

#DeleteFacebook is a watershed moment – has the penny finally dropped with consumers?

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Founders of the more ‘private, meaningful’ digital scrapbook app, Storychest, say that now is the time for people to consider how best to protect their privacy online.

Storychest is a journal meets photo album meets scrapbook for the digital age, which allows people to share private moments and events with their loved ones. Its founders welcome the fact that consumers now recognise the problems associated with so-called ‘free’ social media platforms.

Charlotte McMillan, who founded the Storychest app, launched on the iPhone last year, along with her business partner, Balvinder Gill, says consumers are now looking for more private, meaningful alternatives to Facebook, following the Cambridge Analytica scandal.

“Before, some people might say to us: ‘Why do I need Storychest? I just put everything on Facebook, for free,’” she says. “Now, we’ve got an answer which everyone understands.”

McMillan, who moved from Brisbane to London in 1998, ended up settling and now has a young family here, says: “I needed a way to digitally organise and keep the best of the endless stream of photos, videos, diaries, keepsakes, years of memorabilia produced and collected by the family, haphazardly stuffed in boxes, buried on computer drives, lost on devices and scattered in social media.

“But on top of that, it needed to be a place to add a few thoughts, tell stories in more detail, leave a meaningful account of things as they happened and capture memories from the past, before they got lost in the business of life.”

A turning point for McMillan was losing precious photos of her children, including baby photos. “I’d had one of those moments a parent dreads,” she explains. “While sorting photos on the home PC that weren’t backed up, I’d managed to delete swathes of photos of the boys, including the baby photos of our third boy, Archie. I realised it all needed to be saved in the cloud.”

With Google Trends data revealing a growing demand in the UK for alternatives to Facebook, McMillan and Gill, now feel that the time has come when people are looking for something else, a more trustworthy service.

“There can, and should, be a safe place to share and keep memories and interact with family and loved ones online,” says McMillan. “Facebook broke new ground and brought people together. Posting online is now second nature to us. However, the tech giants have shown little accountability in the way they operate - in the case of the recent revelations about Facebook, at best, turning a blind eye. They will no doubt face a much more regulated and constrained landscape as the full picture becomes clear.

“Storychest, meanwhile is, simple personal and private. Your stories are shared with only those people who

you choose to see them, and no further. We don't capture and sell your data. We don't sell advertising. Instead, users wishing to keep up to 25 stories can do so for free within the app, and after that, if they like our service we charge a small, monthly subscription.

“We think it's time to take the positive lessons learnt, embrace our desire to share and communicate, but to do so within a transparent, safe environment, giving the control back to the consumer.”

To find out more about the Storychest iPhone app, visit: storychest.com and download it for free on the App Store.

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