



What is it?

ask.fm is a social networking service which is based around users asking each other questions. The site is based in Latvia but is growing in popularity in many other countries and there are currently around 80 million registered users. The site can be accessed by simply visiting ask.fm and is currently available in 38 languages.

Users are able to ask questions anonymously which has led to problems with cyberbullying and offensive content. The site is clear that asking a question anonymously means that your name is hidden from other users but makes the point that identifying information can be shared with law enforcement if necessary. The site actually provides good information about safety and privacy but there is no requirement to read any of this when signing up.

There is only one official app for Apple devices: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/ask.fm/id635896473&mt=8 and one for Android phones - https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.askfm

Privacy

It is important to know that all content posted onto ask.fm is public and can be seen by anyone who visits the site – they do not need to be a member of the network.

It is possible to prevent being asked questions anonymously and users should enable this feature as others are less likely to post offensive content if they can be identified. Click on Settings and then on privacy. Click on do not allow anonymous questions.

Reporting

Despite press reports to the contrary, it is possible to report inappropriate content on ask.fm and you do not need to be logged into the site (i.e. a user) to do this. When you move your mouse over any post on someone else's profile, you will see an option to like the post and also a flag which allows you to report the post for one of four reasons. It is also possible to block or report a user, by scrolling to the top of their profile page and clicking on Block but users need to be logged in to do this. Users can also remove any questions from their own profile by clicking on the cross in the top right hand corner of every question and answer.

Report dialog box options:

- Bullying
- Spam or scam
- Violence
- Pornographic content

Buttons: OK, Cancel

Question post: "Are you a shopaholic?" (8 days ago) with Report button. "How does the Internet influence your life?" (10 days ago) with Delete button.