



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

Office of the Director
Bureau of Consumer Protection

January 14, 2010

Marc Rotenberg
Executive Director
Electronic Privacy Information Center
1718 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Mr. Rotenberg:

Thank you for your recent complaint to the Commission regarding changes to Facebook's privacy settings. We appreciate receiving this information, which raises a number of concerns about Facebook's information sharing practices.

The Commission staff carefully reviews all complaints that it receives. Your most recent complaint raises issues of particular interest for us at this time. As you know, we are hosting a series of public roundtables at which we will discuss existing and emerging business models and their impact on consumer privacy, including social networking services. The privacy issues raised by social networking services will be a major area of focus at our next event, to be held on January 28, 2010, in Berkeley, California (*see* www.ftc.gov/bcp/workshops/privacyroundtables). As the amount of personal information shared on social networking sites grows, and the number of third-party companies and advertising networks with access to such information grows, it is important that consumers understand how their data is being shared and what privacy rules apply. The Commission staff believes it is critical that companies provide transparency about how this data is being handled, maintained, shared, and protected, and what steps consumers may take to control the use of their information.

To ensure that we have a full understanding of the concerns you have raised, I have asked Maneesha Mithal, Associate Director in the Division of Privacy and Identity Protection, to follow up with you and set up a meeting. Please be advised, however, that any Commission investigation is non-public until the Commission decides to issue a formal complaint or close the investigation. As a result, we can neither confirm nor deny that we are conducting an investigation of the issues raised by your complaint.

We appreciate your raising this issue with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C. Vladeck".

David C. Vladeck