

Facebook photos swiped for dating website

6 February 2011



A view of the Facebook homepage taken in Washington, DC. Hacking and art mixed on Friday in a freshly-launched dating website that lets visitors seek mates by sifting through profile pictures mined from Facebook.

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Lovely-faces.com boasted Facebook pictures of about 250,000 people searchable in categories that included nationality, gender, funny, smug, and "climber."

The creators of the online "dating agency" were identified at the [website](#) as artists Paolo Cirio and Alessandro Ludovic.

'Our mission was to give all these virtual identities a new shared place to expose themselves freely, breaking Facebook's constraints and boring social rules," the website authors said in an online statement datelined in Berlin.

The artists explained that a million "stolen" Facebook profile pictures were analyzed using [facial recognition software](#) that filtered images by expressions.

"Immersing ourselves in the resulting database was a hallucinatory experience as we dove into

hundreds of thousands of profile pictures and found ourselves intoxicated by the endless smiles, gazes and often leering expressions," the artists said.

"So we established a new website (lovely-faces.com) giving them justice and granting them the possibility of soon being face to face with anybody who is attracted by their facial expression and related data."

Facebook frowned on lovely-faces, saying that "scraping" or mining information violates the terms of service at the world's leading online social network. Facebook was investigating and vowed to take "appropriate" action.

Ironically, the story of Facebook's genesis tells of its founder [Mark Zuckerberg](#) getting in trouble for hacking Harvard University computers while a student to get pictures of coeds for comparison with each other at a website called "Face Mash" that he created.

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