Facebook temporarily blocks new apps from joining its platform

Facebook paused its app review process last week to “implement new changes,” the company quietly announced yesterday. Facebook’s move to momentarily prevent new apps and chatbots onto its platform comes after the Cambridge Analytica data privacy scandal that’s unfolded over the last two weeks. The ongoing situation has embroiled the company in an existential crisis of unprecedented magnitude after up to 50 million Facebook users profiles’ were compromised by a third-party app. Last week, Facebook said it will further limit developers’ access to user data.

Now, Facebook appears to be reevaluating how it approves apps due to how easily the third-party survey app, called “thisisyourdigitallife,” was able to mine data and sell it with little to no oversight from Facebook, and for Cambridge Analytica to retain that data even after claiming to the company that it had deleted it. “To maintain the trust people place in Facebook when they share information, we are making some updates to the way our platform works,” writes Ime Archibong, Facebook’s vice president of partnerships. “We know these changes are not easy, but we believe these updates will help mitigate any breach of trust with the broader developer ecosystem.”

Archibong also outlines the changes Facebook will make in the coming weeks, including an “in-depth review of our platform” that involves a full audit of any app with suspicious activity, and a process to inform users if an app they’ve

given access to was removed for data misuse, among other protective measures.

One co-founder of a digital agency took to Facebook to complain about the sudden pause, as spotted by *Mashable*. “Imagine hundreds of hours of work, tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars in investment capital, and dozens of clients disappearing at any given moment at the whim of a few lines of code,” Troy Osinoff wrote, as he set his status to “thinking about the meaning of life.”

The Verge has reached out to Facebook regarding when the app review process will be resumed. We’ll update this story when we hear back.

https://www.theverge.com/2018/3/28/17173614/facebook-cambridge-analytica-data-app-review-process