

# Employees Should Consider Cleaning Up Their Profiles To Avoid The Potentially Career-Limiting Impact of Facebook Graph Search, Suggests Punch

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Following the launch of Graph Search, which enables searches within Facebook based on individuals' likes, interests and past activity, users should swiftly take a look at their profile and privacy settings to ensure that they are not surprised by being associated with undesirable subjects in search results, advises integrated PR, search and social media agency (<http://www.punchcomms.com/social-media-agency.html>) Punch Communications.

Graph Search is Facebook's newly launched social search (<http://www.punchcomms.com/social-search.html>) functionality, offering results based on each user's network and social preferences, as distinct from more traditional search engines that compile results based on the wider internet.

Consequently, Graph Search results are tailored to the individual, based on their network and according to the enquiry – examples might include “friends that enjoy Mexican food” or “people in London that like dancing”, with the results returned being based on a juxtaposition of the two search elements in each enquiry.

The tool has already revealed its scope for providing potentially compromising results for queries. In the days since Graph Search has been live as a beta version, there have been a number of humorous results being shared across the web.

As Graph Search matures, Facebook users should give thought to their privacy settings and, perhaps more importantly, the nature of the content that they post and engage with across the site. For example, a friend's tagged image of a night out could be retrieved by a potential employer using the new Graph Search functionality, potentially influencing a decision that could significantly affect the individual's career.

Pete Goold, Managing Director of Punch, commented: “Graph Search really socialises search, providing real-time results based on the user's network as opposed to the entire web or social community. In a way it's similar to – but distinct from – the integration of social results from Google+ with Google's web-wide search function.

“I see a couple of potential problems that might occur, particularly around the theme of employment and career development. Candidates need to think about what a recruiter may find with a little effort on their Facebook profile. Similarly, employees may not realise that their actions could result in sensitive information being readily visible by their employers.

“For now, it's worth spending a little time in spring cleaning – potentially looking at past images, tags, links and other interactions, to consider the implications of something undesirable being seen unintentionally.”

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