Google to Shut Down Google+ Earlier Than Expected by @MattGSouthern

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Google is shutting down Google+ four months earlier than originally planned following a second data breach.

It was announced back in October that Google+ would be shut down in August 2019 due to a data breach affecting 500,000 users.

A significantly larger data breach was discovered this past November, impacting 52.5 million users.

As a result, Google is expediting the process of sunsetting Google+, which is now scheduled for April 2019.

In addition, all Google+ APIs will be shut down within the next 90 days.

For those concerned that their data may have fallen into the wrong hands, Google says there is no evidence of misuse.

> *"No third party compromised our systems, and we have no evidence that the developers who inadvertently had this access for six days were aware of it or misused it in any way."*

However, the investigation into the impact of the bug is still ongoing, so further details may be revealed at a later date.

In the worst case scenario, the only information a third party may have had access to is profile information provided by a user that was set to not-public.

Google says the bug found in the Google+ API would not have given third parties access to data used for fraud or identity theft.

> *"The bug did not give developers access to information such as financial data, national identification numbers, passwords, or similar data typically used for fraud or identity theft."*

Users who actively used Google+, and wish to preserve their data, can do so by following the steps in this article.

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Facebook Explains How its Search Results Work by @MattGSouthern

Facebook has put together a short explainer video with details about how its search results work.

The company says it wants to be more transparent about what's happening when users search for content on Facebook.

Facebook crammed as much information as it could into its less than 2-minute video. Here's what was revealed.

How Facebook Search Works

Search results on Facebook are primarily influenced by people's activity on Facebook.

What people do off of Facebook has no impact on its search results.

When a user searches for content on Facebook the results are ranked based on their activity on Facebook, and activity of the overall community.

Facebook activity that influences search results includes:

- What your friends share with you
- Pages you follow
- Groups you've joined
- Events you've liked or followed
- Things you've interacted with in your News Feed
- Information you've listed on your profile
- Places where you've been tagged
- Previous searches you've done

Facebook search results are also based on general Facebook

community activity, including the popularity of what's being searched for and how recently it was posted.

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Instagram Lets Users Share Stories With a Select Audience by @MattGSouthern

Instagram is launching a new feature that will allow users to share stories with close friends only.

This is an ideal solution for individuals who want to maintain a balance of personal and professional content on Instagram.

An increasingly common trend on Instagram is people creating fake profiles, or "Finstagrams," specifically for sharing a

different type of content with close friends.

Instagram’s new Close Friends option is likely a direct response to the Finstagram trend.

Users who have accounts with a mix of business and personal connections can now share stories only with people they know personally if they prefer.

In order to do that, users need to create a “Close Friends” list, an option that can be found in the side menu.

The next step is to add specific people to the list. No one can request to be added, and information about who’s in the list is private.

When creating stories there will be an option to share with just the close friends list.

Users viewing a story that’s shared with close friends will see a green badge on the photo or video.

Stories for close friends will also be indicated with a green ring around the person’s profile photo.

Close Friends is a feature that has been in testing for months. This past summer we reported on a test spotted by Jade Manchun Wong.

For those keeping scores, this is yet another discovery by Wong that ended up receiving an official release.

Close Friends is now available worldwide on Instagram for iOS and Android.

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Instagram Lets Users Add Alt Text to Photos by @MattGSouthern

Instagram is introducing the ability to add alt text to photos in an effort to make the platform more accessible.

The post Instagram Lets Users Add Alt Text to Photos by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Facebook Makes it Easier to

Find Local News and Information by @MattGSouthern

Facebook is connecting more people to local news and information with an expansion of its “Today In” section.

The post Facebook Makes it Easier to Find Local News and Information by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Instagram to Roll Out Redesigned User Profiles by @MattGSouthern

Instagram announced it will be introducing redesigned user profiles, which are set to roll out over the next few weeks.

The post Instagram to Roll Out Redesigned User Profiles by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Instagram to Remove Fake Followers, Comments, and Likes Generated by Third-Party Apps by @MattGSouthern

Instagram is taking steps to limit inauthentic activity on its network by removing fake followers, likes, and comments.

The post Instagram to Remove Fake Followers, Comments, and Likes Generated by Third-Party Apps by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Facebook is Changing Chatbot Permissions for Subscription Messaging, Effective December 31st by @MattGSouthern

Facebook is making changes to subscription messaging permissions that will affect chatbots.

The post Facebook is Changing Chatbot Permissions for Subscription Messaging, Effective December 31st by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Instagram Rolls Out More Ways for Businesses to Sell Products by @MattGSouthern

Instagram has expanded its shopping features with the ability to tag video posts with links to products.

The post Instagram Rolls Out More Ways for Businesses to Sell Products by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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Facebook Adjusts Algorithm to Reduce the Reach of Clickbait Content by @MattGSouthern

Facebook is taking steps to reduce the reach of sensationalist and provocative content.

The post Facebook Adjusts Algorithm to Reduce the Reach of Clickbait Content by @MattGSouthern appeared first on Search Engine Journal.

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