

Protecting your digital memories

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[Lalita Kauldhar](#) looks at why it is worthwhile to put plans in place that protect your digital memories for your loved ones when you pass away and how you can do this.

In June, the Society for Trust and Estate Practitioners ([STEP](#)) launched a new “Protect your Digital Memories” campaign.

The campaign aims to increase awareness and encourage people to protect their digital memories. STEP is calling for government and digital service providers to do more to help people put plans in place and provide support to families and loved ones wanting to gain access to a deceased’s account. But why is protecting your digital assets and memories so important?

Why should I think about protecting my digital memories?

In 2022, we digitally store so much of our lives and memories in photos, videos, social media accounts, emails, and cloud storage - to name a few. But, just like physical and monetary assets, digital memories can be as important to people.

In what circumstances might my loved ones need to access my digital accounts?

There are many circumstances where your family and loved ones may need to access your digital accounts should you pass away or lose capacity, including:

- To access things that hold sentimental value to you or your loved ones
- To protect your privacy
- Take care and safeguard any financial property you might have.

Unfortunately, many people are unaware of what will happen to their digital memories and assets should they become incapacitated or pass away. Without adequate planning, these could be lost forever or create further problems down the line.

How to protect your digital memories

You can take several relatively simple steps that could prove extremely helpful to your loved ones further down the line.

Update your legacy settings

Many social media and internet platforms we use daily, such as Apple, Google and Facebook, have tools allowing you to decide how your account can be accessed when you are no longer here or can do so yourself.

If you do not nominate a legacy contact, accounts can be difficult and potentially impossible to access. However, updating your legacy settings should only take a few minutes and will give you peace of mind that your loved ones can access your accounts in the future.

Communicate with your loved ones

While no one wants to think about a time when you are no longer here or cannot make decisions for yourself, it is essential to talk to family and friends about your wishes. Having these conversations now can save a lot of time and stress for your loved ones in the future. Out of these discussions, you may even start sharing things with them now, such as photos and videos.

Use cloud storage

Cloud storage makes it easy to store and back up your digital files, including important information and more sentimental items. Keeping everything in the cloud and

ensuring your loved ones can gain access to this can make things a lot easier when you are no longer around.

If you have any concerns about what might happen to your digital estate, contact [Lalita Kauldhar](#) to advise you on how to plan effectively.

Lalita Kauldhar
020 7299 7004
Lalita.Kauldhar@riaabg.com
www.riaabarkergillette.com



Note: This article is not legal advice; it provides information of general interest about current legal issues.

