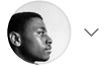


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Threads: Social Media App or Privacy Threat?



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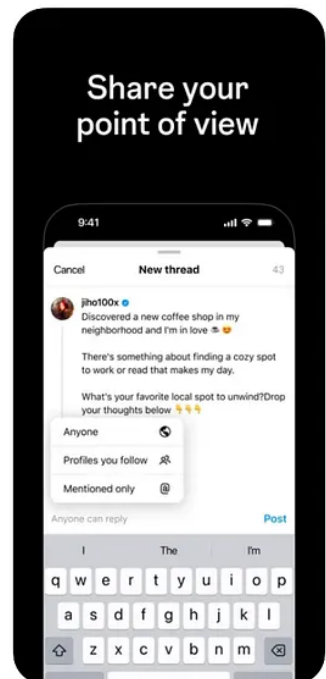
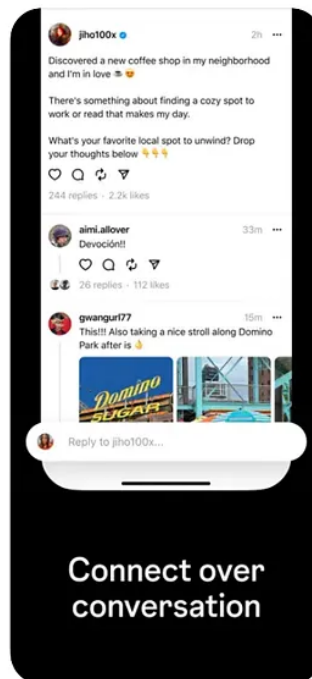
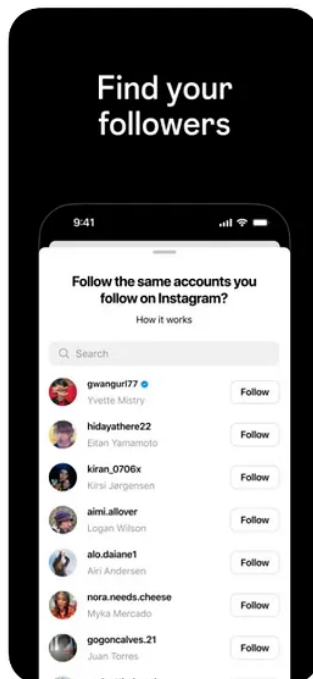
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Threads by Meta | Credit : www.archive.org

On 6th July, 2023, Meta released a rival to Twitter: Threads. Despite almost being a clone of its competitor, Threads did bring a new perspective on the common micro-blogging platform we all know and love.

The app had over 30 million downloads in 16 hours since its release and doesn't seem to be slowing down. As of today, it has reached over 70 million signups, catching up to Twitter's 368 million monthly active users.

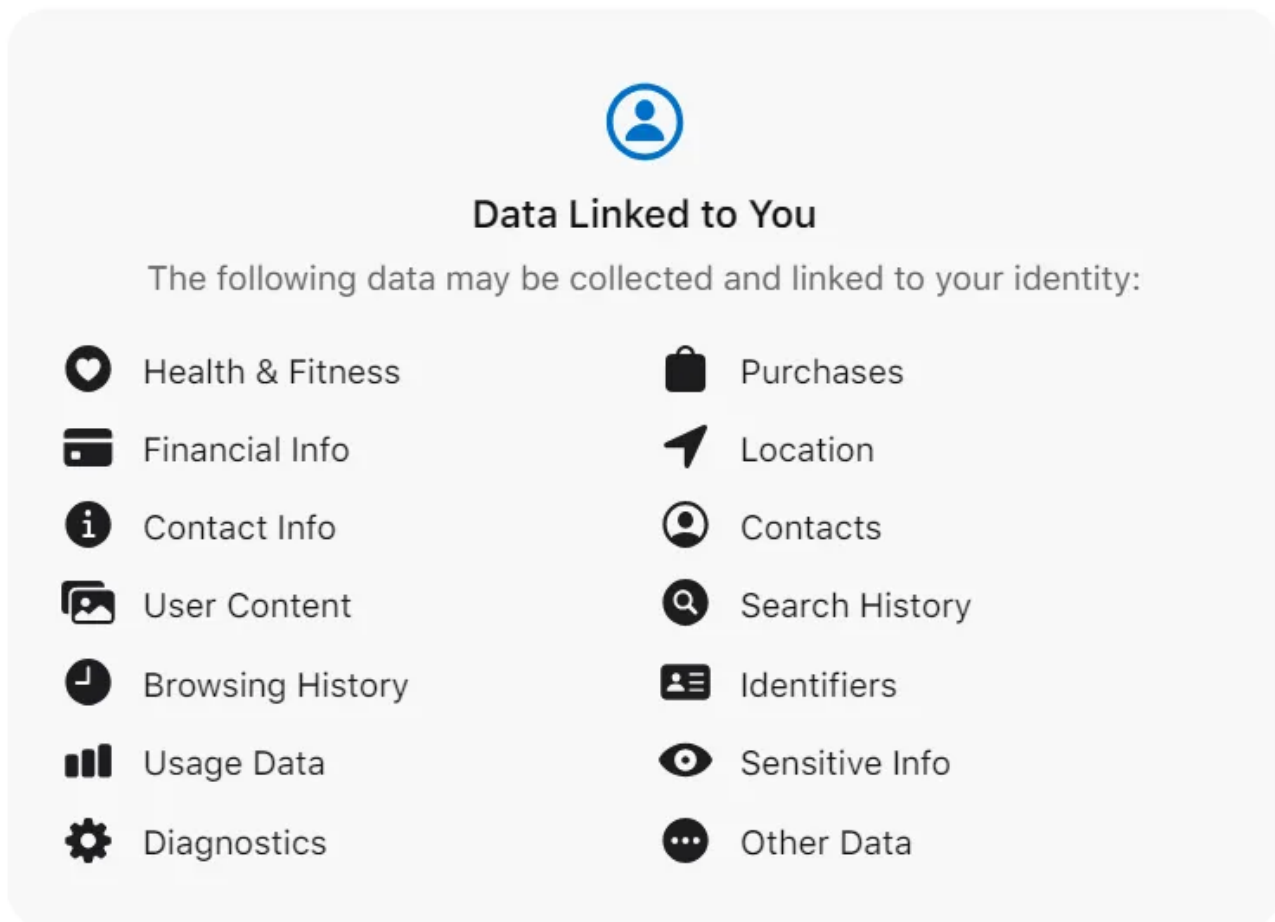
However, it has been noticed that despite this great stride, Threads hasn't been launched in the European Union. Why you might ask? It all comes right back to

Meta.

Meta has been infamous for mishandling the data of its users on several occasions. In November of 2022, Meta was fined \$275 million for not complying to Europe's GDPR rules on protecting data after a data set of users' data was found on the Internet.

In May of this year, Meta was fined a heftier amount of \$1.3 billion for breaching data privacy laws again. The company has faced multiple lawsuits over the years for similar issues and they don't seem to be letting down.

When compared to its platform colleagues, Threads takes a considerable amount of data from its users. Such data includes your name, contact, purchase history, and app activity. While these may not be particularly sensitive, some other data are.



Threads data collection information

Other data Threads collects on you include your physical address (precise), race, pregnancy status, sexual orientation, religion and biometric data. To top it off, the privacy policy indicates you can't delete your threads account without deleting your Instagram account.

Here's the full list of things collected about you from Google Play Store Data Safety:

1. Name
2. Email Address
3. User IDs
4. Phone Number
5. Device ID
6. Location (Approximate and Precise)
7. Political or Religious Beliefs
8. Sexual Orientation
9. User payment info
10. Purchase History
11. Credit Score
12. Health and Fitness info
13. Messages
14. Access to Audio, Files and Docs
15. Your Contacts
16. App activity
17. Web browsing history
18. Crash and Diagnostic Data

Now to be fair, many apps on your phone collect at least half this data. But some of these such as health information, credit score and even your religious beliefs seem out of place for a social media app.

Apple users tend to be much more susceptible to this high level of collection as they cannot control the app permissions at a more granular level like Android users.

Threads does bring some good to the table such as having no ads (though that is very likely to change), and being safer for kids due to no explicit content being allowed on the platform. It also makes trolling and going scot-free a lot harder because of the link to your Instagram account.

However, looking at that list, you might want to think a bit more before moving on to another microblogging platform.

Threads

Meta

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