

Facebook rolls out 'Timeline' feature to all users

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Mark Zuckerberg delivers a keynote address during the Facebook f8 conference in San Francisco, California, September 2011. Facebook on Thursday began transforming profile pages into interactive digital scrap books that let members of the world's leading online social network tell the stories of their lives.

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The "Timeline" feature being rolled out by Facebook was unveiled at a developers conference in September and comes with new ways for people to discover and share music, movies, books and news.

"Timeline gives you an easy way to rediscover the things you shared, and collect your most important moments," Facebook said in a blog post

announcing that the change is now available to its more than 800 million members.

"It also lets you share new experiences, like the music you listen to or the miles you run."

Timeline visually graphs Facebook posts based on when they were uploaded, letting people look back at pictures from special events, memorialized accomplishments, pithy text exchanges and other updates from their lives.

After upgrading to Timeline, people will have seven days to privately review and edit how it will be viewable by friends at the social network before it automatically goes live online.

"Your new timeline will replace your profile, but all your stories and photos will still be there," Facebook said.

Tools allow Facebook users to hide posts they do not want included in their Timeline or change settings regarding which of their friends or associates can see posts.

Facebook also tailored a version of Timeline for use on smartphones or tablet computers powered by Google's Android software.

"Mobile timeline starts with your unique cover photo," Facebook's Mick Johnson said in a blog post. "As you scroll down, you'll see your posts, photos and life events as they happened, back to the day you were born."

Unveiling Timeline in September, Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg described it as "the story of your life."

He demonstrated by showing how his new profile page chronicled his

experiences from meeting US President Barack Obama to baby photos.

"What Timeline does is show all the recent activity and then as you go back in time it starts summarizing the things you've done in your life," he said.

The changes come with a new class of Facebook applications that let people automatically allow chosen friends to see what they do or experience without needing to click "Like" or "Share" buttons.

Online music service Spotify, for example, will let Facebook users see what friends are listening to at any given moment and then listen along by clicking on a post.

The same principle will apply to computer or mobile gadget applications for digital books, news and films.

People will need to install third party applications to share snippets in Timeline profile pages, which will feature privacy controls. Applications will also require people to set data sharing "permissions" before they are used.

Partners ready with "open graph" applications include online streaming video services Netflix and Hulu. Applications are also available to deliver and share news stories from sources including Yahoo! and News Corp.'s The Daily.

Facebook's transformation is likely to trigger backlash from ranks of notoriously change-averse users and to resurrect concerns over how effectively the social network protects people's privacy.

Facebook said it has worked with privacy groups while developing Timeline and that it has made it simple and clear to control what

information gets shared and with whom.

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