Meta may offer paid ad-free Facebook and Instagram in Europe

Meta could let users pay for Facebook and Instagram to avoid ads in their feeds, at least in Europe.

The New York Times reports that Meta is considering a paid subscription to its social media products, an attempt by Meta to quell concerns by the EU around data privacy and ads. No information is available on price or a release date, and it's not confirmed whether the product will actually be released.

Meta did not respond to a request for comment.

The company has been fighting with the EU and other European regulators around alleged privacy violations from its ad-tracking services and data transfers. Ireland's Data Protection Commission fined Meta $1.3 billion for transferring data of European users to the US, a violation of GDPR. The US and the EU signed a data transfer agreement in July, easing restrictions on social media platforms.

Meta has already started offering the ability to opt out from targeted advertising in the EU, and it reportedly proposed going further and shifting it to an opt-in option for everyone in the region.

Meta also delayed releasing its new social platform, Threads, in Europe due to regulatory concerns. Meta seems to be worried about the upcoming Digital Markets Act that prevents companies from reusing personal user data, including their name and location.

https://www.theverge.com/2023/9/1/23855820/meta-paid-ad-free-facebook-and-instagram-eu