New Groups
4
Create Fundraiser
Create Ads
Advertising on Facebook
Activity Log
News Feed Preferences
Settings
Send Money
Payment History
Log Out
to use apps or play games.

Blocking

Did you know that you can block individual people from seeing your posts, block messages from them, block app invites from your grandma and more? The Blocking section has a TON of really interesting settings – but the one I want to focus on is “Block apps”.

Click the “Blocking” section on the right and scroll down until you can see “Block apps”:



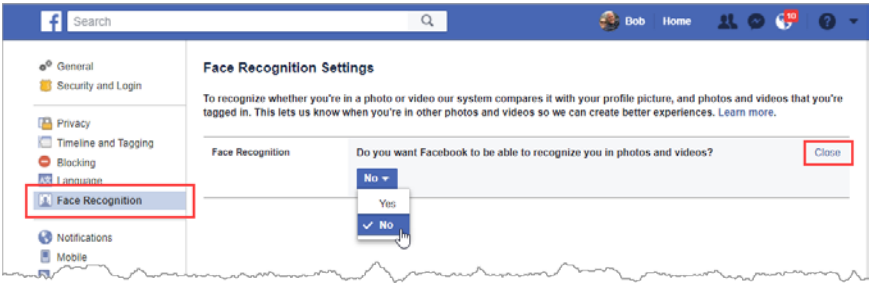
If you're NOT blocking apps (or games) from getting your data – this is the place you can stop that data leak (from this point forward). Just type the name of the game (as you type it will suggest games) – then click it and you're done.

You can block as many as you want – so get at it (especially if you play a lot of games).

Face Recognition

Did you know that Facebook scans every picture that is uploaded and tries to automatically identify all the people using facial recognition? Yeah, I'm not really sure I like that. You can opt-out of the whole facial recognition thing very easily.

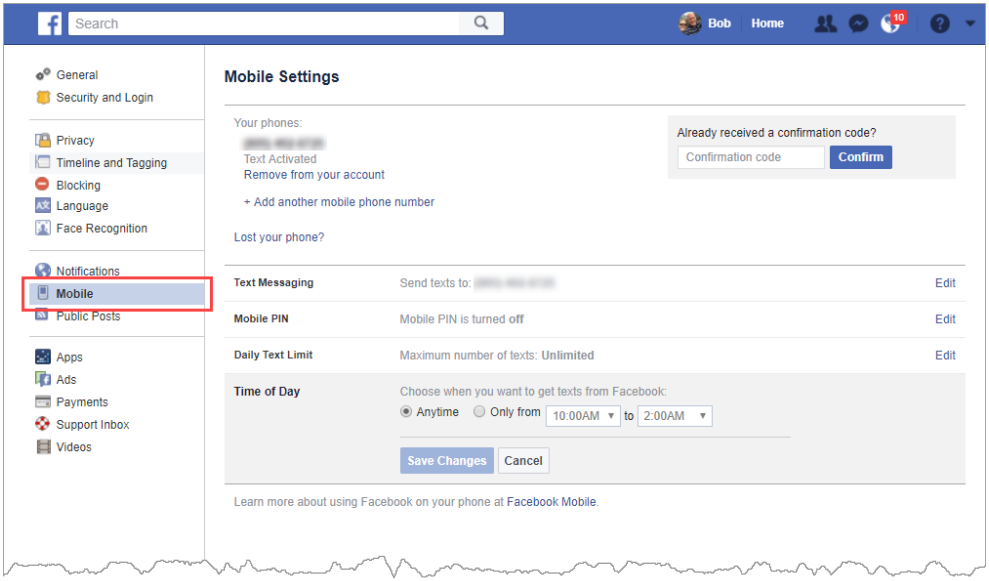
Click "Face Recognition" and then click the "Edit" link on the right (in the screenshot below it changed to "Close" after you click "Edit"):



Mobile

Do you ever get texts from Facebook in the middle of the night? Annoying – right? Well, you can limit the hours that Facebook will send you texts.

Just click on “Mobile” and click “Edit” next to “Time of Day”:



Apps

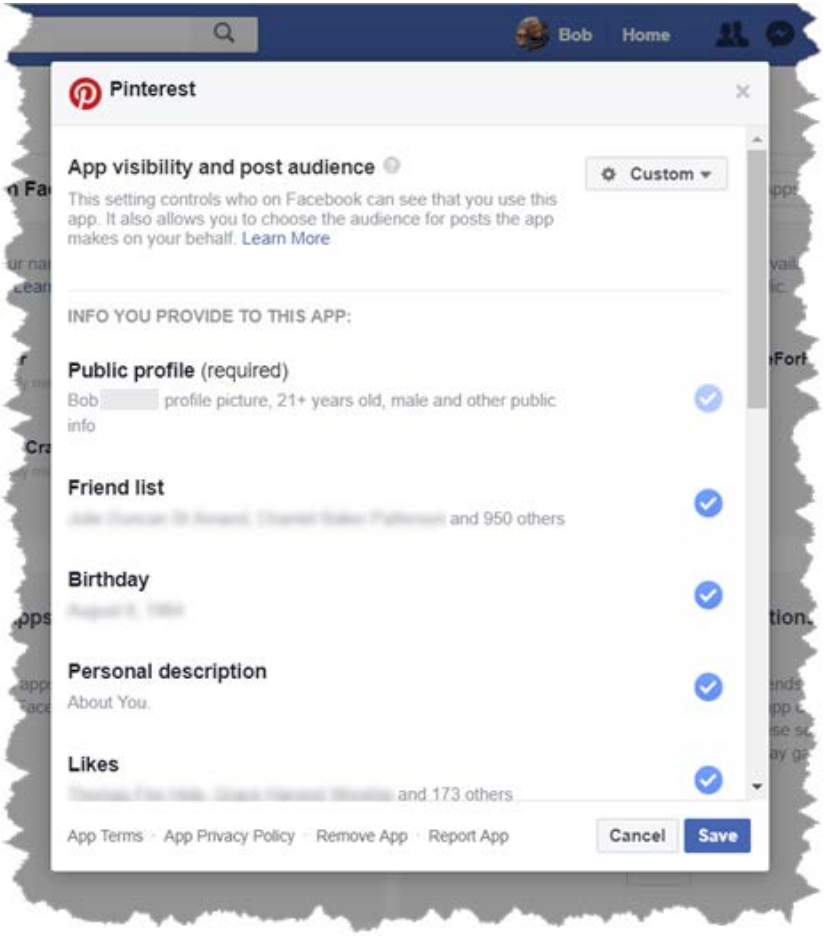
Apps (whether you know it or not) can consume a lot of information about you, your friends, your posts and more – without you realizing it.

Logged into Facebook

The first section "Logged in with Facebook" can leak your data like a fire hose. What is "Logged in with Facebook"?

You know every time you go to any site and it says "Login with Facebook" and you click that button – you are giving explicit permission to that vendor to give them a ton of information.

I was surprised to see just how many places I had logged in using Facebook (from even years ago). I've gone through and cleaned my out – but check out the kinds of information that each login can get – this example was from Pinterest:



They could see my entire friend list, birthday, everything I had ever liked, all my uploaded photos and much, much more.

You can limit the data the application can see (except for the "Required" section – every one of them requires access to your public profile).

Simply **click the blue checkmark** and the oval will be an empty circle. This means that the vendor will not have (any more) access to that data about you (if they haven't harvested it already):



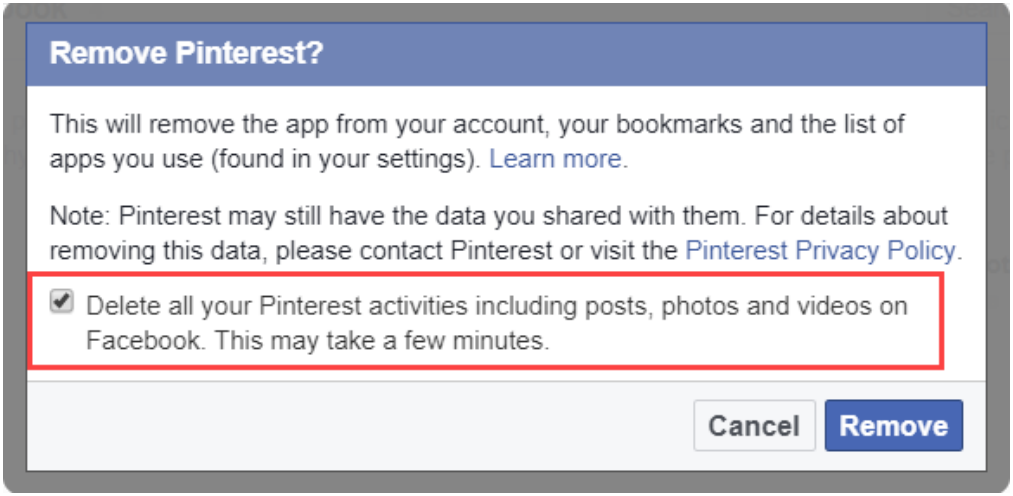
If you want the vendor to stop using data about you that it gathered – you need to **contact each of them individually**.

There are other interactions that you may have from other sites: for example, you may have connected your Pinterest account to Facebook (on the Pinterest side) so you could do single-click posting.

Convenient, yes. Data sieve? **Definitely.**

If you're no longer using a particular app (or site or game) – then click the "X" and delete it.

You'll see a remove confirmation. If the app / site / game was able to post for you (like automatically post from Pinterest to Facebook) – you'll see a little checkbox



If you are still using it but you want to delete it from Facebook login do this:

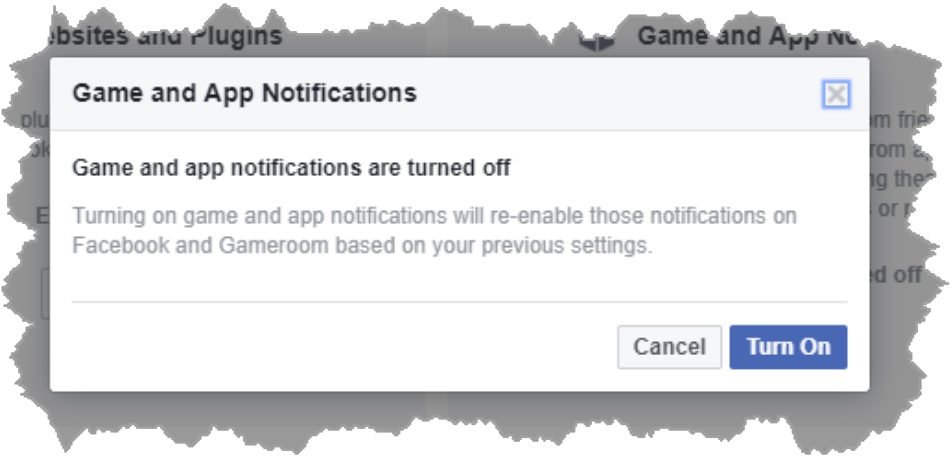
- Go into each app, site or game and turn off (uncheck) as many of the items as you can;
- Go to that app, service or site and login;

- Go to the preferences of that site – and turn off "Login with Facebook" (it's different for every app / site / game).
- THEN you can go back into Facebook and delete the app.

There are four other sections that also apply to apps – and we'll go through them one-by-one.

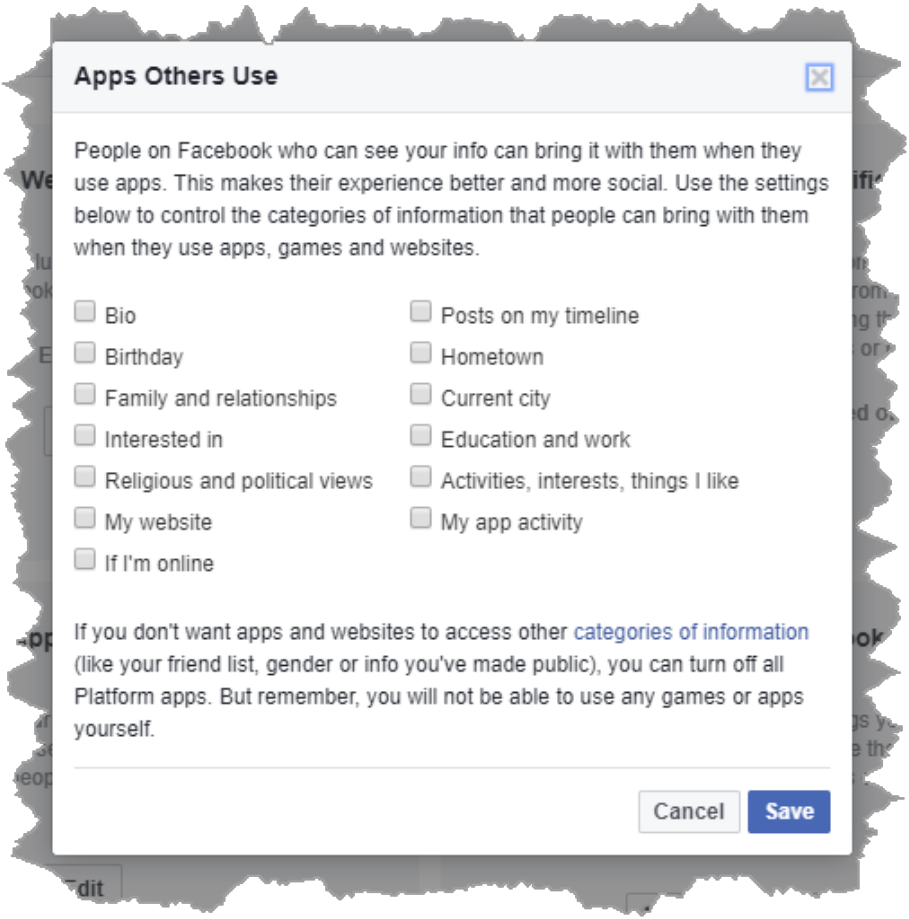
Games and App Notifications

If you're tired of 100 different apps / sites / games sending you 100 notifications a day – you can just turn them off:



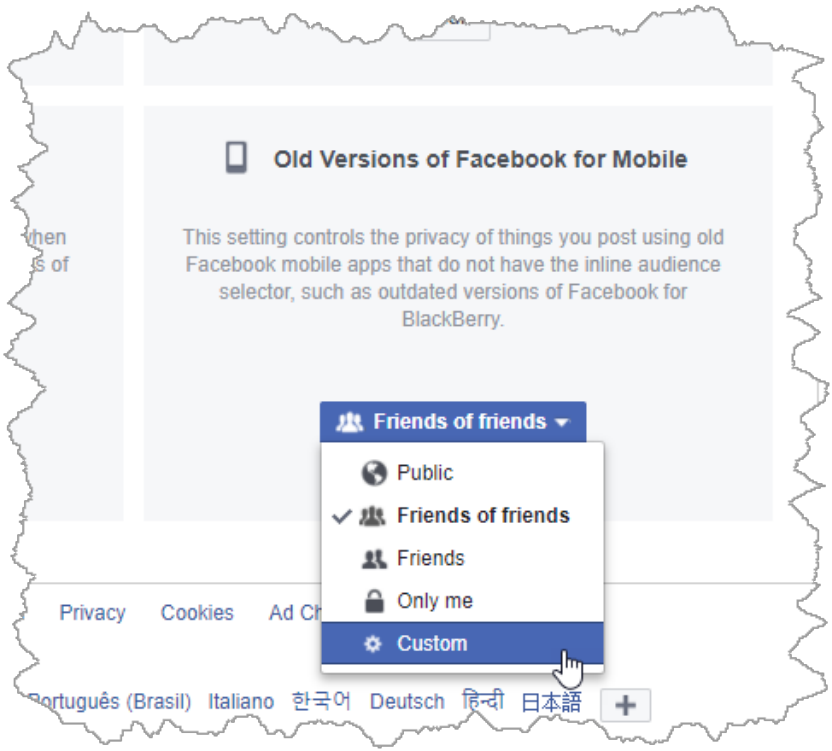
Apps Others Use

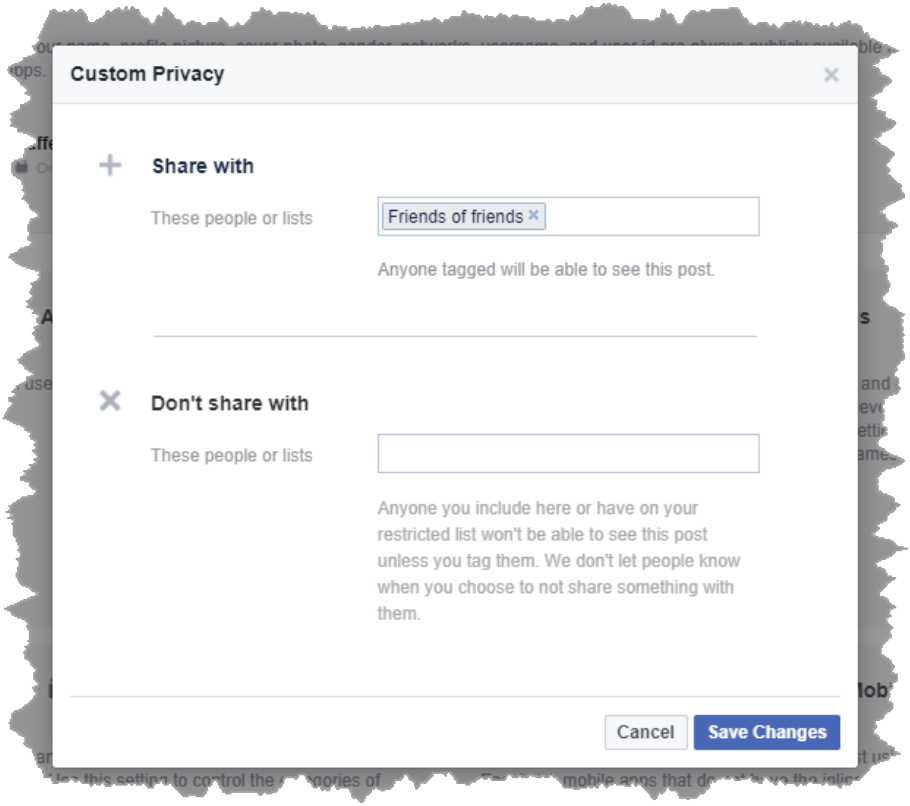
Data: it's the gift that just keeps on giving. Did you know that people on Facebook can actually bring in **your data** to the apps / websites / games **they interact with.** It's best to **uncheck all the fields**:



Old Versions of Facebook Mobile

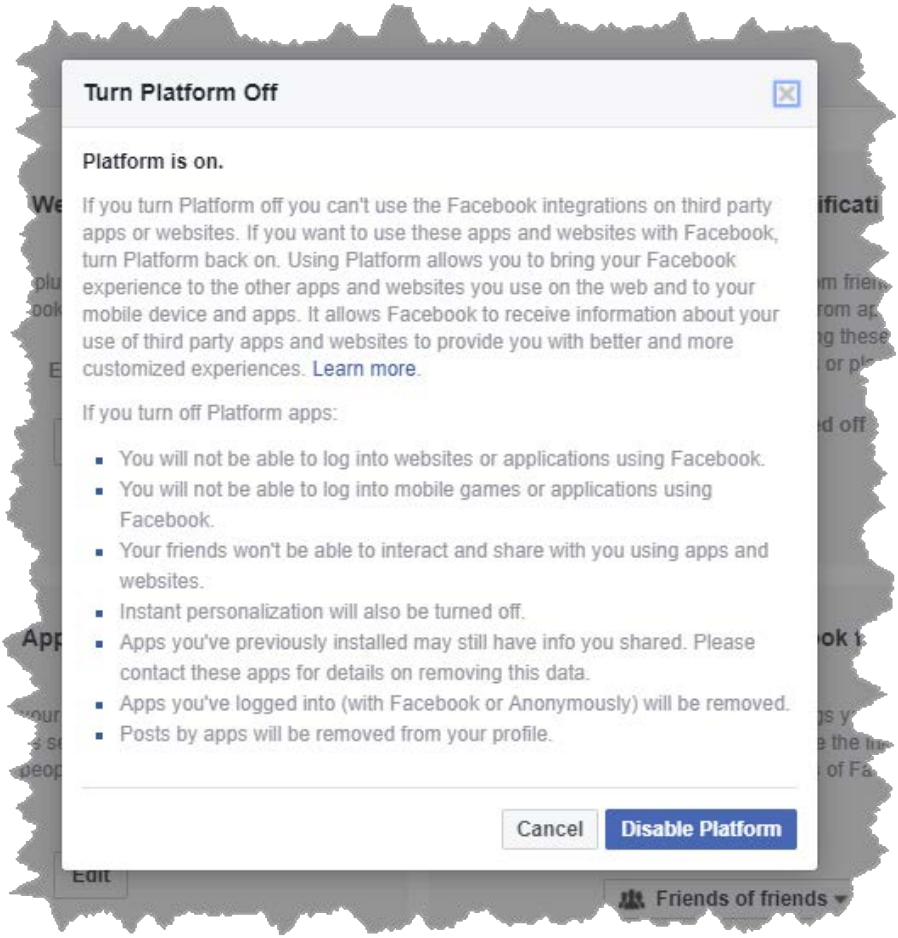
If you're using the old version of Facebook mobile (or… *shutter* … a BlackBerry) – you can control who sees your posts. You can simply choose from a dropdown – or set custom people or lists to share with (or hide from):




Custom Privacy
Share with
These people or lists
Friends of friends
Anyone tagged will be able to see this post.
Don't share with
These people or lists
Anyone you include here or have on your restricted list won't be able to see this post unless you tag them. We don't let people know when you choose to not share something with them.
Cancel
Save Changes

Apps, Websites and Plugins

This is the nuclear option. If you don't want any apps / sites / games to get your info – you can nuke all the access in one place:



Straight From The Horse's Mouth

You can read Facebok's Official Data Policy here: https://www.facebook.com/about/privacy/your-info#public-info

I hope this section of the guide has shed a little bit of light on ways you can stop (well, at least slow down) some of the data that Facebook harvests and then doles out to third parties.

Now, on to Part 2 – finding out what Facebook knows (and stores) about you and your online activity!

Part 2: Facebook Knows A LOT About You

(Spoiler Alert: AAAAAAAAH!)

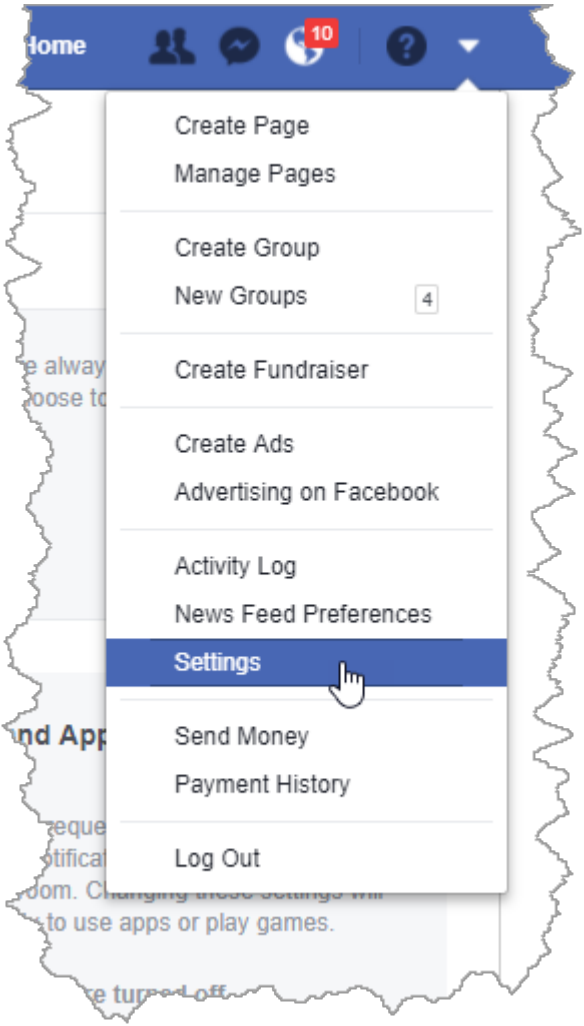
So, after I wrote the last PDF called “How To Stop (Some) Facebook Data Leaks” – I got to thinking about all the data that Facebook must store on me – and I wondered how far back it went.

So, I decided to download ALL the data that Facebook collected and IS STORING on me.

Whoa. What an eye-opener!

I’ll share some of my findings below (as redacted as a White House Briefing!) – but for now, let’s get to the HOW you download your data.

To get started – log into your Facebook account on a computer (not a mobile device) and click the “down icon” to the right of the “?” link and choose “Settings”:

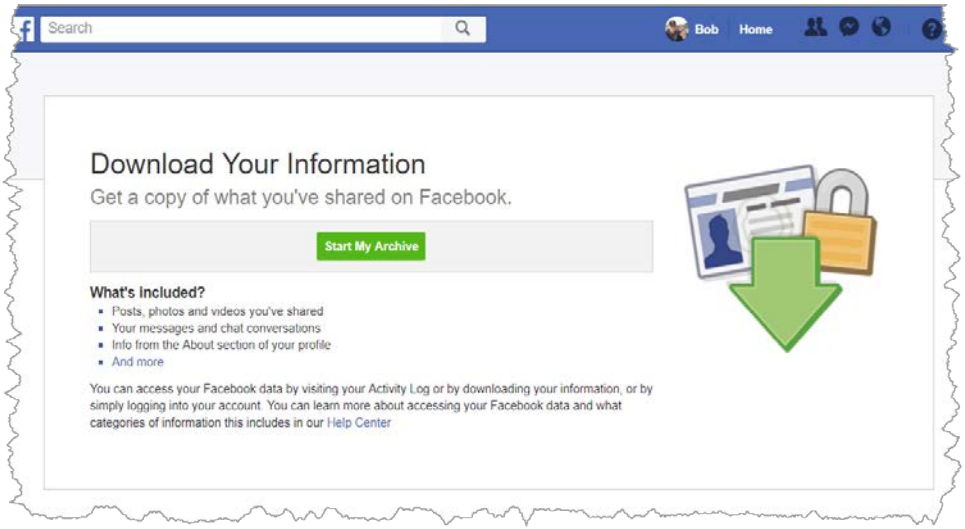

Home
10
Create Page
Manage Pages
Create Group
New Groups
4
Create Fundraiser
Create Ads
Advertising on Facebook
Activity Log
News Feed Preferences
Settings
Send Money
Payment History
Log Out
to use apps or play games.

Downloading Your Data

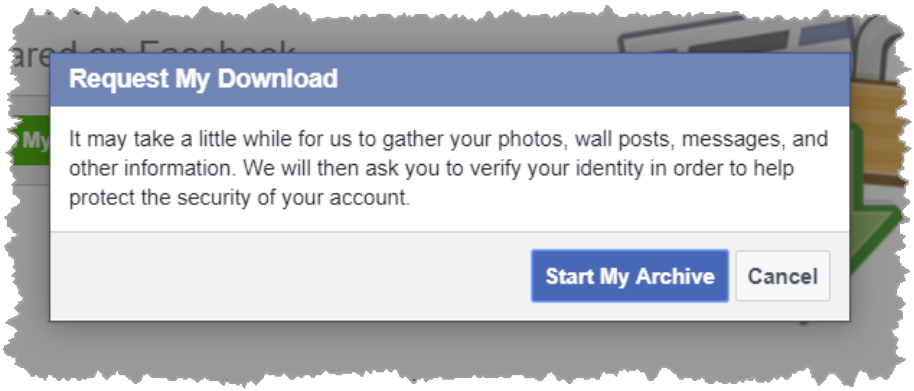
Once you're in the settings – at the bottom of the first screen – you'll see the link that you're looking for:

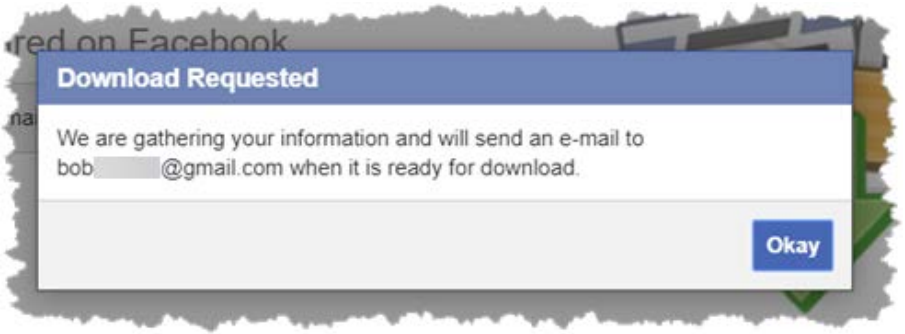


Once you click on that – you'll see the "Are you sure" screen:



When you click the “Start My Archive” button - you’ll be prompted to enter your password – then you’ll see a couple of dialogs:



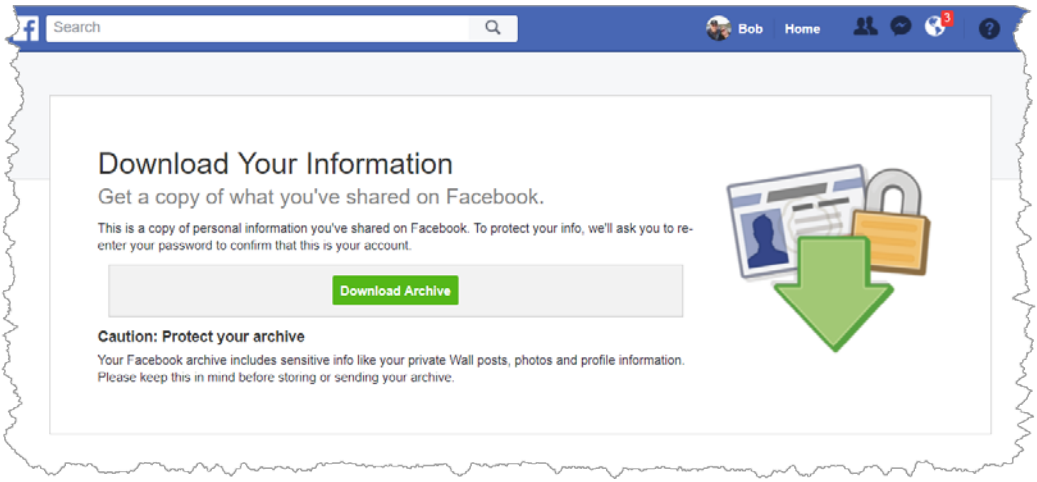


Then – you wait.

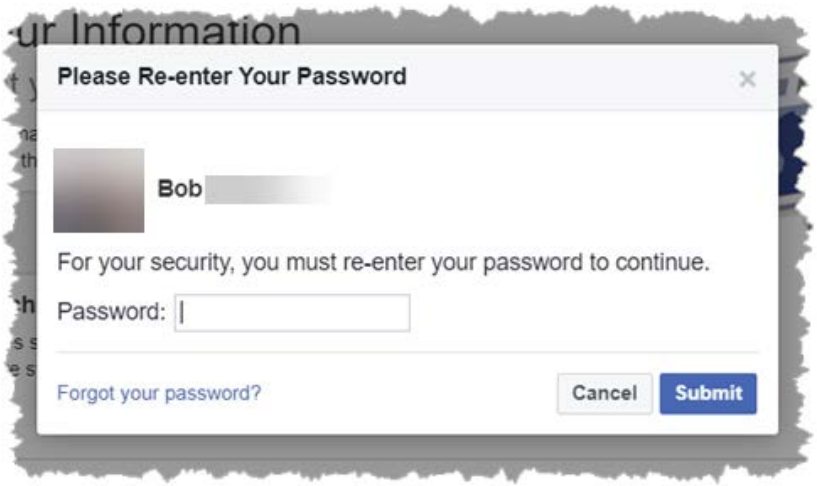
While you’re waiting – you may want to check out: https://www.facebook.com/help/405183566203254

This will tell you all the data you can expect in your download. Quite frankly – I found the list quite disconcerting.

It took about 10 minutes or so for my archive to be ready. You'll get an email with a link to your download. Once you receive the link and click it – you'll be transported back into Facebook:



Once you click the "Download Archive" button – you'll be prompted to enter your password again:



Now – you wait. Again.

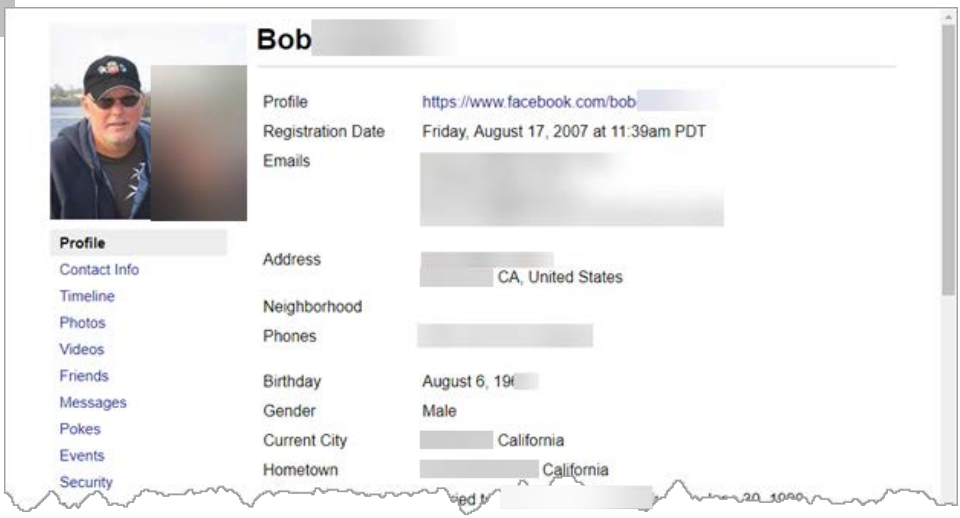
My download was 592MB. As .zip file! That is HALF A GIGABYTE .zip file! Whoa.

Create a new folder – and put the .zip file in the new folder and then unzip it.

Viewing Your History

Inside the folder you'll see that there are a bunch of other folders and a file called "index.html". Double-click the "index.html" file.

OK – so here's how it starts out. Telling me I joined Friday, August 7, 2007 at 11:39am PDT.

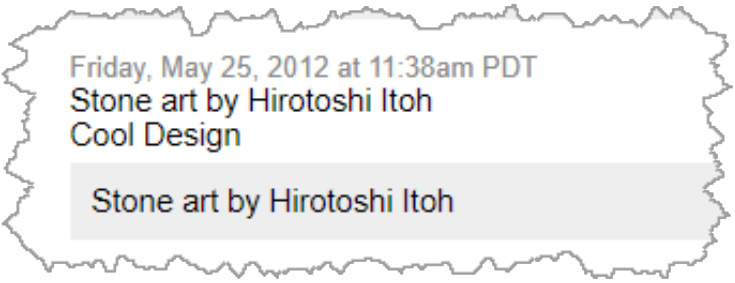


Then, it just goes on from there. It has all the pages I've ever liked – even ones I've "unliked", books I've read, movies, TV shows, all the groups I've ever been a part of, etc. etc.

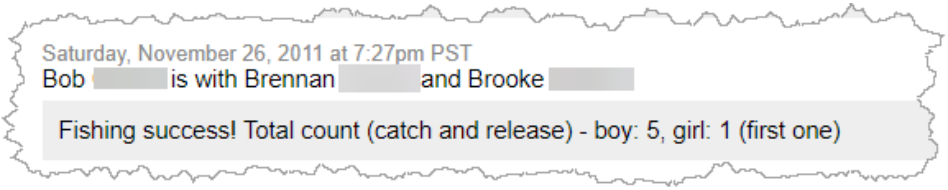
Then, under "Contact Info" – I see the names and phone numbers (all the phone numbers) of ALL my friends who provided a phone number in their profile (even if it was not visible).

Moving on to “Timeline” – there is EVERY SINGLE POST I’ve ever made. Even ones where I made no comment (e.g. just uploaded a picture).

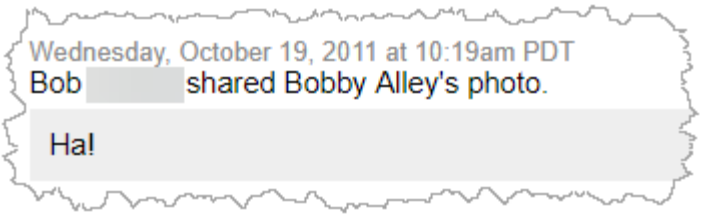
It also has all the stories I shared (where I pasted a link in):



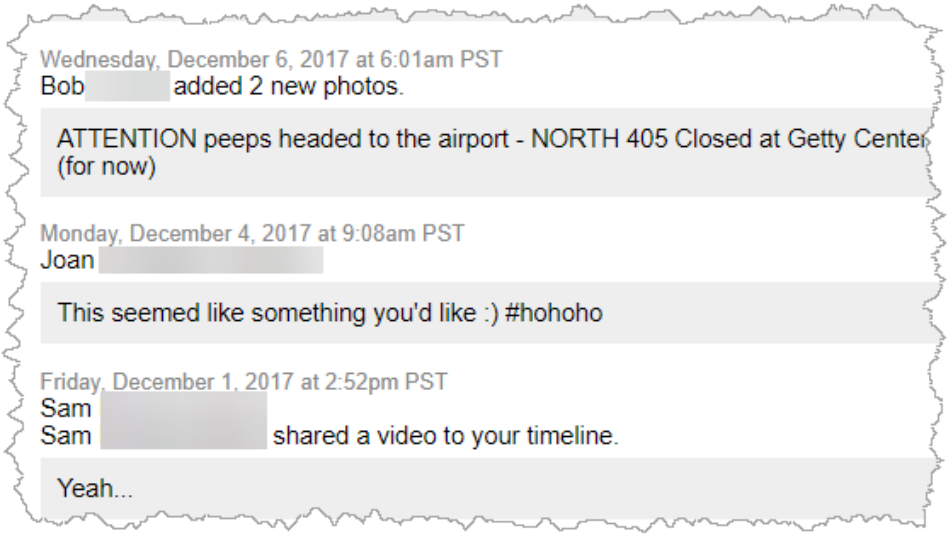
It contains the names of anyone I tagged in any post:



It has the name of the person (or page) of every photo I've "shared":



It has all the times I posted from my mobile app, as well as when anyone posted on my page:



So…. Ummmm…. Yeah. Everything.

Facebook Keeps All Your Photos

Then I moved on to "Photos"… and while it looked like it was random – I realized that they were just the ALBUMS that I had photos in. It also contained all the comments on that album:



Motorcycle Stuff - 31 Photos
Thursday, September 24, 2009 at 4:01pm PDT

Bob Before and after shots of the tires...
Thursday, September 24, 2009 at 4:02pm PDT

Alex So how long did they last? What brand are the r
Thursday, September 24, 2009 at 5:37pm PDT

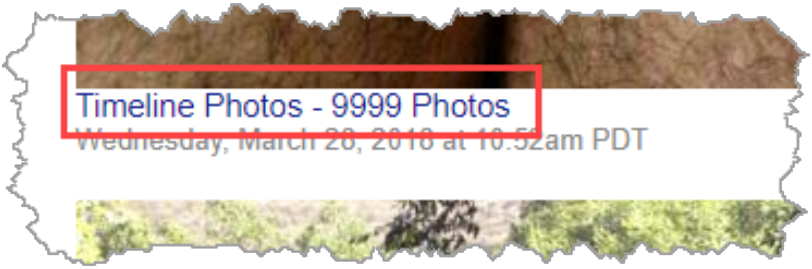
Bob Hey Alex - they lasted about 8,000 miles (mostly cany
riding)... I was replacing a set of Dunlop Pilot Road 2's with anoth
really like the tires - a LOT! The FJR came with Metzlers originall
after 7,100 miles. These tires are AWESOME. About $350 for the
Thursday, September 24, 2009 at 7:51pm PDT

Ummmm… here's the thing. If you CLICK on the album name:



It has EVERY SINGLE PHOTO you've ever posted – along with the comments under each photo.

I guess the "good news" is that it appears as if they only take the first 9,999 pictures. For example, I've posted over 13,000 (!) timeline photos – but they "only" downloaded 9,999:



Facebook Keeps All Your Videos Too

Moving on to "Videos" – it was a collection of ALL the videos I had uploaded – along with a couple Facebook-produced "Bob's Friends" type of videos that I had shared! The interesting thing is that you can click on them and they'll play (they are downloaded to your local drive).

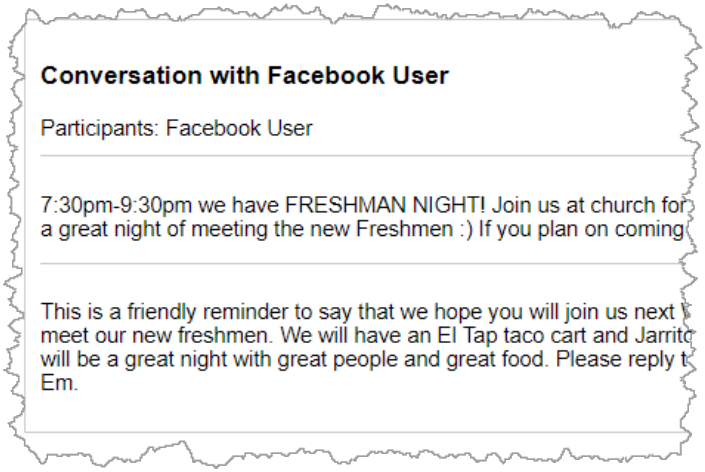
Facebook Keeps Track Of All Your Friends

Next we get to "Friends". This was sort of a "ripper" for me.

- It shows all my current Friends (and the date we became friends).
- It shows everyone I've sent a Friend Request to and when
- It shows everyone I've Declined a Friend Request and when
- It shows everyone I've Removed – "unfriended" and when
- And it show all my Followers and Followees (the people I follow).

Facebook Tracks All Your Messages

Messages – ALL THE MESSAGES. This includes messages where someone spammed me – and I guess they were blocked or it was to a group I was in because all it says is "Facebook User":



Conversation with Facebook User

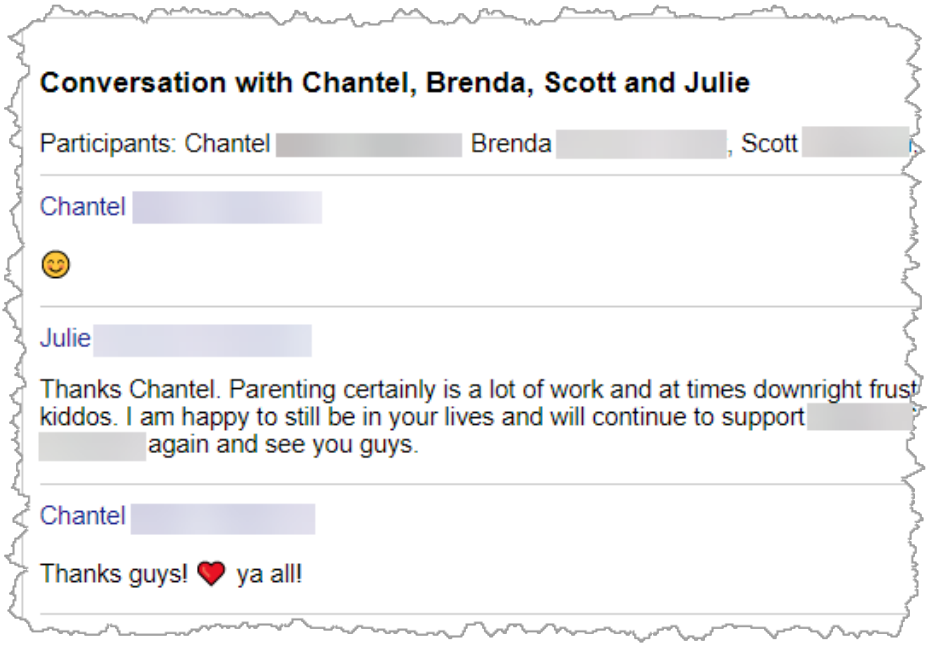
Participants: Facebook User

7:30pm-9:30pm we have FRESHMAN NIGHT! Join us at church for a great night of meeting the new Freshmen :) If you plan on coming

This is a friendly reminder to say that we hope you will join us next meet our new freshmen. We will have an El Tap taco cart and Jarrito will be a great night with great people and great food. Please reply t Em.

There are also ALL of the messages between me and individuals – INCLUDING any photos or links or files (photos, pdf files, icons, sound files) were included in the conversation. While there are some gaps – I was able to click on a link to a sound file someone messaged me – as well as a pdf that I uploaded to someone else in another conversation.

They even keep the emojis:



Conversation with Chantel, Brenda, Scott and Julie

Participants: Chantel, Brenda, Scott

Chantel

😉

Julie

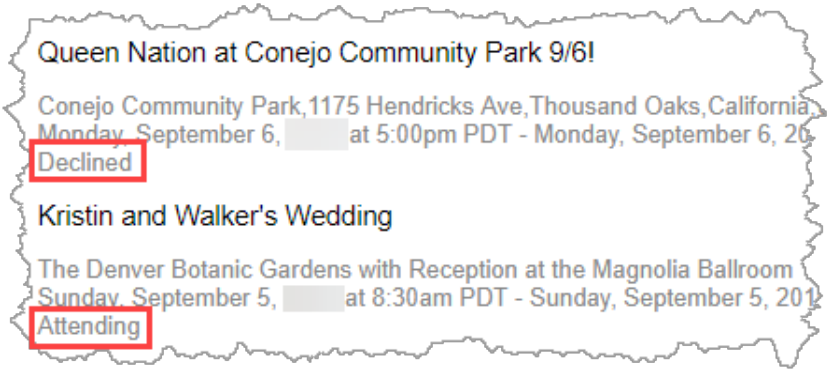
Thanks Chantel. Parenting certainly is a lot of work and at times downright frust kiddos. I am happy to still be in your lives and will continue to support again and see you guys.

Chantel

Thanks guys! ❤️ ya all!

Facebook Tracks All Your Events

Now we move on to "Events". This has a list of EVERY event I was ever INVITED to – as well as my response:



Facebook Tracks All Your Logins

Under "Security" it has EVERY SINGLE login session I've ever done. It also includes the Date, IP address, browser (and platform) as well as the last two digits of the security cookie:



Facebook Tracks All Your Applications

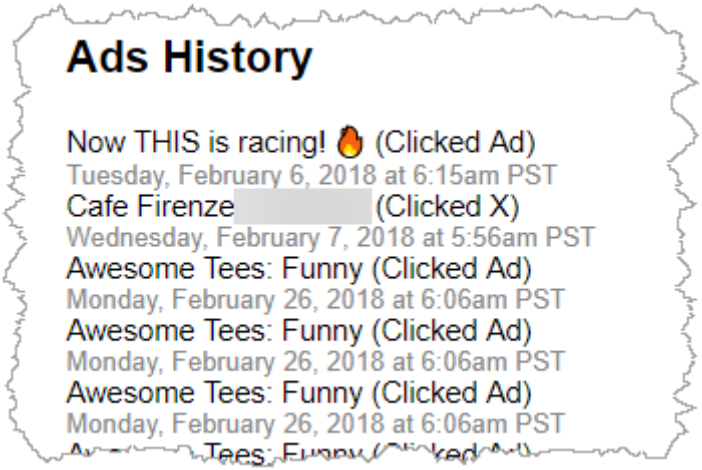
There is the "Applications" link – but if you read my last article I got RID of all the applications that I "logged in with Facebook" – except one. That was the only one that showed up under my "Applications" link.

Now we move on to the Grand Finale – the "Ads" section. This contains "Ads Topics":



Facebook Tracks All Ads You've Seen And Clicked On

It also contains an "Ads History" – with every single ad I clicked on:



The thing that REALLY was interesting – was the very last section "Advertisers with your contact info" :



Mine had 221 COMPANIES that have my contact info. Just by looking at the list here – it appears as if I logged in while in The Netherlands – as most of these companies are Dutch.

Action Plan

So – what can you do about it?

- You can contact all the companies (221!) who have your contact data and tell them to delete it;
- You can shrug your shoulders and count it as a cost of being social
- You can plan your Frexit (Facebook Exit)

Whatever you decide – I hope you found this guide… ummmmm… "Enlightening."