

What you *need to know* about your *digital legacy*

90% of us use the internet regularly and it can be hard for loved ones to close down our online life once we are gone.

Here's what you need to know about organising your digital legacy...

Digital assets

These include everything from your social media accounts and personal blogs to subscriptions for ancestry websites, streaming services like Spotify or payment services like PayPal.

Helping executors to be aware of the existence of online accounts and how to access them is the main reason you may wish to prepare a separate document that can be stored safely with the will. Known as a digital or social media will or 'letter of wishes' this should include details of all your online accounts and wishes, for example, whether you want your Facebook site memorialised, or closed.

Choose a 'digital executor'

The first step in organising your digital legacy is to appoint a digital executor.

This needs to be a tech savvy person, and ideally, one of the existing executors of your will. Check whoever you choose is comfortable doing this, as ultimately they'll be responsible for closing down your online accounts, and depending on your wishes, may need to sort out your social media photos and videos.



Check the T's & C's

The next step is to make a list of all your online accounts with the username or email address attached to each, **but don't include any passwords**. You can find lists of the most common online accounts along with a 'tick list' by downloading the free 'Digital Wishes' pack from the *SunLife website.

Once you've made a list of all your accounts; think about what you want done with each; and check that the company's terms of use allow this, to avoid losing photos, videos or music. With Apple, for example, its terms and conditions say accounts are 'non-transferable' – with any rights to your ID or content ending on death, which can mean photos and videos are lost unless they're already backed up.

You can find an up to date list of your options with social media sites, as well as rules on information stored on devices like phones and tablets, by downloading the ** 'social media will' template on the Digital Legacy Association website.

Update regularly

As you open or close online accounts during your lifetime, you should update your digital wishes.

For easy access, you can choose to store your digital wishes securely online although your solicitor can store a copy too. There are lots of different companies offering services to help you do this but check that they allow you to update your digital wishes document as often as you like.

To use a service like this you must appoint a 'Trusted Contact' (ideally an executor of your will) who can access your wishes after your death.

*Sunlife accounts checklist and letter writing PDFs available at -
www.sunlife.co.uk/siteassets/documents/digital-legacy-final.pdf/

** For social media will template -
digitallegacyassociation.org/social-media-will-template/

World Cancer Research Fund

(Registered Charity No: 1000739)

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