

Ello, the Social Network Alternative to Facebook

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Ello, a social network alternative to Facebook is expanding its user base immensely, even as it remains in beta testing. Market watchers and tech trend analysts attribute the influx of users indicative of Facebook's waning popularity due to its invasive, profit-driven, monopolistic, and downright creepy conduct.

Facebook's incremental, manipulative policy and terms of use have been described as everything from a greedy business practice, [to a government sanctioned means of mass manipulation and soft censorship](#).

It was inevitable that start-ups and activists would seek to offer Facebook users an alternative that allowed social media to be used as a tool of empowerment, not insidious manipulation and censorship. Ello appears to be tapping into that [with its manifesto](#) which states:

Your social network is owned by advertisers.

Every post you share, every friend you make and every link you follow is tracked, recorded and converted into data. Advertisers buy your data so they can show you more ads. You are the product that's bought and sold.

We believe there is a better way. We believe in audacity. We believe in beauty, simplicity and transparency. We believe that the people who make things and the people who use them should be in partnership.

We believe a social network can be a tool for empowerment. Not a tool to deceive, coerce and manipulate — but a place to connect, create and celebrate life.

You are not a product.

In theory, not only does Ello's manifesto sound ideal, it is likely to attract a multitude of disillusioned Facebook users fed up with the big-tech's monopoly, but who have stayed aboard for a lack of a better alternative.

Market Watch in an article titled, "[Facebook killer called Ello gets the timing right](#)," reported:

There has been a lot of chatter on social media this week about a new social network called Ello, which is getting buzz for its anti-Facebook Inc. stance. But is the start-up, which accepts no advertising and does no data mining, ready for prime time?

Ello has apparently been gaining such a huge influx of new users that its servers were having problems in the past two days, despite the requirement that you need an invitation to join.

Market Watch notes that Ello's popularity is due more to Facebook's shortcomings than Ello's superior performance – Ello which is admittedly still in beta testing and with features still being incrementally added.

Out of the Frying Pan Into the Fire?

Migrating from Facebook to an alternative social network is tempting, but careful research must be done to ensure that these alternatives are true in their purpose and not simply the next “Facebook” repainted and refitted to be even more invasive and insidious. The appearance of Ello and its astonishingly expanding user base does illustrate one important point – no matter how many “Facebooks” the establishment tries to create, there will be a demand for legitimate and transparent alternatives that serve users rather than manipulate and constrain them.

Whatever Ello ends up becoming, activists across the tech community should be ever vigilant, scrutinizing these networks for abuse, and prepared to meet demands if and when alternatives like Trello fail in their mission statements.

Demanding privacy, transparency, and honesty from corporations like Facebook and the special interests they represent is like demanding decency from a common criminal – futile. Instead, measures must be taken, independent of the criminal or criminal enterprise's actions, that will protect individuals and society from their malevolence.

Creating a multitude of alternatives and taking ownership over the technology and infrastructure our society depends on [by creating local, independent alternatives](#) whittles away at not only the insidious means the establishment wields against us, but undermines the vast resources the establishment has access to in order to create such means in the first place.

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