

MARKETING

## Facebook gave away years of user data to smartphone makers without consent

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Facebook's latest data scandal further hams the platform's relationship with users. Image credit: CSPAN

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Facebook's privacy scandals seem never to end as the company has yet again been revealed to have given users' data away without their consent.

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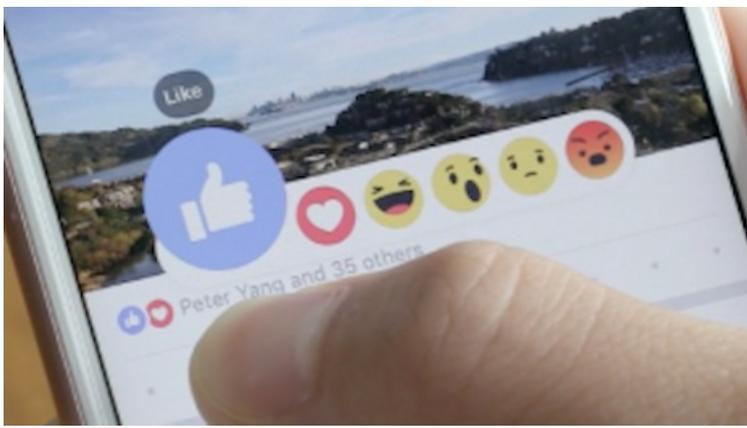
Just a few months after the Cambridge Analytica scandal, a new report from *The New York Times* has found that Facebook gave away years' worth of data on consumers to smartphone manufacturers including Apple and Samsung. While the partnership between Facebook and these companies has been public knowledge, the extent of the data given away, including that of customers who did not consent to this specific partnership, is only now being revealed.

### Privacy

In March, Facebook made headlines when the company was found to have allowed massive amounts of user data to be taken and mishandled by outside groups, most notably the research firm Cambridge Analytica.

Since then the company has been in damage control mode, working overtime to assure users that their privacy is paramount and that the rampant misuse of data would come to an end.

But now, a new report from *The New York Times* shows that Facebook's mishandling of data went even further.



*Facebook shared personal data with device makers for years. Image credit: Facebook*

According to the report, Facebook gave large amounts of personal user data to more than 60 creators of smartphones, including Apple, Samsung, Blackberry, Amazon and Microsoft. The report also found that those companies were able to access the data of users' friends, without their consent or even if they had barred the sharing of data through Facebook.

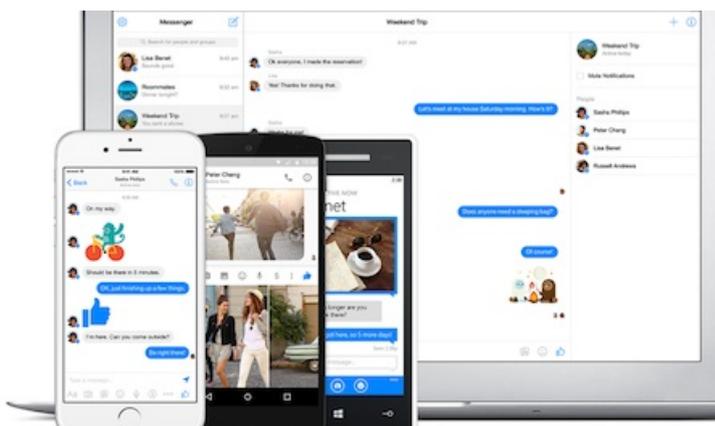
Facebook had previously assured the public that the ability for third parties to access data from users' friends without their knowledge had been discontinued in 2014, but the company did not disclose that device makers were exempted from that ruling.

While these partnerships have been in place for more than a decade, it appears that Facebook began winding them down in the wake of the Cambridge Analytica scandal.

#### Data breach

Facebook has been one of the dominant entities in the world of digital advertising and publishing, but the recent controversies plus the platform's waning popularity may drive some luxury publishers and advertisers to look elsewhere.

When Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg appeared before Congress in April, the tech CEO faced tough questioning over how the company uses and abuses consumers' data. At a panel hosted by Media Radar on April 5, an executive from Hearst explained that traffic from Facebook has been in a steady decline for quite a while, calling into question how valuable the platform still is ([see story](#)).



*Facebook's relevance and trustworthiness have both been damaged. Image credit: Facebook*

Repercussions surrounding Facebook's invasive use of data have extended far beyond those directly involved, causing luxury marketers to now be more concerned about their use of customer information.

According to a survey from Kelton Research and SheerID, two to one consumers want brands to request consent before using their personal data. Only 8 percent are comfortable with marketers looking into social channels for individualized information such as likes and activity for promotional purposes, including discounts ([see story](#)).

As one of the biggest social networks in the world, Facebook's handling of data sets a barometer for general public feeling on how large companies make use of personal information. As Facebook finds itself embroiled in yet another scandal, customer sentiment towards the use of data will likely be affected.

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