

Content Creators Beware: Social Media Is Using Your Data

Jolie Mengert

A “Content Creator” is someone who creates entertaining or educational digital content that is mostly expressed and consumed through social media.¹ While I would not call myself a Content Creator, I would say that I am a very active social media user over various platforms. I am embarrassed to admit that I have never taken the time to read a social media company’s data privacy policy. I felt the pros of using the platform would outweigh the possible privacy concerns. However, my opinion on this topic has been swayed after the recent privacy data policy changes made by various social media platforms concerning their use of my data. In this day and age where content ownership seems like a given, several social media companies have distorted that idea.

On May, 2024, Meta announced that the company considered using public Instagram posts as part of its AI training data.² Similarly, Google changed its privacy policy to allow its AI chatbot and other services to train using any publicly available information.³ As of late, many companies are looking to train their AI models on data that was once classified as private in their terms and conditions by changing their privacy policies.⁴ Members of the public that are most vulnerable to these changes are Content Creators and artists alike.

Content Creators build their careers on publishing digital content and reaching as many people as possible to build an audience and make money. There is a fear that their work will become fodder for AI and there is a legitimate concern that they may lose their livelihoods.⁵ AI can threaten Content Creators in a multitude of ways. There is a fear that it will replace the content that it was trained on.⁶

The use of AI in content creation can raise several ethical and societal concerns. These concerns include data privacy and intellectual property issues, and considerations to the content’s integrity.⁷ Content Creators worry that they may have to find new and untested platforms to protect their future work.⁸ It is especially frustrating when companies like Meta have not provided an option in the United States to opt out of the AI scraping.⁹ This blog post is a warning to Content Creators and regular folks alike to stay diligent about social media companies’ privacy policies, as even the smallest updates could place your content at risk.

¹ Erika Lenkert, *What is a content creator and how to become one*, ADOBE, <https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/content-creator> (last updated Jan 12, 2024).

² Tatum Hunter, *Artists are fleeing Instagram to keep their work out of Meta’s AI*, WASH. POST (June 6, 2024, 7:00AM), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2024/06/06/instagram-meta-ai-training-cara/>.

³ Eli Tan, *When the Terms of Service Change to Make Way for A.I. Training*, N. Y. TIMES (June 26, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/26/technology/terms-service-ai-training.html>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Hunter, *supra* note 1.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Ian Shepherd, *How AI Impacts Social Media Content Creation*, FORBES, (Mar. 10, 2024, 9:27AM), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ianshepherd/2024/03/10/how-will-ai-impact-social-media-content-creators/> [<https://perma.cc/5ND4-87D3>].

⁸ Hunter, *supra* note 1.

⁹ *Id.*