Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age

By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

Delete looks at the surprising phenomenon of perfect remembering in the digital age, and reveals why we must reintroduce our capacity to forget. Digital technology empowers us as never before, yet it has unforeseen consequences as well. Potentially humiliating content on Facebook is enshrined in cyberspace for future employers to see. Google remembers everything we've searched for and when. The digital realm remembers what is sometimes better forgotten, and this has profound implications for us all.

In *Delete*, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger traces the important role that forgetting has played throughout human history, from the ability to make sound decisions unencumbered by the past to the possibility of second chances. The written word made it possible for humans to remember across generations and time, yet now digital technology and global networks are overriding our natural ability to forget--the past is ever present, ready to be called up at the click of a mouse. Mayer-Schönberger examines the technology that's facilitating the end of forgetting--digitization, cheap storage and easy retrieval, global access, and increasingly powerful software--and describes the dangers of everlasting digital memory, whether it's outdated information taken out of context or compromising photos the Web won't let us forget. He explains why information privacy rights and other fixes can't help us, and proposes an ingeniously simple solution-- expiration dates on information--that may.

Delete is an eye-opening book that will help us remember how to forget in the digital age.

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age

By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

Delete looks at the surprising phenomenon of perfect remembering in the digital age, and reveals why we must reintroduce our capacity to forget. Digital technology empowers us as never before, yet it has unforeseen consequences as well. Potentially humiliating content on Facebook is enshrined in cyberspace for future employers to see. Google remembers everything we've searched for and when. The digital realm remembers what is sometimes better forgotten, and this has profound implications for us all.

In *Delete*, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger traces the important role that forgetting has played throughout human history, from the ability to make sound decisions unencumbered by the past to the possibility of second chances. The written word made it possible for humans to remember across generations and time, yet now digital technology and global networks are overriding our natural ability to forget--the past is ever present, ready to be called up at the click of a mouse. Mayer-Schönberger examines the technology that's facilitating the end of forgetting--digitization, cheap storage and easy retrieval, global access, and increasingly powerful software--and describes the dangers of everlasting digital memory, whether it's outdated information taken out of context or compromising photos the Web won't let us forget. He explains why information privacy rights and other fixes can't help us, and proposes an ingeniously simple solution--expiration dates on information--that may.

Delete is an eye-opening book that will help us remember how to forget in the digital age.

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1256165 in Books
- Published on: 2009-10-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .90" h x 5.60" w x 8.50" l, .88 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 256 pages

Download and Read Free Online Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger

---

Editorial Review

Review

Winner of the 2010 Don K. Price Award for Best Book in Science and Technology Politics, Section on Science, Technology, and Environmental Politics (STEP) by the American Political Science Association

Winner of the 2010 Marshall McLuhan Award for Outstanding Book in Media ecology, Media Ecology Association

"Mayer-Schonberger deserves to be applauded and *Delete* deserves to be read for making us aware of the timelessness of what we created and for getting us to consider what endless accumulation might portend."**--Paul Duguid,** *Times Literary Supplement*

"In *Delete*, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger argues that we should be less troubled by the fleetingness of our digital records than by the way they can linger."**--Adam Keiper,** *Wall Street Journal*

"Mayer-Schönberger raises questions about the power of technology and how it affects our interpretation of time. . . . He draws on a rich body of contemporary psychological theory to argue that both individuals and societies are obliged to rewrite or eliminate elements of the past that would render action in the present impossible."**--Fred Turner,** *Nature*

"There is no better source for fostering an informed debate on this issue."**--*Science***

"As its title suggests, *Delete* is about forgetting, more specifically about the demise of forgetting and the resulting perils. . . . [Mayer-Schonberger] comes up with an interesting solution: expiration dates in electronic files. This would stop the files from existing forever and flooding us and the next generations with gigantic piles of mostly useless or even potentially harmful details. This proposal should not be forgotten as we navigate between the urge to record and immortalise our lives and the need to stay productive and sane."**--Yadin Dudai,** *New Scientist*

"*Delete* is a useful recap of the various methods that are--or could be--applied to dealing with the consequences of information abundance. It also adds a thought-provoking new twist to the literature."**--Richard Waters,** *Financial Times*

"After a decade or more of books examining digital technology's consequences for the law, politics and society, we are finally beginning to see interesting books that talk about its effect on the individual. *Delete* is a highly promising (and often fascinating) first effort to spell out the problems, and to think through how they might be engaged."**--Henry Farrell,** *Times Higher Education*

"This book . . . is laid out like an invitation to such a sparring session. There you find the detailed arguments, spread out one by one. Get ready to highlight where you agree, note contradictions and arguments not carried through to their consequential end, and make annotations where you feel a new punch. The session will be

worth the effort."**--Herbert Burkert,** *Cyberlaw*

"A fascinating book."**--Clive Thompson,** *WIRED Magazine*

"A lively, accessible argument . . . that all that stored and shared data is a serious threat to life as we know it."**--Jim Willse,** *Newark Star Ledger*

"A fascinating work of social and technological criticism. . . . The book explores the ways various technologies has altered the human relationship with memory, shifting us from a society where the default was to forget (and consequently forgive) to one where it is impossible to avoid the ramifications of a permanent record."**--Philip Martin,** *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*

"Mayer-Schönberger convincingly claims that our new status quo, the impossibility of forgetting, is severely misaligned to how the human brain works, and to how individuals and societies function. . . . Can anything be done? *Delete* is an accessible, thoughtful and alarming attempt to start debate."**--Karlin Lillington,** *Irish Times*

"To argue for more forgetting is counter-intuitive to those who value information, history and transparency, but the writer pursues it systematically and thoroughly."**--Richard Thwaites,** *Canberra Times*

"Surprising and fascinating. . . . *Delete* opens a highly useful debate."**--Robert Fulford,** *National Post*

"*Delete* offers many scary examples of how the control of personal information stored in e-memory can fall into the wrong hands. . . . Lucid, eminently readable."**--Winifred Gallagher,** *Globe and Mail*

"*Delete* is one of a number of smart recent books that gently and eruditely warn us of the rising costs and risks of mindlessly diving into new digital environments--without, however, raising apocalyptic fears of the entire project. . . . [Mayer-Schonberger] is a digital enthusiast with a realistic sense of how we might go very wrong by embracing powerful tools before we understand them."**--Siva Vaidhyanathan,** *Chronicle of Higher Education*

"In this brief book, Mayer-Schönberger focuses on a unique feature of the digital age: contemporaries have lost the capacity to forget. Many books on privacy frequently mention, but never address in detail, the implications of an almost perfect memory system that digital technology and global networks have brought about. . . . An interesting book, well within the reach of the intelligent reader."**--***Choice*

From the Back Cover

"If the gathering, storage, and processing of information puts us all in the center of a digital panopticon, the failure to forget creates a panopticon crossbred with a time-travel machine. Mayer-Schönberger catalogs the range of social concerns that are arising as technology favors remembering over forgetting, and offers some approaches that might give forgetting a respected place in the digital world. Read this book. Don't forget about forgetting."**--David Clark, Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

"*Delete* is, ironically, a book you will not forget. It provides a sweeping but well-balanced account of the challenges we face in a world where our digital traces are saved for life. These issues transcend just issues of privacy but go to the heart of how our society and we as individuals function, remember, and learn. I highly

recommend this most informative and delightful book."**--John Seely Brown, University of Southern California, coauthor of** *The Social Life of Information*

"An erudite and wide-reaching account of the role that forgetting has played in history--and how forgetting became an exception due to digital technology and global networks. Mayer-Schönberger vividly depicts the legal, social, and cultural implications of a world that no longer remembers how to forget. *Delete* deserves the broadest possible readership."**--Paul M. Schwartz, Berkeley School of Law**

"In a work of extraordinary breadth and erudition, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger broadens the 'privacy' debate to encompass the dimension of time. His concept of 'digital forgetting' reshapes how sociologists, technologists, and policymakers must define and protect individual autonomy as technology usurps the prerogatives of human memory."**--Philip Evans, Boston Consulting Group**

"Human society has taken for granted the fact of forgetting. Technology has made us less able to forget, and this change, as Mayer-Schönberger nicely demonstrates, will have a profound effect on society. We as a culture must think carefully and strategically about this incredibly significant problem. *Delete* will spark a debate we need to have."**--Lawrence Lessig, author of** *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*

"*Delete* is a refreshingly philosophical take on the new dilemmas created by extensive digital documentation of our daily lives. Mayer-Schönberger's background in business and technology leads him to a creative and novel response to the challenges generated by persistent storage of data. *Delete* is a valuable contribution."**-- Frank Pasquale, Seton Hall Law School**

About the Author
Viktor Mayer-Schonberger is professor of internet governance and regulation at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, and a member of the academic advisory board of Microsoft. His other books include "Governance and Information Technology". A former software developer and lawyer, he spent ten years on the faculty of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mark Cabrera:

The book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age gives you the sense of being enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable much more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem with your subject. If you can make examining a book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age being your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. It is possible to

know everything if you like open up and read a e-book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science reserve or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this guide?

Carole Garner:

What do you ponder on book? It is just for students since they are still students or that for all people in the world, what best subject for that? Only you can be answered for that query above. Every person has different personality and hobby for each and every other. Don't to be pushed someone or something that they don't want do that. You must know how great along with important the book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age. All type of book is it possible to see on many methods. You can look for the internet sources or other social media.

Margaret Jackson:

Book is to be different per grade. Book for children till adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important normally. The book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age had been making you to know about other information and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The publication Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age is not only giving you much more new information but also being your friend when you truly feel bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship with the book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age. You never feel lose out for everything in case you read some books.

Kim Free:

That guide can make you to feel relax. This particular book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age was vibrant and of course has pictures on there. As we know that book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age has many kinds or type. Start from kids until teenagers. For example Naruto or Private eye Conan you can read and believe that you are the character on there. Therefore , not at all of book are make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and chill out. Try to choose the best book in your case and try to like reading that.

Download and Read Online Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger #VFOY4T7CJQS

Read Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger for online ebook

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger books to read online.

Online Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger ebook PDF download

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger Doc

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger Mobipocket

Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age By Viktor Mayer-Schönberger EPub