

[Skip Navigation](#)

Microsoft  
math and science  
U.S.  
Microsoft an

[The Atlantic Home](#)

Tuesday, April 27, 2010



[Follow the Atlantic »](#)



**GET 2 FREE ISSUES**

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

- [Politics](#)

Presented By 



[The 'Test Vote' Fails](#)

[Chris Good](#)



[Why the GOP's Stalling Financial Reform](#)

[Marc Ambinder](#)



[Why the GOP's Stalling Financial Reform](#)

- [Business](#)

Presented By 



[Predicting Future Health Care Costs](#)

[Megan McArdle](#)



## [Who Made Government So Big?](#)

[Derek Thompson](#)



## [Treasury To Profit from Citi Stock Sale](#)

[Daniel Indiviglio](#)

- [Culture](#)

Presented By  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [The Man Who's Saving Soul](#)

[Aylin Zafar](#)



## [When Great Art Happens to Bad People](#)

[Erik Tarloff](#)



## [Gabourey Sidibe Does SNL](#)

[Sage Stossel](#)

- [International](#)

Presented By  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [Vote-Rigging in Sudan](#)

[Emily Quanbeck](#)



## [Free, Tolerant, and Happy](#)

[Richard Florida](#)



## [In Haiti, Rum and Recovery](#)

[Tristram Korten](#)

- [Science & Tech](#)

Presented By  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [A Facebook Privacy Shield?](#)

[Niraj Chokshi](#)



## [STD-Free but Pregnant](#)

[Sara Rubin](#)



## [Makeup to be Surveilled In](#)

[Niraj Chokshi](#)

- [National](#)

Presented By  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [So That's What Makes Bankers Tick](#)

[Edward Tenner](#)



## [Are Computers Making Us Fat?](#)

[Ellen Ruppel Shell](#)



## [Channeling Benjamin Franklin](#)

[Edward Tenner](#)

- [Food](#)

[Presented By](#)  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [How to Beat the Obesity Crisis](#)

[Marc Ambinder](#)



## [Dietary Guidelines: Nearing Reform?](#)

[Marion Nestle](#)



## [Feds Oppose Labeling GM Products](#)

[Barry Estabrook](#)

- [Magazine](#)

[Presented By](#)  **GET A FREE ISSUE**



## [Beating Obesity](#)

[Marc Ambinder](#)



## [Muslim Superheroes](#)

[Suzy Hansen](#)



## [Who Owns the First Amendment?](#)

[Michael Kinsley](#)

- [video](#)

[Presented By](#) 



## [Under the Knife](#)

[Jennie Rothenberg Gritz](#)



## [An Evening in Doolin](#)

[Jennie Rothenberg Gritz](#)



## [Scenes from The Pacific](#)

[Jennie Rothenberg Gritz](#)

[Niraj Chokshi](#)

[All Posts](#)

- [+ Share](#)
- [f](#) [t](#)
- [<< Previous Science](#)
- [✉ Email](#) [🖨 Print](#)

# Reining In Facebook

Apr 26 2010, 1:15 AM ET | [Comment](#)

Online privacy advocates are getting some high-profile support.

This weekend, Senator Chuck Schumer asked the Federal Trade Commission to [create guidelines](#) for how user information is shared by online social networks. A bill with [similar privacy-protecting goals](#) was introduced in the House on Thursday.

The moves follow an ambitious attempt by Facebook to [extend its reach](#) over the Web, which [has raised a new round of privacy concerns](#). But Facebook isn't alone. [Blippy](#), a startup which allows users to share their purchasing histories online, [apologized today](#) for [inadvertently making available](#) users' credit card numbers and, last month, Google received flak from [an FTC commissioner](#) over how it handled privacy when unveiling its Buzz social network.

Schumer's recommendations to the FTC include encouraging social networks to let users opt in to privacy changes rather than forcing them to opt out. Facebook chose the latter route for its recent changes, forcing users to navigate a complicated process to undo them. (Here's [a guide](#) to doing so and a Facebook [privacy primer](#).) Spammers and scammers could also [solicit unsuspecting users](#) by using data made available by the social network, Schumer said: "There are lots of things that you may have never wanted to go beyond your family and friends but do."

A [bill](#) introduced on Thursday by Michigan Rep. Thaddeus McCotter would give citizens better control over that information by forcing sites to remove publicly available information at a user's request. Despite the noble goal, the roughly 300-word document that features a typo in its first line "suffers from some vague language that seemingly opens the door for abuse," [wrote Ars Technica's Jacqui Cheng](#). The Cato Institute's Jim Harper [imagines one way](#) the bill could be misused: rabble-rousing users who post false information under various guises in order to overwhelm webmasters with subsequent take-down requests. Nothing good can be said of the bill, [writes Thomas O'Toole at TechLaw](#), "except for the fact that there is little chance it will be enacted into law."

For its part, Facebook has stepped up its lobbying efforts with privacy topping the agenda, according to VentureBeat's Kim-Mai Cutler, who spoke [with a company spokesman](#). As privacy concerns escalate, the company is positioning itself well, Cutler writes:

Even though the company says its role in D.C. is about awareness for now, developing these relationships will help Facebook get ahead of and influence legislation that may curb its ad targeting abilities.

- [+ Share](#)
- [f](#) [t](#)
- [✉ Email](#) [🖨 Print](#)

- Presented By  **GET A FREE ISSUE**

## Join the Discussion

**Add New Comment**

Required: Please login below to comment.



Large empty text area for comment input with scrollbars.


Name  Website (optional)

Email   Subscribe to all comments by email

[You must be logged in to post a comment.](#)

**Showing 1 of 1 comment**

Sort by  [Subscribe by email](#) [Subscribe by RSS](#)

 [Kashmir Travels](#) 7 hours ago

FB

[Flag](#)

[Comments powered by DISQUS](#)

**Niraj Chokshi's Archive**

[Recent Posts](#)

[By Source](#)

[By Date](#)



What is the role of business in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

JOIN THE DISCUSSION >

willyoujoinus

Chevron

Human Energy

**AtlanticWire** Last Update: 9:22 AM

- [BREAKING RANKS: No, the Internet Is Not a 'Force for Good'](#)



- [Dems' Financial Reform Test Vote Fails](#)
- [Happy Hour Vid: Right Grudgingly Accepts Flat Conservative SNL Skit](#)

## Voices

- [Andrew Sullivan](#)



### Of Course She's Running For...

- [Megan McArdle](#)



### A Democratic Cry For Help

- [Marc Ambinder](#)



### Why Republicans Are Stalling...

- [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#)



### Days Of Future's Past

- [James Fallows](#)



### The Arizona Law: Taking Civil...

- [Jeffrey Goldberg](#)



## [A Great Jewish Joke That Gen...](#)

- 
- [Clive Crook](#)



## [Why a VAT Makes Sense](#)

- [Joshua Green](#)



## [Will Palin Run, or Won't She?](#)

### [Correspondents](#)

- [Edward Tenner](#)  
[So That's What Makes Bankers Tick](#)
- [Andrew Cohen](#)  
[Incurious Bastards](#)
- [Erik Tarloff](#)  
[When Great Art Happens to Bad People](#)

Recent posts from our network of expert outside Correspondents

[View All](#)

## Subscribe Now

10 ISSUES. SAVE 59% JUST \$2.45 PER COPY

<input type="text" value="NAME"/>	<input type="text" value="City"/>
<input type="text" value="Address 1"/>	<input type="text" value="State"/> <input type="text" value="Zip"/>
<input type="text" value="Address 2"/>	<input type="text" value="Email"/>
<input type="button" value="Subscribe"/>	

## Newsletters

Sign up to receive our two free newsletters

- This Week on TheAtlantic.com** ([sample](#))
- This Month in The Atlantic** ([sample](#))
- I want to receive updates from our partners and sponsors



- [Subscribe Help](#)
- [Faq](#)
- [Follow the Atlantic](#)
- [Masthead](#)
- [Store](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Educational Program](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
  
- [Site Map](#)
- [Terms & Conditions](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Press](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Merchandise](#)

Copyright © 2010 by The Atlantic Monthly Group. All Rights Reserved.