



## Will Facebook's Portal Video Chat Spy On You?

Buyer beware! There is no expectation of privacy with any social network platform or device. Facebook owns one of the best facial recognition systems on earth. Because Technocrats are driven to hoard data, you can expect everything to be identified, catalogued and eventually weaponized against you. □ TN Editor

Facebook's new video chat devices Portal and Portal Plus are now [available for purchase in the US](#), but the thought of putting another video camera and microphone in the home might make some consumers feel uneasy.

The social network has a [bad track record](#) when it comes to privacy and security. A massive security breach this year allowed hackers to steal personal information from 29 million Facebook accounts. Then there's the Cambridge Analytic scandal, which exposed the data of roughly 87 million Facebook users without their permission.

Privacy experts say that with any smart device, consumers need to be aware of what information is being collected and proactively manage

that data. Facebook on Wednesday shared more details about the privacy and security safeguards the tech firm put in place. Still, it will be up to consumers to decide if that's enough to trust the social network.

Here's what we know so far:

**What information does Portal collect?** Facebook points out that the tech firm won't be listening to, viewing or keeping the contents of Portal's video calls, but that doesn't mean the company isn't tracking any information about you. The company said it processes data such as the frequency and length of your calls, but not what you're saying in them.

"For example, we may use the fact that you make a lot of video calls to inform some of the ads you see," the company said. And because the video chat device is tied to Facebook Messenger, information such as how often you use a feature or app may be used for ad targeting outside of Portal like on the main social network or Instagram. The device also includes Amazon's smart assistant Alexa, but a Facebook spokesperson said it doesn't see or retain any data from those interactions.

If Facebook Portal crashes, the tech firm keeps a record of that data along with user feedback information. It also logs your voice commands after you say "Hey Portal," but Facebook says that data won't be used for ad targeting.

**Can I delete my voice command history on Portal?** Yes, users can delete a history of their voice commands in their Facebook activity log.

**Will Portal's smart camera identify me or my family members?** No, Facebook says that the camera doesn't identify people on the video call.

[Read full story here...](#)