



Digital Life After Death

This time I don't mean *Windows* computers. Have you given any thought to what will happen to your online identity when you are no longer with us? You may want to add instructions about your digital life to your list of valuable papers to pass on to your heirs. It has now been 20-30 years that we have all been living with email, Domain names, *Facebook*, *LinkedIn*, *Pinterest*, etc. Some people may not care very much about what happens and others may care a lot. This month I thought it would be a good idea to make sure that everyone thinks about what is right for them.

There are not many laws on the books about what happens to our online accounts. Much of what will happen to them is spelled out in the "Terms of Service" for each service we have signed up for. The Terms of Service is the legalese that we all click "Agree" to when signing up for an account. I must admit I have never read any of them and I'm pretty sure that most of you have not either. Sometimes those "Terms of Service" limit what we can and can not do but to help you to start thinking about it here is a check list of what you might want to think about and eventually put it in writing for your heirs.

Accounts:

- Online backup (aka Cloud backup) ([Carbonite](#), [Mozy](#), [iDrive](#), etc.)

- Email ([AOL](#), [Apple](#), [Comcast](#), [Google](#), [Microsoft](#), [Verizon](#), [Yahoo](#), etc.)
- Domain names (you@yourdomain.com) ([1and1](#), [Network Solutions](#), [GoDaddy](#), etc.)
- Online shopping ([Amazon](#), [eBay](#), [PayPal](#), etc.)
- Social networks ([Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#), etc.)
- Travel (Airline frequent flyer programs, hotel programs, etc.)
- Healthcare (medical, dental, etc.)
- Insurance (Auto, Home, Life, etc.)

What do you want done with the account?:

- Close the account
- Memorialize the account, if available (see [Facebook](#))
- Change the name on the account to my spouse or heir (may not be possible)
- Leave the account open, in my name, with control taken over by my spouse or heir. If there is a fee for the account have you provided funds for this.

Collect all your user names and passwords in one place:

- Some people like good old fashioned pen and paper. Start a notebook and write them all down.
- Some people like a *Word* or *Excel* document on the computer.
- Some people like to use a password manager ([Dashlane](#), [LastPass](#), [RoboForm](#), etc.). Setup an emergency contact with the password manager, if available.

Hardware Inventory

Create a list of your hardware and designate a beneficiary for each.

- Computers
- Tablets
- Smartphones
- External hard drives
- USB drives
- Cameras
- Music players

Designate a Digital Executor:

- Select someone who is tech savvy (well informed about or proficient in the use of modern technology, especially computers) enough to carry out your wishes.

More info:

[What you need to know about your digital life after death](#)

[Why You Should Appoint a Digital Executor as Part of Your Estate Plan](#)

[Next-of-kin process for Outlook.com](#)

[Aging with Dignity 5 Wishes](#)

[Example of a Digital Estate Plan](#)

If you plan now I bet you will be able to rest easier for that final big nap.

Newsletter Archives

[Click here](#) to read some of my past newsletters.

Some of my clients do not realize that my business has expanded to all mobile devices. In fact, any consumer electronic product that you can purchase I can help you with. So if you would like help setting up or syncing your new smartphone or tablet or connecting your new WiFi TV to the Internet, just let me know.

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