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STUDY

This is how Austrian Facebook users tick!

Futurezone and WU Wien (Economics University Vienna) have conducted a survey of users of the social network.



Foto: AP

More and more Facebook users are becoming increasingly bored with the social network and could imagine changing to another; they believe that uploaded data is worth nothing.

However, they would be willing to pay to avoid their data being forwarded to marketing companies. This is the result of Austria's largest Facebook study which Futurezone launched in cooperation with the Institute of Business Administration and Information Management at the University of Vienna.

Facebook has got more than 800 million members and numbers are increasing daily. However, the

attraction of the social network seems to be fading. 38 percent of the users are losing interest and about one third of the people surveyed can imagine using a different one.



Dr. Christine Bauer, Jana Korunovska, Prof. Dr. Spiekermann - Foto: WU Wien

Bored users

That Facebook is bound for the same destiny as its competitor MySpace is unlikely. Nearly 90 percent state that they are logged on at least once per day. Around 30 percent admit being logged on for more than three hours a day, whereas only 10 percent declare using Facebook for a maximum of one hour daily. "These facts allow us to assume that there is a new kind of time arrangement in many households, where Facebook comes straight after sleeping and eating", says Jana Korunovska of WU Wien.

18 percent of the people questioned said that they are in some way addicted to Facebook. "The data we have collected shows that with about seven percent of the participants there is a reasonable suspicion of Facebook addiction", says Korunovska. Of course, these are only the extreme cases. 65 percent could easily resign from Facebook. Only 14 percent could not imagine a life without the social network.

Privacy and Security

97 percent of the people surveyed use the "private atmosphere" to avoid showing their data to everyone. "We have to bear in mind that the mean age of the people surveyed was about 27 years and nearly no adolescents were questioned. Within the group of juveniles under 18 it shows that the possibility of "private atmosphere" is less used", says Christine Bauer of WU Wien.

But what is the data actually worth? More than 60 percent answered; not one Euro.

"But what is interesting is that people act like children when you tell them their data has been sold to another company. At this very moment there are more paying to save their profiles. Then, the valuation of one's own data is at about five Euros", says Sarah Spiekermann of WU Wien.

Through much discussion regarding the ownership of the data, the participants are in disagreement. 32 percent say that it belongs to the individual whereas 25 percent think that their data belongs to Facebook. 35 percent think that their data belongs to both equally.

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