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# big to close down — sites need regulation

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Sean Gallup / Getty Images 2012

**Though Google makes it easy to export Google data through its Takeout system, not every Internet company has Google's capabilities.**

Gallery goes dark, or the next Digg is re-engineered and customized work flows no longer work, users are guaranteed both sufficient notification and data portability before all is lost.

While Google ought to be commended in how it allows for the easy exporting of Google data through its Takeout system, not everyone is Google. The Internet isn't really an option anymore. Like a public utility, people need to be able to rely on the continued viability of their service providers and their stuff. With so much of society's permanent record represented only online, these sites have an implicit obligation to protect the permanence of that record. However, we can't rely on profit-motivated companies to maintain what are, in all fairness, collectively mostly junk, but to each of us individually, irreplaceable memories.

As such, we propose a regime wherein once a website or service hits a predetermined number of active users, it becomes too big to simply close down without legal repercussions. Fundamentally, the site takes on some of the character of a public utility and is perceived as such by regulatory bodies. Standards and their enforcement could be through industry committees, or a

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