

Facebook Algorithm Changes

Mark Zuckerberg's New Year's resolution was to "fix the newsfeed". He's certainly got started, beginning by changing the algorithm that defines what content users will see to prioritise **"meaningful interactions"**. That means more personal updates from friends & family, and less current affairs or content shared by acquaintances, brands and publishers.

"We've gotten feedback from our community that public content—posts from businesses, brands and media—is crowding out the personal moments that lead us to connect more with each other."

The bottom line is that this will hit publishers hardest (think LadBible, etc.), but it will have a negative impact on engagement for brands. However, this is certainly not the first time Facebook has altered its design, and ultimately it has just reinforced the trends and learnings we saw in 2017:

- The organic post is dead.
- Facebook is a 'pay-to-play' platform.
- Content needs to be relevant, spark authentic interaction, and provide opportunity for sharing to be successful.

It's also expected that ad prices will increase further as a result. In 2017 we saw **the same format cost 24% more than in 2016 to achieve the same results**—and as Facebook further holds newsfeed control, the number may continue to rise.

If we are honest, this is not a huge change for us as advertisers, and it can be a positive moment for us to re-address how we focus our content and marketing efforts to get you a higher return on investment. Increasing costs does not mean a reduction in effectiveness, if we plan ahead.

We are working internally and with Facebook directly to consider best format practices going forwards—a selection of which are below:

- Promotion—**promoting** and **targeting** will define content calendars and campaigns even more. We need to ensure they are engaging and effective to improve spend vs result effectiveness.
- Content should be **video first**, and **optimised for views**.
- More engaging formats and techniques will be prioritised: e.g. **Canvas**.
- Ad spend should utilise **Reach & Frequency buying initially** (to compete in a highly saturated space), and then look to **auction** based bidding (to reach more relevant audiences and to ensure your more engaging content is prioritised).

From a content creation perspective, we also recommend testing and learning from a few more engaging experiences, such as:

- 'PR-able', large-scale campaign activations.
- Improved pixel tracking.
- More LIVE activations with Q&As.
- Use of your community—fans can become advocates to improve authenticity and engagement.

To think even bigger, this also reinforces our recommendation for 360 communication plans and the utilisation of relevant platforms. Instagram, Snapchat, dark social, smart home products, physical experiences and beyond are demanding more consumer attention—and can all be integrated into one central plan that can certainly offset the algorithm change, and improve overall activity.



If you would like to catch up in the coming weeks to discuss immediate actions—small tweaks, and longer-term plans—feel free to get in touch and we shall come by armed with a raft of data.

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