

Facebook tops 350 million users, tightens privacy

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This handout image courtesy of Facebook.com, shows founder Mark Zuckerberg on his profile page in 2007. Facebook is enhancing privacy controls and eliminating its regional framework for online communities as the Internet's most popular social networking service tops 350 million users.

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Facebook founder [Mark Zuckerberg](#) announced the changes and the milestone in a blog post late Tuesday, saying new privacy features will let users determine who gets to see pictures, comments, videos and other material in profiles.

"We're adding something that many of you have asked for -- the ability

to control who sees each individual piece of content you create or upload," Zuckerberg said.

"To make this possible, we have focused on giving you the tools you need to share and control your information."

When Facebook launched in early 2004 as an online network for college students to stay connected, the model centered on sharing information with "networks" of school friends.

That online community model endured, being expanded to companies and geographic regions.

About half of Facebook users are members of regional networks, with some regions encompassing entire countries, such as India and China.

"Some of these regional networks now have millions of members and we've concluded that this is no longer the best way for you to control your privacy," Zuckerberg said.

"The plan we've come up with is to remove regional networks completely and create a simpler model for privacy control where you can set content to be available to only your friends, friends of your friends, or everyone."

In coming weeks [Facebook](#) members will be asked to review and update personal [privacy](#) settings in a streamlined new format, according to Zuckerberg.

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