



A new website randomly, instantly and irreversibly deletes your Facebook "friends"

By Jason Gilbert - Yahoo! News
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Ever wanted to prune your Facebook friend count, but didn't have the heart to "unfriend" that old high school friend or acquaintance from a friend's birthday party years ago?

Perhaps it's time to get frackin'.

A new website called FriendFracker.com says it can help minimize defriending anxiety on Facebook, by instantly, randomly and irrevocably deleting as many as 10 Facebook friends with a single click. Just enter your Facebook details and – poof! – a handful of Facebook friends vanish from your timeline.

Here's how it works: You connect your Facebook account to FriendFracker by securely logging in with your Facebook email and password. After granting permission to the app, FriendFracker goes into motion, identifying a handful of real friends – those you interact with on a regular basis – and protecting that group from deletion. Then, it identifies a much larger selection of "friends" in quotation marks you probably won't miss; from that group, FriendFracker goes to work on 1 to 10 of the "friends," ending whatever tenuous Facebook connection still holds you together.

The service does not inform you which friendships it ended for you, and that's the point.

"If you can't tell which friends vanished from your social network," FriendFracker co-founder Rafael Lozano-Hemmer explained, "then good riddance!"

FriendFracker was created by Lozano-Hemmer, an experimental artist, and former Obama reelection campaign CTO Harper Reed. The clever hack – which is "aggressively against the Terms of Service of Facebook," Reed says – was created in a 24-hour period as part of Seven on Seven, an annual conference put on by the art-tech collaboration nonprofit Rhizome. During the conference, seven artists are paired with seven different different technologist and asked to invent and create "something new" in a day.

Harper and Lozano-Hemmer demonstrated FriendFracker at the 4th annual Seven on Seven conference at the New School in New York City on Saturday to riotous applause; indeed, FriendFracker, with its mission to trim away those bulging, meaningless Facebook friend lists, was one of the conference's most pronounced successes. (Disclosure: Yahoo! News co-sponsored the conference.)

FriendFracker.com is up and running – Facebook's legal team hasn't caught wind of it, apparently – and ready to assist you in your defriending needs. Be careful, though: The site springs to action the moment you log in, and the friend deletion is irreversible (unless, of course, you figure out who was defriended, and then send another friend request).

If you're ready to give a fond farewell to a bunch of folks you probably haven't said hello to since 2004, you can start fracking your friends right here. Because parting can be such sweet, sweet sorrow.