

Facebook delays plan to share contact information

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A view of the Facebook homepage taken in Washington DC on January 3. Facebook, in its latest privacy flap, on Tuesday delayed a plan to share home addresses and mobile phone numbers of its members with outside developers of applications.

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Facebook announced on its developer blog on Friday it would begin granting developers access to home addresses and mobile numbers but the social network followed up with another post on Tuesday saying the move had been put on hold.

"Over the weekend, we got some useful feedback that we could make

people more clearly aware of when they are granting access to this data," said Douglas Purdy, director of developer relations at Facebook.

"We agree, and we are making changes to help ensure you only share this information when you intend to do so," Purdy said.

"We'll be working to launch these updates as soon as possible, and will be temporarily disabling this feature until those changes are ready," he said.

"We look forward to re-enabling this improved feature in the next few weeks."

The change announced Friday would have allowed Facebook members to share their home address and mobile number with external websites and third-party developers of applications.

A Facebook user would have had to explicitly choose to share the data before it could be accessed by a application or website and home addresses and mobile numbers of friends could not be shared.

Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at computer [security](#) firm Sophos, was among those expressing concern about Facebook's initial move.

"I realize that Facebook users will only have their personal information accessed if they 'allow' the [app](#) to do so, but there are just too many attacks happening on a daily basis which trick users into doing precisely this," Cluley said in a blog post.

"Now, shady app developers will find it easier than ever before to gather even more personal information from users," he said. "You can imagine, for instance, that bad guys could set up a rogue app that collects mobile

phone numbers.

"The ability to access users' home addresses will also open up more opportunities for identity theft, combined with the other data that can already be extracted from Facebook users' profiles," Cluley said.

[Facebook](#) is the world's most popular social network with nearly 600 million users but it has been dogged by complaints about privacy protection.

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