



The Changing Face of Facebook Regulations and How It Affects Startups

The latest spate of regulations implemented by Facebook will change the way businesses, in particular startups as well as SMEs, reach their target audiences:

Gone are the days where bootstrapping entrepreneurs were required to set aside a considerable sum of capital towards traditional advertising channels. With the advent of social media and the propensity for these mediums to reach audiences from around the globe, the process has taken a more cost-effective shape. Due to the nature of these platforms, marketing has also become more targeted, tailored to audiences that have shown past interest or propensity to be vested in the content being shared.

That being said, platforms like Facebook have to constantly pivot their guidelines, rules and regulations in order to maintain credibility and order – which in turn changes the social marketing playing field.

EdgeRank is the name commonly given to the algorithm that Facebook uses to determine what content should be displayed in their users' News Feed. Its constantly changing algorithm considers such factors as how connected the user is to a particular topic, how much engagement that particular user creates as well as how current a particular piece of content is.

Changing algorithms and new regulations

Facebook has come out with certain regulations over the span of the last month or so, in part to quell a growing number of irate users who have shown dissent at the number of irrelevant posts on their News Feeds:

- Early January of 2018, Facebook announced the prioritisation of posts from friends/family/groups over those from general Facebook pages.
- End of January 2018, Facebook makes clear intention to battle fake news, an issue the company has had to battle for the last few years.
- At about the same time, Facebook bans all advertisements that cover the Cryptocurrency industry.

What this means for social marketers

It's not all doom and gloom for those who are looking to leverage Facebook for marketing purposes. When it comes to Facebook changing its algorithm, there is probably no area that is more affected by these changes than the startup world, often relying heavily on Facebook marketing due to its wide reach and cost-friendly structure.

Those using the platform for marketing purposes are advised to [produce](#) organic and original content that encourages meaningful one-to-many discussions. Posting of content with a link to one's blog or website, for example, is seen as an attempt to use the site for free traffic without providing value to the community.

Businesses can look into producing live videos over pre-recorded ones, something Facebook looks at favourably. Live videos have been [reported](#) to reach up to 6 times the number of regulations as pre-recorded ones.

Startups should also take a detailed look at their target audience and discover which platforms they are attracted to. Reddit, for example, draws a large blockchain/cryptocurrency crowd and is a great medium for the industry. The cosmetics and retail industry is highly drawn to Instagram, making this platform great for marketing products in this category.

What should always be considered is that Facebook is in the business of providing a platform for interaction. To effectively carry this out, the company will have to protect its user-base from irrelevant information. It is still a great tool for startups as well as small and medium enterprise marketers looking for an inexpensive and wide-reaching advertising platform; they just need to understand that what should come first is the value of the content they are producing.

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