
Facebook to Allow Designation of Digital Heirs

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The heir will also be able to respond to requests from friends or relatives of the deceased who are not connected to Facebook, update the photo in the person's profile and file comments and photos of the dead person on the social network.

The service initially will be available only in the United States, although Facebook is planning to expand it to other countries.

If they prefer, users will also be able to inform Facebook to close the dead person's account.

Up to now, the social network allowed, after receiving notification that a person has died, the account to remain online but frozen – or “memorialized” – and thus without the possibility of editing it.

“By talking to people who have experienced loss, we realized there is more we can do to support those who are grieving and those who want a say in what happens to their account after death,” Facebook said on its blog.

Less than a dozen U.S. states have laws to regulate online activities.

Virginia, for instance, allows the parents or legal representatives of a Facebook user to take control of the account if the user dies.

Google in 2013 became the first large Internet firm to allow users to select online heirs for Gmail

accounts and cloud storage services, among other things.
