

Facebook settles with FTC over deception charges

November 29 2011, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer



This Oct. 11, 2010 file photo, shows the logo of the online network Facebook, recorded in Munich with a magnifying glass of a computer screen of a laptop. Facebook said Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2011, it is settling with the Federal Trade Commission over charges it deceived consumers. The FTC had charged that the social network told people they could keep the information they share private and then allowed for it to be made public. The charges go back to 2009.(AP Photo/dapd, Joerg Koch)

Facebook is settling with the Federal Trade Commission over charges it deceived consumers with its privacy settings to get people to share more personal information than they originally agreed to.

The FTC had charged that the social network told people they could keep the information they share private, then allowed it to be made public.

The charges go back to at least 2009, when Facebook changed its [privacy settings](#) so that information users may have deemed private, such as their list of friends, suddenly became viewable to everyone.

"They didn't warn users that this change was coming, or get their approval in advance," the FTC said.

The FTC said the settlement requires Facebook to get people's approval before changing how it shares their data.

In a blog post, Facebook CEO [Mark Zuckerberg](#) said the company has made a "bunch of mistakes." But he adds that this has often overshadowed the good work Facebook has done. He says Facebook has addressed many of the FTC's concerns already.

The settlement is similar to one Google agreed to earlier this year over its Buzz [social networking service](#). Like [Google](#), Facebook has agreed to obtain assessments of its privacy practices by independent, third-party auditors for the next 20 years.

Facebook isn't paying anything to settle the case, though future violations could lead to civil fines.

Zuckerberg said [Facebook](#) has created two new executive positions - a chief privacy officer of products and a chief privacy officer of policy as part of its response to the settlement.

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