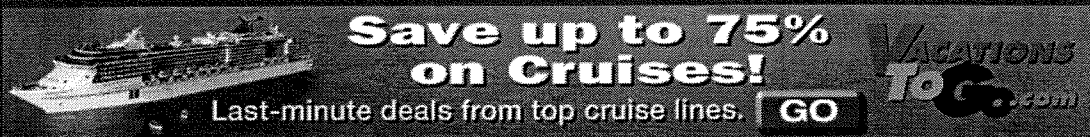


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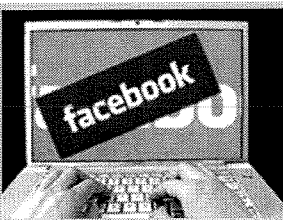
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## Technology & Science

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### Facebook to Open to All Internet Users

Facebook Site, Now Restricted Mostly to Students, to Expand Eligibility to All Internet Users



(Facebook.com/ AP Photo )

By ANICK JESDANUN AP Internet Writer  
NEW YORK Sep 11, 2006 (AP)

The Associated Press

Facebook, an online community now restricted mostly to high school and college students, will soon throw its doors wide open and welcome millions of Internet users currently left standing at the gates.

The move will allow existing users to invite their now-ineligible friends, but it also risks changing the tone of a community where trust and privacy are key. Just last week, users revolted when Facebook introduced a feature that allows easier tracking of changes their friends make to personal profile pages.

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The change in eligibility will come soon, although Facebook officials were still deciding exactly when.

To join Facebook, a user now must prove membership in an existing network using an e-mail address from a college, a high school or selected companies and organizations. That has largely limited membership to students, along with some faculty and alumni.

As a result, Facebook has fewer than 10 million registered users, compared with some 109 million at News Corp.'s MySpace, which has an open-door policy.

With the change, a user can simply join a regional network such as one for their country, state, metropolitan area or city. No authentication will be performed.

But unlike the case with MySpace and other open community sites, users will be restricted in how much they can learn about others the way Harvard students can't automatically view a Stanford user's full profile page, which may include photos, contact information and other personal details.

Users will have to agree to grant access, and they may give some users the ability to view only portions of their profiles.

Started by three Harvard sophomores in February 2004 as an online directory for college campuses, Facebook expanded to high schools last September and to selected companies and organizations earlier this year. Those users have been eligible to join regional networks as well when they graduate or move, and it is those networks that will be expanding soon.

Chris Hughes, co-founder of the Palo Alto, Calif.-based company, said everyone around the world will be covered by one of some 500 regional networks, although some regions may cover one or more countries. U.S. regions, he said, are likely to be geographically smaller.

Facebook to Open to All Internet Users  
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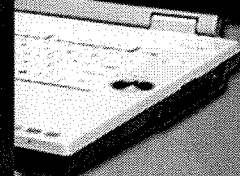
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