

Facebook knows your heart -- and it's complicated

March 28 2012, By Michelle Maltais

For everything, there is a season. And for every relationship, it seems, there is a status update on Facebook.

The gatekeeper of most things personal these days took a look at when users seem to be hooking up and breaking up with all of those declarations of love. Using [relationship](#) data of U.S.-based users from 2010 and 2011, they evaluated how different times of the year affected the blossoming and wilting of relationships.

The hot summer months appeared to have a chilling effect on relationship changes shared on the social networking site. "Across [age groups](#), the summer months are bad news for relationships," the Facebook Data team wrote in its note. "In 2010 and 2011, May through August were clearly lower than the other months of the year, suggesting the daily net change in relationships reaches a low during the summer."

February was a high time for new relationship revelations. That was boosted, the data team said, by the boom on Valentine's Day, which showed the highest rate of relationship notifications - 49 percent more than splits. Christmas was right behind it with 34 percent more connections boasted on Dec. 25.

And, as you might imagine, April 1 showed a jump in relationship updates: 20 percent more relationship listings than splits. Of course, April 2 showed the most extreme move in the opposite direction, with 11 percent more "break-ups" than new relationships.

The data team said they saw gains in relationship updates after the weekend, with Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday the biggest days for new updates. Relatively more break-ups were revealed leading up to the weekend, peaking on Friday and Saturday among older age groups.

For the under 25 crowd, the weekly pattern had its low point in relationship updates on Thursday and Friday, followed by a slightly earlier weekend bump starting on Saturday.

Certainly, Facebook's data on relationships aren't precise. Not everyone reveals their relationships immediately - or at all. And it's a little amusing that the data team describes their data in definitive terms as relationships actually forming or falling apart, as opposed to those realities simply being revealed.

I mean, do you really take the chance of prematurely announcing your relationship's beginnings or endings, or do you let it marinate a minute before casting it in virtual stone on Facebook? It's a big decision to make your private life public - or maybe not as much as it used to be.

And we all know, it's not real until it's on Facebook. Couples aren't really couples until they are connected by status update, even if they've been married for decades.

Really and truly, when it comes to [Facebook](#) and any revelations on relationships, we'd prefer to check "It's complicated."

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Citation: Facebook knows your heart -- and it's complicated (2012, March 28) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-03-facebook-heart-complicated.html>

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