

own your own content

SOCIAL CONTROL

2019

a guide to getting
your content
from social media

This zine was created by Alexandra Dolan-Mescal for
Documenting the Now. Send questions and suggestions to
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SNAPCHAT

What's a Snapchat archive if they don't store your snaps and chats? Basically everything else - your logins, contacts, snap date/times...

1. Your profile  - settings  - scroll down to "My Data", re-enter password
2. App shows list of data in app and data available for download before you submit request
3. Emails link, with note "there is a limited number of times per day you can download data"

Time til email: 19 min.

Result: HTML file that is really easy to navigate and JSON files for developers.

User Friendliness: 

Data Reusability: 



Points for effort but the data is scant.



INSTAGRAM

Getting to your Instagram Archive involves understanding their labyrinth of icons... but you can also do it from your computer.

1. Your profile - menu ≡ - settings cog

2. Go to Privacy & Settings - Download Data

3. Emails link, which will only work for 4 days. You can also check in "Download Data" screen for the download link if email does not arrive.

Time til email: 20 min (could take up to 48 hours)

Result: A zip file named with your username and download date, nice for keeping track of archives. Media are nested into folders by month.

hard to scroll through images since they are in so many folders



User Friendliness:

Data Reusability:

Social media platforms allow us to connect with each other across distances, share stories that aren't told in mainstream media, and document important moments as they happen. They are a form of accountability, a way to raise marginalized voices, and a way to remember.

Social media platforms are also for-profit private companies, who can (and do) use your data however they want. They can get bought out, shut down, or change rules at a whim.

As Facebook deletes live feeds of police brutality, blog platforms like Del.icio.us and Posterous disappear with a day's notice, thousands of videos disappear from YouTube and MySpace loses all songs posted before 2016, we know that our content is as vulnerable as it is important to us, to our life stories. We cannot trust platforms to save our content - we have to own it ourselves.

I made this zine as a starter kit to help people own their own content. I will update it yearly as these spaces regularly change. Please get in touch with suggestions for new platforms to document, interesting things you see in your downloaded archives, or any other updates I should make!



FACEBOOK

Facebook has spent a lot of time developing their archive. You can even see which advertisers have targeted you! Get yours:

1. Settings - Your Facebook Information - Download
2. Select options for date range, format (JSON/HTML), media download quality
3. Select info you want to download, create file!
4. All archives are saved in “Available Files” tab, you can go back and get them anytime.

Time til email: 7 min HTML, 10 min JSON

Result: HTML: Extensive archive with viewer that looks like Facebook. JSON: data for developer reuse.

User Friendliness: ★★★★★

Data Reusability: ★★★★☆

JSON is great for developer reuse but CSVs would be even better for the average user.



TWITTER

Midway through 2019, Twitter changed their look and their archive along with it. The new, less user friendly way to get your archive:

1. Account - Settings & Privacy - Your Data
2. Enter password, select Twitter and/or Periscope
3. Download link, that will expire in 1 month, is sent to your email.

Time til email: 45 min

Result: Many .JS files and a media folder

Question! Why “the information we believe is most relevant and useful to you”?!? Why not all of it?

User Friendliness: ★★★★☆

Data Reusability: ★★★★☆