

MARKETING

Facebook will crack down on advertisers' access to user data in wake of scandal

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Mark Zuckerberg spoke about how information is used on Facebook. Image credit: CSPAN

By STAFF REPORTS

After the scandal involving Facebook users' data privacy and the improper access and usage of that data by Cambridge Analytica, the platform's founder Mark Zuckerberg appeared before a congressional hearing on April 10 to speak about exactly what happened.

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At the hearing, Mr. Zuckerberg was emphatic that advertisers and developers will never take priority over consumers' data safety. In response to the controversy, Mr. Zuckerberg announced that Facebook would strictly limit what consumer information advertisers would be able to access.

"We have to give people control over their information and the developers they share it with need to protect it too," Mr. Zuckerberg said at the hearing. "We don't just build tools, we want to make sure they are being used for good.

"This includes the basic responsibility to protect their information."

Data breach

The Cambridge Analytica scandal, briefly explained, involved the data firm improperly accessing personal data of more than 87 million Facebook users by purchasing it from an app developer.

This data is not normally available to outside firms, but Cambridge Analytica obtained it illegally. The data firm then used that information for political campaigns, mostly in support of President Donald Trump's election campaign in 2015 and 2016.

However, even among President Trump's supporters, the revelation has sparked outrage over the carelessness with which the data was handled by Facebook as well as Facebook's failure to inform any of the 87 million users whose data was leaked that they may have been affected.



Advertisers on Facebook and Instagram will take a hit in the wake of the scandal. Image credit: Facebook

While Facebook is not the most prominent social media platform for luxury brands, its sister platform Instagram is one of the most influential in luxury.

There is no current indication that any data was taken from Instagram, the two companies do share data sets and Facebook's limiting of advertisers' access to data on Facebook may spill over into its Instagram advertising policies.

During the hearing, Mr. Zuckerberg said that Facebook would be carefully reviewing any entity that gathers or has gathered large amounts of data over the course of its existence.

"We are investigating every developer who had access to large amounts of data," Mr. Zuckerberg said. "They will be banned if they misused it.

"We will limit the amount of information that developers and advertisers have access to in the future."

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