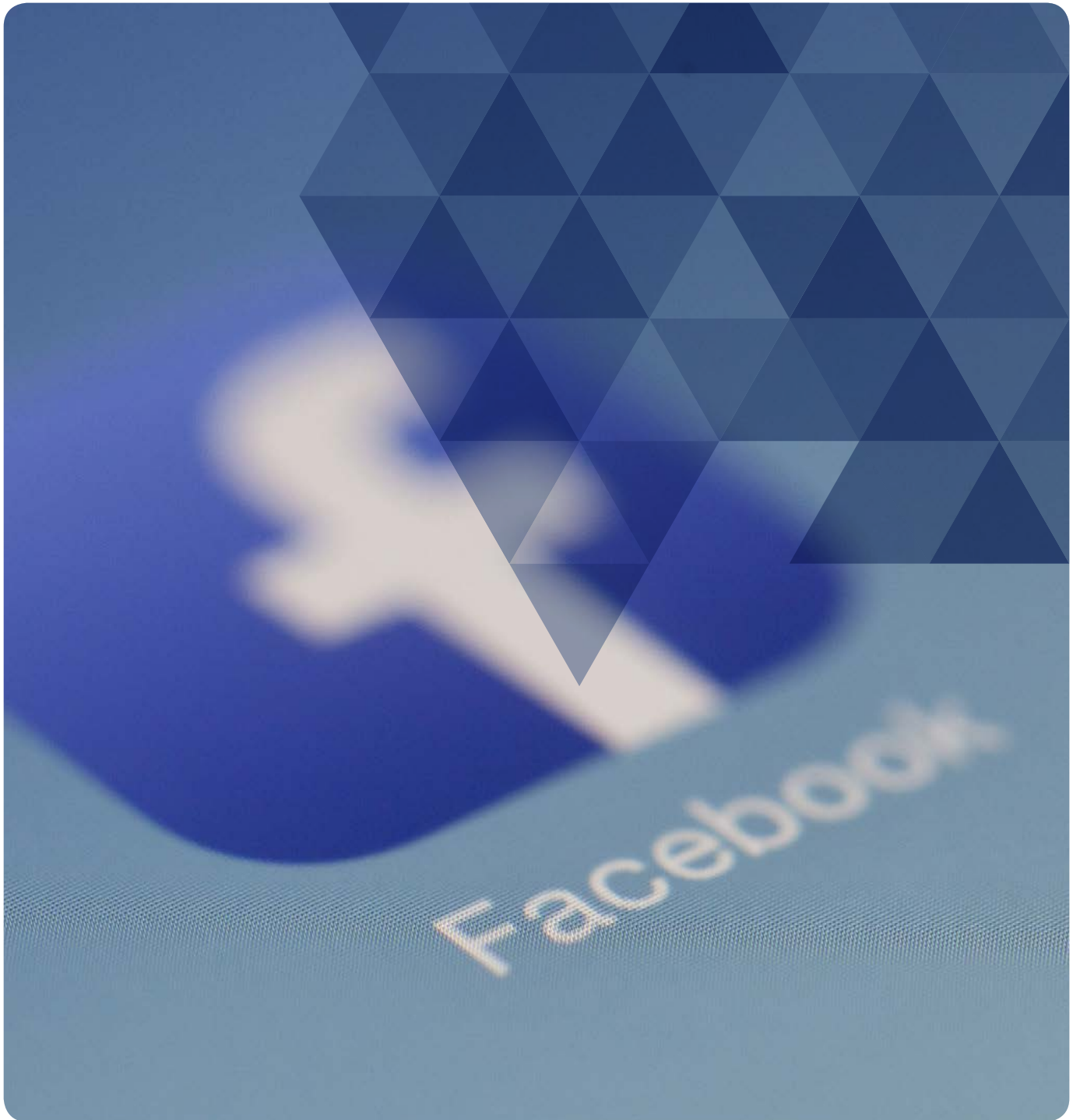


ROSS SETTLES

Facebook News Feed Changes: Impact and Actions

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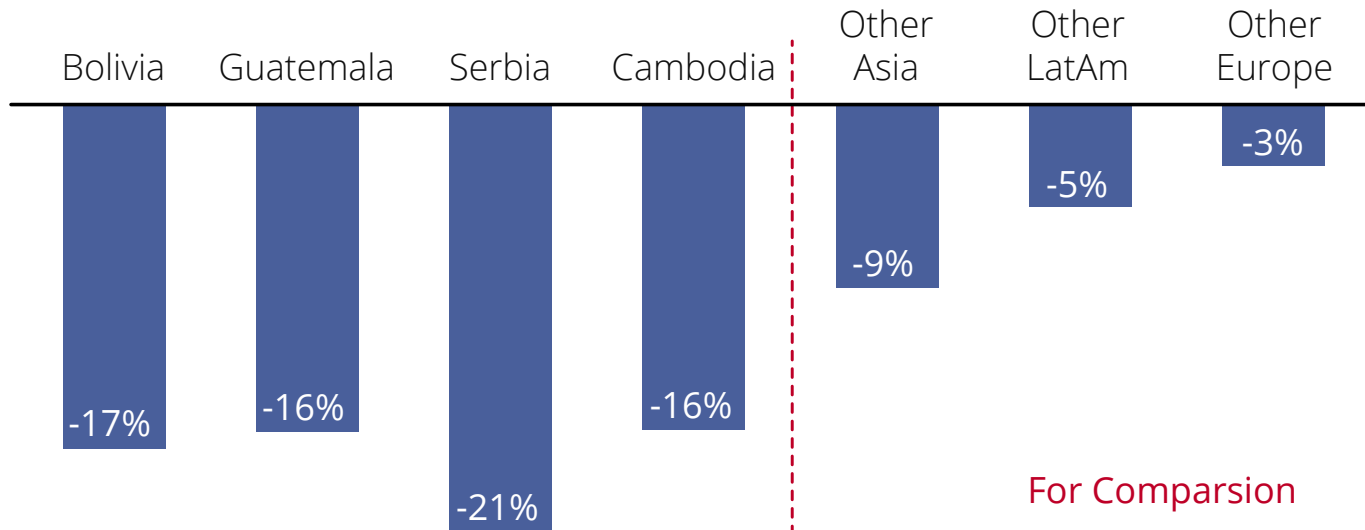


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An MDIF analysis of the impact of Facebook's Q4 2017 "Explore" News Feed test showed a steep decrease in traffic for test market publishers versus traffic changes for publishers in nearby regional markets. This report will explore the impact of the Explore changes in emerging markets, discuss the implications for the global News Feed change announced by Facebook in Q1 2018 and provide an action plan to deal with expected traffic losses.

In October 2017 Facebook announced a test in six emerging markets to create a separate feed (the Explore Feed) for public posts from media, businesses and public figures, removing these posts from the main News Feed. The experience from news media in the emerging market tests suggest that Facebook page impressions and interactions could decline by 60% or more.

Change in Facebook Contribution to Representative Sites (Year-over-Year Comparison - November 2017 to January 2018)



Source: MDIF Analysis, Google Analytics, February 2018

MDIF analyzed a group of representative news publishers and also found that the share of traffic sourced from Facebook declined more than twice as much as comparable sites in the same region. The resulting impact on traffic was also a net decline by between 10% to 20%, substantially greater than the experience of other comparable online publishers.

Though the original “Explore” test has since ended, findings from the trial likely informed Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg’s January 2018 announcement of a global change to the algorithm that determines what users see in the main news feed. In the past, the News Feed emphasized showing users relevant content and encouraging new connections between users and public pages. The new algorithm re-focuses on showing users posts that promote “more meaningful interactions” with friends and family and de-emphasizing passive posts from media, businesses and public figures. The new algorithm will roll-out globally over 2018 with its associated impacts on audience and revenue. For online publishers using Facebook’s public pages to distribute stories and advertising, the implications are a major change in the qualities of a successful post and the overall value of Facebook as a source of revenue and audience.

As Facebook introduces the changed algorithm over the remainder of 2018, online publishers will have some time to prepare and plan strategies for how to compensate for the impact of the change on their business.

There are several key steps that a media executive should take to prepare.

STEP 1:

Detail Current Facebook Strategy – What is your media’s strategy for Facebook? How does your media use Facebook to achieve your news reporting and business goals?

STEP 2:

Asses the Problem – How dependent are you on Facebook? What percentage of your traffic is from Facebook? What percentage of your revenue is dependent on Facebook?

STEP 3:

Action Planning – What actions can you take to maintain the benefits your media receives from Facebook? What actions should you take to create alternatives to Facebook?

The first step in evaluating a Facebook strategy is understanding what your media company's strategy is today. The typical media Facebook strategy has three parts:

AUDIENCE

– Using Facebook as a source of traffic.

REVENUE

– Building programmatic ad plans around the page views generated by Facebook traffic. Building native advertising campaigns that rely on Facebook for impressions and distribution.

NEWSROOM

– Using Facebook to engage the audience, generate comments, tips and discussion in support of story or program development.

For each of these, media companies need to take an inventory of current goals, uses, costs and contribution.

The second step evaluates whether each part of your Facebook strategy is measurable in revenue, audience reach and cost. By understanding the magnitude of the potential contribution, media executives can assess the impact on audience size and growth, newsroom activities like programming and story development, and finally revenue.

With an estimate of the scope, you can begin to plan a response – “The Action Plan”. Most responses can be grouped into three categories:

DIVERSIFICATION

– Looking for new audience and revenue sources that are consistent with your media's mission and goals.

BRAND AWARENESS

– Create awareness of your media's brand in order to reduce reliance on any traffic intermediar, whether social network or search engine.

ADAPTATION

– Facebook will likely continue to be a significant audience and revenue platform for online publishers. Consequently, publishers will need choose which Facebook strategies to continue and what adaptations need to be made.

In January Facebook announced that they had reached 2.15 billion monthly active users on all platforms, making them as much a feature of online publishing as "http://" and the @ sign. Facebook will continue to change its business operations to deliver more value to users and advertisers and ultimately to shareholders. Consequently, an online publisher has no choice but to have a defined strategy for what role Facebook will play in the success of their media company. The publisher must also create a clear

set of measurable goals for the strategy and then measure and adjust as the market and Facebook continue to change.

The following paper outlines the current understanding of Facebook's planned changes to the news feed, then describes some steps to evaluate the impact of the change and finally highlights information needed to create an "Action Plan" that will help mitigate the impact of the change.



WHAT HAPPENED?

Facebook Reduces Media Posts in News Feed.

During January 2018, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and other executives made a series of announcements describing changes to the main “News Feed”. The most substantial of [these announcements came from Zuckerberg](#) himself and addressed a fundamental change in the goals for user interaction with the News Feed. News Feed is the default list of posts that Facebook shows a user when they enter the site or sign into the mobile app. The changes focus on factors that determine which posts are shown to whom, at what time and in what location on Facebook. Because of the high volume of posts that can potentially be included in any user’s News Feed, the Company uses an algorithm to determine what items it believes the user and Facebook will benefit from seeing. The announced changes will impact the factors that Facebook incorporates into this algorithm.

In the past, Facebook’s news feed prioritized helping users discover relevant content either from friends or from public pages from their favorite media, brands or public figures. Beginning in January, Zuckerberg instructed the product managers working on the News Feed to re-focus their efforts on helping users create more meaningful social interactions with friends and family and around content from public pages.

Typical Mobile News Feed



Source: Facebook

“

I'M CHANGING THE GOAL I GIVE OUR PRODUCT TEAMS FROM FOCUSING ON HELPING YOU FIND RELEVANT CONTENT TO HELPING YOU HAVE MORE MEANINGFUL SOCIAL INTERACTIONS.

”

MARK ZUCKERBERG,
11 JANUARY 2018

The most significant change for publishers is the reduction of the amount of content from media, brands and public figures. The following week Zuckerberg discussed Facebook's own estimate for the change in the news feed.

In the future for posts to be included organically in the news feed, i.e. without paying for inclusion, content from media, brands or public figures will need to have the same level of user engagement as posts between friends and family.

Subsequent to Zuckerberg's post, Facebook's head of the news feed, [Adam Mosseri explained some of the changes that users could expect and the impact on content from the public pages](#). Fundamentally, Facebook will prioritize page content in the News Feed that generates active engagement over passive engagement. Facebook provides users multiple ways to engage with a particular post whether from an individual

friend or from public pages. Simple, passive engagement includes “likes and reactions”, more active engagement involves “comments and shares” and the most active engagement is direct sharing through Facebook Messenger, direct to a friend's timeline or within in a Facebook Group. Facebook will promote posts with more active engagement to the News Feed which will drive in turn more clicks, more feedback and ultimately more reach for the publisher.

Mosseri continues by pointing out that re-focusing on more engaging content, especially between friends and family, will result in less of the more passive content that is typically distributed through public pages.

“

...WE EXPECT NEWS TO MAKE UP ROUGHLY 4% OF NEWS FEED -- DOWN FROM ROUGHLY 5% TODAY. THIS IS A BIG CHANGE, BUT NEWS WILL ALWAYS BE A CRITICAL WAY FOR PEOPLE TO START CONVERSATIONS ON IMPORTANT TOPICS.

”

MARK ZUCKERBERG,
19 JANUARY 2018

“

AS WE MAKE THESE UPDATES, PAGES MAY SEE THEIR REACH, VIDEO WATCH TIME AND REFERRAL TRAFFIC DECREASE. THE IMPACT WILL VARY FROM PAGE TO PAGE, DRIVEN BY FACTORS INCLUDING THE TYPE OF CONTENT THEY PRODUCE AND HOW PEOPLE INTERACT WITH IT.

”

ADAM MOSSERI,

Mosseri underlines that not all content from pages will disappear from the News Feed. Content that sincerely and actively engages users will still receive placement in users' News Feeds. Sincere engagement is a critical element of the new algorithm. Earlier in December, Facebook announced new rules that penalize so-called [“engagement bait”](#), the artificial use of incentives or rewards to encourage users to like, share, or comment on a particular post. For example, “Comment ‘YES’ if you love Japanese food to be eligible for a free sushi dinner” is a simple example of “Comment Baiting”.

Facebook Engagement Metrics

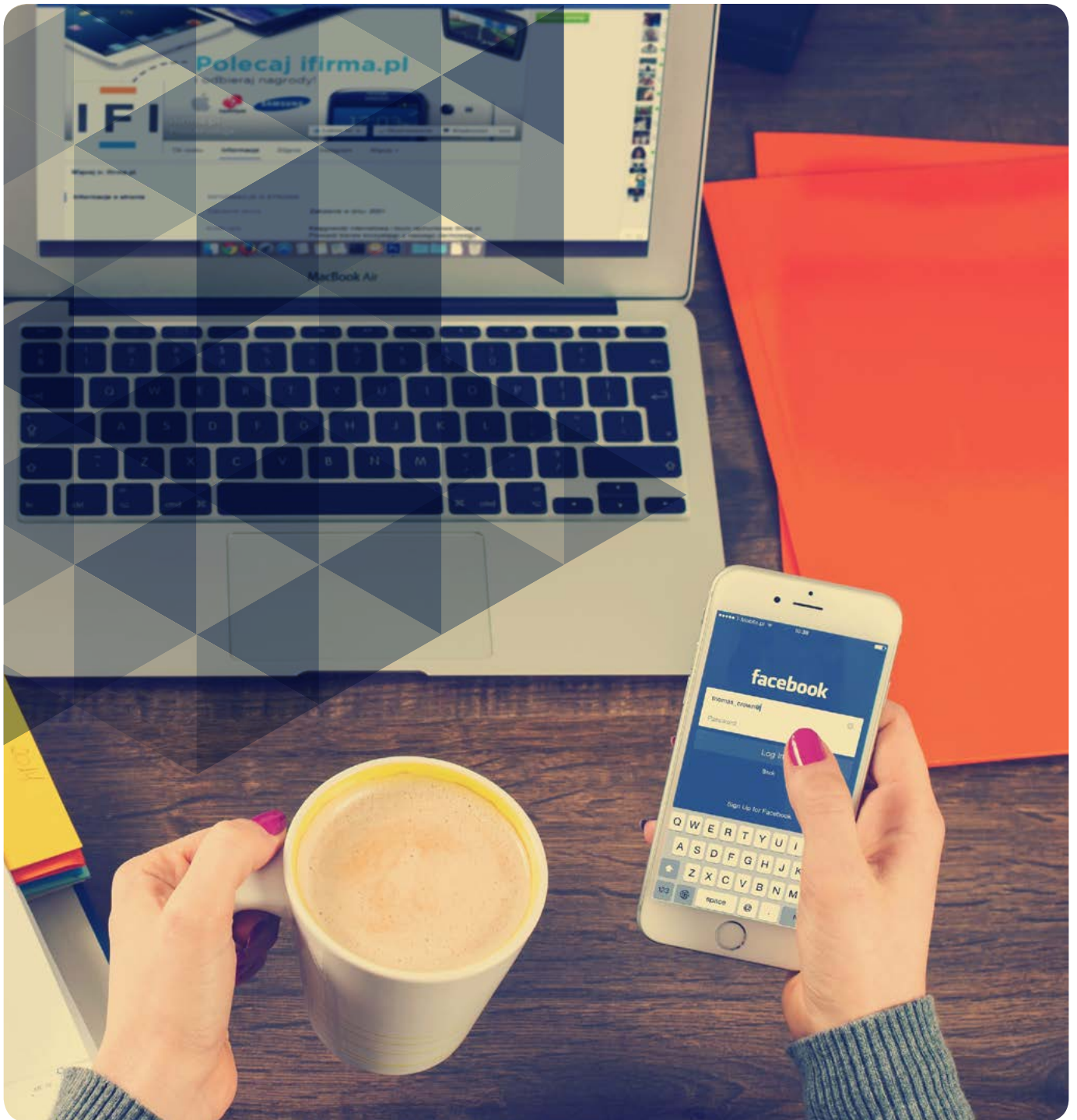


Passive

More Active



Source: Facebook



HOW BAD CAN IT BE?

Impact and “The Explore Tab” Test

Facebook’s News Feed changes will impact online publishers in two ways. First, it will change the visibility of their Facebook posts, reducing impressions and reach on Facebook. Based on Zuckerberg’s estimate, the average impact could be a decline of 20%. Secondly, it will reduce the amount of traffic Facebook refers to the page’s original site. Impact clearly varies with the publisher’s strategy for using Facebook. In the U.S. where the changes are already being implemented, Facebook interactions are down for some online publishers by 50% or more and the resulting referral traffic to publisher websites has declined sufficiently that social publishing sites like “Little Things” have been forced to shut down. (Source: [“Viral Publishers See Sharp Engagement Drops on Facebook, Digiday, 2 March 2018.”](#))

Publishers can look at the potential impact on a scale. Most publishers have already experienced changes in interactions and reach for their Facebook posts and declines in the contribution to their website traffic over the course of 2017. This change is the low end of the impact scale and varies by market and online publisher. Alternatively, publishers could experience the dramatic impact felt in the markets where Facebook tested the “Explore Tab”. Facebook conducted the test in six emerging markets – two in Central Europe (Serbia and Slovakia), two in

Asia (Cambodia and Sri Lanka) and two in Latin America (Bolivia and Guatemala). In the test markets, Facebook launched a version of the mobile app in which it removed all public page content from the default News Feed and created a new tab named “Explore” for posts from media, brands and public figures. The News Feed became exclusively posts and shares from friends and family. In these markets, some publishers reported declines in Facebook engagement of 60-80%. (Source: [“Facebook moving non-promoted posts out of news feed in trial”, The Guardian, 23 October 2017.”](#)) The test began in October 2017 and concluded at the beginning of March 2018. (Source: Facebook Newsroom, [23 October 2017](#) and [1 March 2018](#)).

The direct impact on publisher Facebook pages was dramatic. [Filip Struhárik](#) from the Slovakian online publisher [Denník N](#) documented the impact of the Explore Tab test on their Facebook page. Based on Struhárik’s calculation, Denník N experienced nearly a 50% drop in impressions on the site’s Facebook page. (Source: [“Less News in the News Feed? These 8 Charts Will Show You What Can Happen”, Filip Struhárik, Medium - 14 January 2018.”](#)) Consequently, all other page metrics experienced similar declines, impacting Denník N’s user and audience acquisition from Facebook.

The ultimate impact for media using Facebook pages as a traffic source has been a decline in the amount of traffic that Facebook sends to media websites. Denník N experienced a decline in traffic in November 2017 of 3%, and 6% in December. Facebook as a source of traffic for Denník N also declined substantially with less than 30% of the site's traffic from Facebook in December 2017. (Source: [“Less News in the News Feed? These 8 Charts Will Show You What Can Happen”](#), Filip Struhárik, Medium - 14 January 2018.)

When MDIF examined the experience with news publishers in other test markets, we discovered similar patterns. The share of traffic (sessions) generated from Facebook fell more than twice as much as it did for publishers in similar markets with no test. (See [illustration on page 14](#)).

Taking a longer view of the impact, MDIF also looked at the changes in total traffic (sessions) comparing full year 2017 with full year 2016. Traffic in the test markets declined by over 10%, while comparable news sites in other non-test markets mostly experienced traffic increases.

Facebook impression and reach impacts could vary from the general declining trend in Facebook impressions publishers have been experiencing over the past year up to the 50% drop reported in Slovakia and other test markets, with Zuckerberg's 20% decline estimate being a midpoint.

Traffic and impressions drive revenue and Facebook's changes will certainly impact revenue. First, programmatic advertising will experience an immediate decline reflecting the decline in page views generated by referral traffic from Facebook. In addition, many online media have expanded their advertising efforts into native

Explore Tab Example: Highlighted in Red



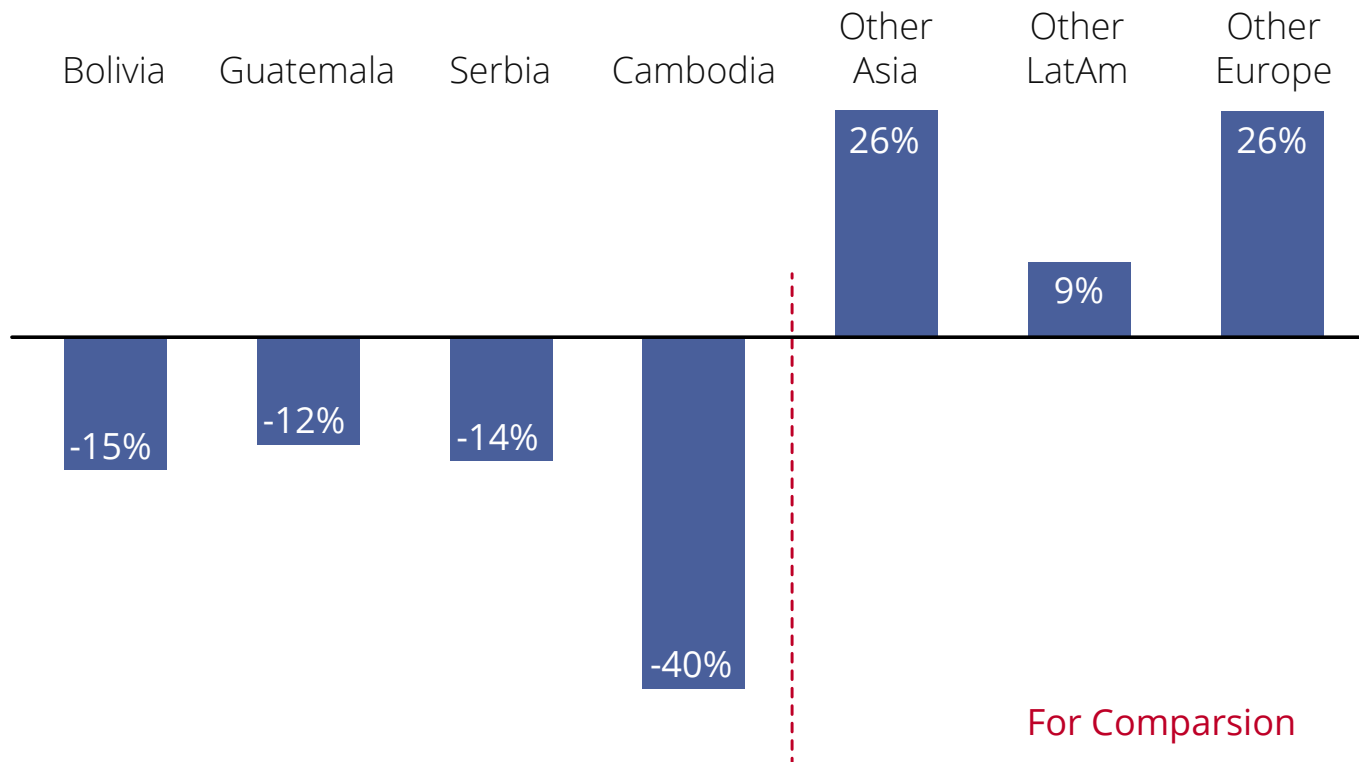
Source: Guatemalan Facebook User

advertising programs that depend on Facebook pages and News Feed distribution. Without a significant change in the publisher's approach to these native advertising programs, effectiveness will decline and advertiser interest and revenue will drop. At the same time, the costs of promoting a post into the newsfeed will likely rise as the demand for Facebook promotions increases and available inventory declines.

For special Facebook formats like video and Instant Articles, the potential impact varies. Adam Mosseri, the head of News Feed for Facebook,

specifically mentioned that video watch time for passive posts would likely decline. US social video publisher [Attn](#) has experienced steep declines in video watch time and engagement, according to a recent report from Digiday. (Source: "[Facebook of Bust: Facebook publisher Attn stands its ground after news-feed change](#)", Digiday, 6 March 2018.) The impact on media publishing to Facebook using the mobile friendly Instant Articles format is still unclear. Some publishers expect the posts in Instant Article format will receive preference for inclusion in the News Feed, though a clear conclusion on impact still awaits analysis.

Total Session Change 2017 vs 2016



Source: MDIF Analysis, Google Analytics, February 2018

Estimating the impact of Facebook's News Feed will be important to establishing an action plan for changes in Facebook page reach and engagement, traffic referral and resulting revenue. The range of outcomes will reflect:

MARKET DEPENDENCE:

- How dominant is Facebook in your market? Are there alternative social networks or sources of traffic and revenue?

FACEBOOK DEPENDENCE:

- What percent of traffic does your website receive from Facebook?
- What percent of revenue is dependent on the reach of your Facebook Page?

FACEBOOK STRATEGY:

- How actively does your media manage and monitor Facebook page posts?
- Do you have the resources to engage more directly through Messenger, Groups?



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Making an Action Plan.

Online publishers need to take a series of steps to build an action plan to address potential impacts from the change in the News Feed. First, they should detail their current Facebook strategy. "How does your media business use Facebook to achieve your news and business goals?" Second, what is your exposure - "Where is your business most vulnerable to a decline in Facebook reach or engagement or in the amount of traffic sent to your website?". Finally, build an action plan to remedy any adverse change that your media may experience from the current or future changes in Facebook.

Detail Your Current Strategy.

As Facebook has grown, especially in emerging markets, online publishers have embraced it for many reasons, creating a web of benefits and sometime frustrations for their media business. Often times the Facebook strategy is built up from many individual functional efforts managed separately without interaction, planning or documentation. Now is the time to take inventory and create a full picture of your media's Facebook strategy.

Online media generally look to Facebook for three different things:

TRAFFIC:

Facebook as a source of referral traffic and pageviews

REVENUE: Revenue from

- Facebook Audience Network
- Content marketing programs distributed through Facebook

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT:

Facebook as a source for content - news programs, stories and commentary

In addition, some media use Facebook for more specialised reasons including Messenger and Groups for internal communications, audience profiling and polling through Facebook pages for both newsroom and advertiser use, event promotion, live streaming of audio or video, among others. Depending on your media's goals and business operations, all of these functions could be core to your Facebook strategy. With your audit of Facebook uses complete, prioritize the relative importance of each to your news operations and overall business.

Measure Your Exposure.

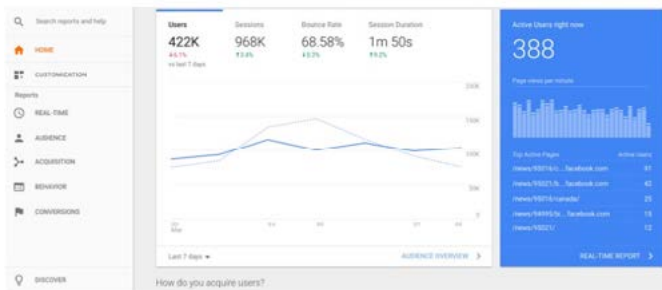
Publishers can now analyze the top priority items in the strategy and determine which are most vulnerable to a steep decline in Facebook's contribution. For traffic, the measure is straightforward and easily calculated from Google Analytics.

For Google Analytics, there are many ways to find the percent of traffic received from Facebook. The simplest starts from the home screen of your Google Analytics account.

1. Start with the Home Screen, which includes multiple graphic displays - at the top a 7-day and real-time traffic summary; the second display is acquisition.
2. Scroll to acquisition
3. choose "Referrals" as report type, which gives specific referring URLs
a) on the bottom left use the calendar control to choose the period, then
b) click produce "Acquisition Report"
4. Search "Facebook"

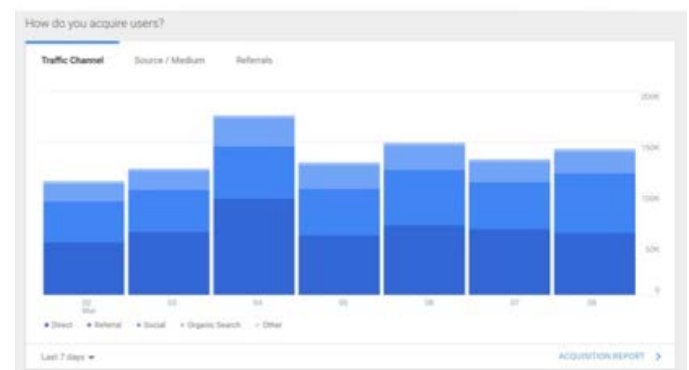
Facebook Session Referrals

STEP 1: GOOGLE ANALYTICS HOME PAGE

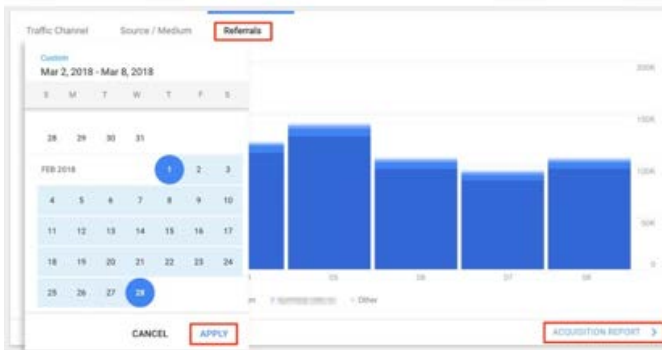


Source: Google Analytics

STEP 3: CHOSE "REFERRAL", DATES



STEP 2: SCROLL TO ACQUISITION REPORT



STEP 4: SEARCH "FACEBOOK"

Source	Users	New Users	Sessions	Source Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Ecommerce Conversion Rate	Transactions
Facebook	456,760	190,779	867,956	3.76%	2.76	00:01:27	0.00%	0
1. m.facebook.com	426,220	178,882	795,182	3.79%	2.73	00:01:23	0.00%	0
2. m.facebook.com	24,921	8,679	48,410	4.17%	2.89	00:01:48	0.00%	0
3. facebook.com	7,618	2,292	15,266	1.22%	3.90	00:02:50	0.00%	0
4. i.facebook.com	1,868	797	3,523	3.04%	3.99	00:03:16	0.00%	0
5. web.facebook.com	723	119	1,479	1.76%	3.93	00:02:36	0.00%	0
6. mobile.facebook.com	39	11	73	1.37%	2.26	00:08:48	3.00%	0
7. iphone.facebook.com	4	3	10	0.00%	2.60	00:04:50	0.00%	0
8. touch.facebook.com	4	0	6	0.00%	3.33	00:07:01	0.00%	0

For revenue, impact calculations will depend on a couple of sources, different for each type of revenue - Facebook Audience Network, on-site programmatic advertising and directly sold native advertising.

FACEBOOK AUDIENCE NETWORK

- Find total revenue and impressions served for the period in the Audience Network report page.

ON-SITE PROGRAMMATIC ADVERTISING

- Refer to the share of page views generated from Facebook from the Google Analytics exercise above. If the programmatic ads are served uniformly across the site, a simple rule of thumb applies the percentage of pages sourced from Facebook to the programmatic advertising revenue amount for a quick estimate of revenue exposure.

NATIVE ADVERTISING

- This may require an account-by-account revenue. Identify revenue from native advertising programs that depend on Facebook for distribution. Also, identify any “marketing” expenses, like “boosting”, related to delivering the advertising. Together this will deliver the amount of advertising dependent on Facebook engagement and the cost for delivering the engagement.

As Facebook reduces the organic (non-boosted) reach of public pages, the demand for Facebook ad units either in the News Feed or in the surrounding areas will increase and prices will certainly follow suit. Simultaneously, Facebook has predicted that the News Feed change will cause total minutes on the social network to decline, resulting in lower supply. The combination of higher demand from media, brand and public figure pages seeking to maintain exposure (at least during some transition) through purchased inclusion in the News Feed (boosting) and the decline in supply will result in a jump in pricing for boosted posts. In the US where the News Feed changes are already rolling out, AdStage, a marketing automation service and Facebook Advertising Partner, found

that cost per thousand impressions on Facebook jumped by 122% in January and another 77% in February. (Source: [“Facebook ad costs spiked higher after a big change to its News Feed algorithm”, Recode, 7 March 2018.](#))

Finally, for audience engagement that contributes to programming or story development, editors and producers should assume that engagement levels will decline with reach. News organizations should identify what techniques - titles, photos, actions - contribute to increasing engagement and understand the related costs. These costs will likely rise as post reach and engagement decline.

Develop an Action Plan.

Action plans to address Facebook's change to the News Feed algorithm usually combine elements of three categories:

1. Diversification - Finding new traffic and audience sources
2. Brand Awareness - Increasing brand awareness and direct audience engagement
3. Adaptation - Identifying new ways to use Facebook to achieve your media's goals

Media's ability to diversify traffic sources will vary substantially by market. Worldwide, Facebook dominates social media traffic with about 76% of total social media traffic in February 2018 (Source: Statcounter.com). But in some markets, smaller, more targeted social networks allow media to cultivate new audiences that can replace part of the decline in Facebook traffic and engagement. Global platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, Snap or Instagram offer one opportunity. But local markets will often have long-standing social platforms like Malaysia's lowyat.com discussion group or Indonesia's detik.com which can also contribute to closing the gap.

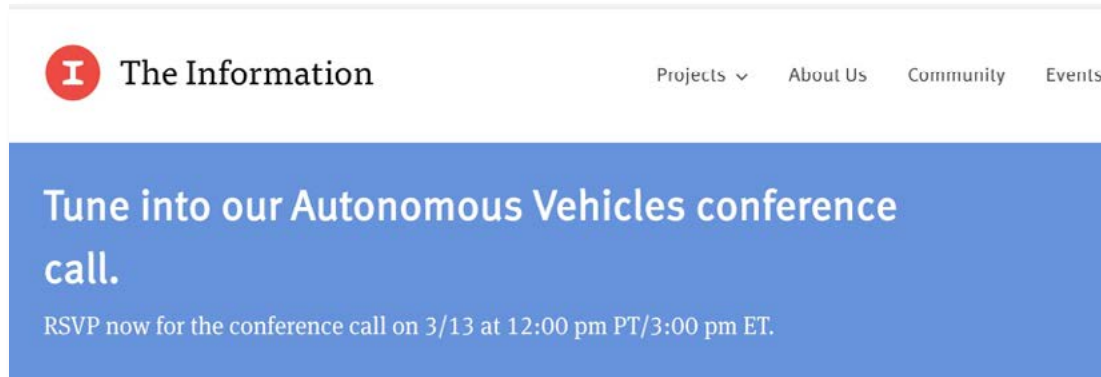
One of the most common diversification strategies, and one that supports overall brand awareness, is email. Increasingly online publishers are developing newsletters to push stories and advertising to targeted audiences. Moving the reader's focus from Facebook where the publisher has little control to email where the publisher and reader have more control.

Publishers will also need to re-focus on search engine marketing and optimization, reviewing their websites to ensure the sites are designed and engineered to facilitate search engine referrals. Search engine optimization and search engine marketing still contribute substantial amounts of traffic to websites worldwide and the amount is increasing. According to a recent report from the technology news website Recode, Google Mobile Search was the dominant source of traffic for websites in early February 2018, with the number of pages sent to websites up nearly 40% versus January 2017. Recode attributes the shift from Facebook to Google as a reflection of the increase in publishers adopting Google's open source Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) format, which increases the speed and accessibility of web pages accessed through mobile search. (Source: ["Google is replacing Facebook's traffic to publishers", Recode.net, 15 February 2018.](#)) After two years, the Google-led AMP effort is taking the general findings and successes from AMP and generalizing them in a future mobile web platform standard. If the standard is adopted by the global web standards body World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), then all mobile pages will receive the same treatment as today's AMP Pages, contributing to continued growth in the amount of traffic referred from mobile search engines like Google.

One of the most important types of diversification an online publisher can invest in is themselves. Increasingly publishers are investing in strategies that emphasize their own brands, authors and programs. One of the more common efforts is combining online and offline efforts, like major events or conference calls. One example is business and technology news site The Information's regular series of conference calls

which link their audience with their reporters on specific topics that underscore the importance of the brand.

Building Brand Awareness and Direct Traffic - Example “The Information”



Source: [The Information](#)

While diversification and brand building can help lower online media's dependence on Facebook, the social network's 2 billion users and continuing evolution will make adapting to Facebook's changes one of the more important aspects of an Action Plan. To start, online publishers can recognize the change and communicate directly to current followers on Facebook, informing them that the amount of content they will see in the future will decrease. Then, publishers can give instructions on how to instruct Facebook to keep a publisher's posts in a user's news feed. Users need to visit the publisher's page, and then select the "Following" tab and then select "See First" option. This action instructs Facebook to include posts from this page in the user's news feed.

Because the new Facebook feed will emphasize media posts that create more meaningful interactions, publishers will need to adapt their past approach to communicating on Facebook. First, publishers should review their current social media statistics on Facebook Insights and look for patterns of past engagement. Are there types of posts that tend to generate more engagement, especially the active engagement that Facebook will value in the changed news feed? Patterns may exist by time of day, or day-of-week; by type of subject matter or format (text, photo, video, other). These patterns establish a framework for future posting. Rather than posting everything passively to the feed, social media editors will now need to be more selective looking to post only what and when their followers are most likely to engage.

In addition to managing the volume and pattern of posting, publishers will want to look for more ways to engage with Facebook users. The most direct way is to actively manage the [notifications section](#) of their Facebook Page. Page notifications include a summary of all comments, shares, reviews and check-ins for a page. The notifications page allows social media managers to actively manage as well as respond and build engaged conversations with followers.

Publishers can go one step further and use Facebook to develop small, enthusiastic communities of influencers. One recently

upgraded Facebook tool to engage influential users is [Facebook Groups](#). Upgraded in October 2017, Facebook groups can now be tied directly to a Facebook Page and then moderated and analyzed through a new Groups Insights page. A publisher's online page may simultaneously develop multiple groups with themes or targets for their most engaged followers. Social media managers can organize groups by topic (auto, news, celebrity, ...) or by particular ongoing story or trend (elections, women's rights, ...), but for groups to be successful, posting and moderation needs to be regular and thoughtful. Simply cross-posting stories is unlikely to be sufficient.

Facebook's "See First" Function



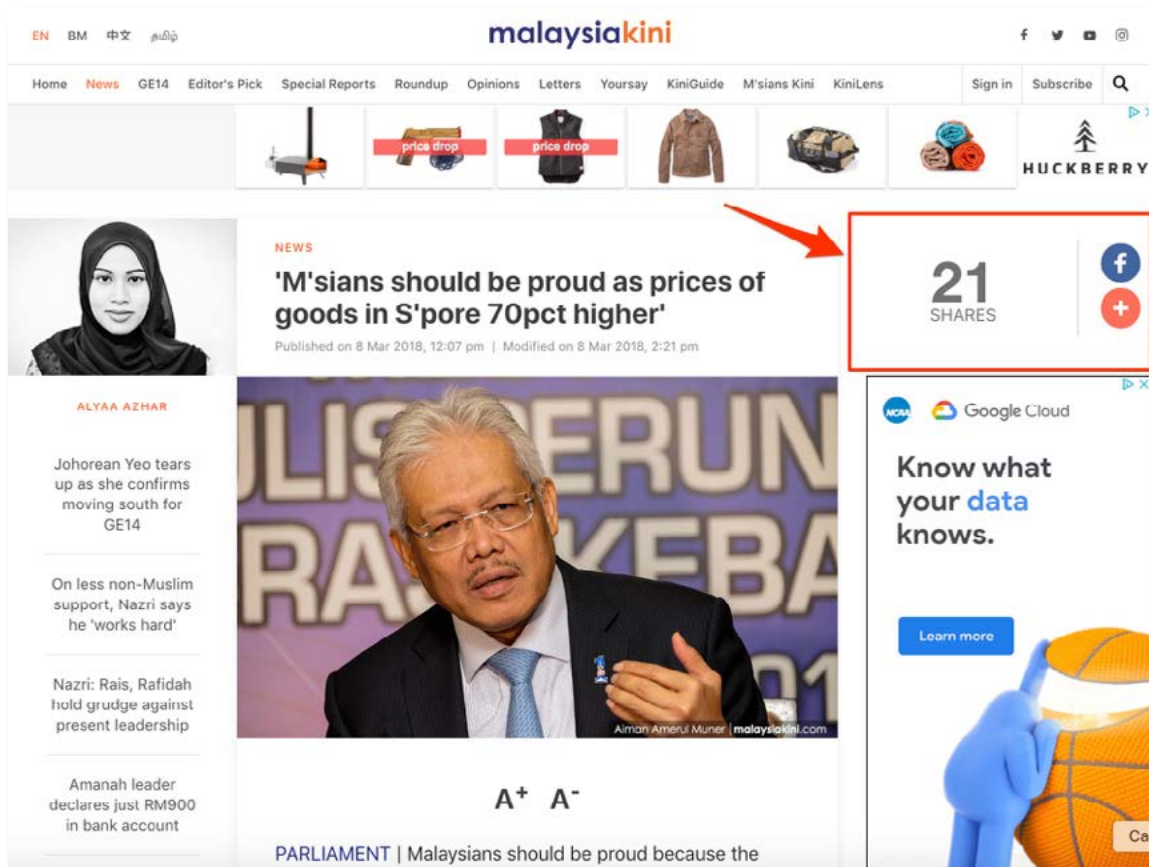
Source: Facebook

Facebook is recommending live streaming video with related event posting as an alternative to passive video posts. Adam Mosseri states that “live videos often lead to discussion among viewers on Facebook – in fact, live videos on average get six times as many interactions as regular videos”. (Source: [Adam Mosseri, 11 January 2018.](#))

Publishers should also look for techniques to encourage readers and viewers of content on

their websites and mobile apps to share and comment on Facebook. Facebook provides a long list of [“Social Plugins”](#) that can help drive engagement on your website to Facebook. The two most common plugins are “Share”, which places a button to share and comment on a particular piece of content from your website and the Facebook Comments plugin which substitutes for on-site commenting systems. In both cases, page design and product management are key

MalaysiaKini’s Sharing Widget



The screenshot shows the MalaysiaKini website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for Home, News, GE14, Editor's Pick, Special Reports, Roundup, Opinions, Letters, Yoursay, KiniGuide, M'sians Kini, and KiniLens. A search bar and social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram) are also present. Below the navigation is a banner for HUCKBERRY with various clothing items and "price drop" tags. The main content area features a news article titled "'M'sians should be proud as prices of goods in S'pore 70pct higher'" by ALYAA AZHAR. The article is published on 8 Mar 2018, 12:07 pm and modified on 8 Mar 2018, 2:21 pm. A red arrow points to a sharing widget on the right side of the article, which displays "21 SHARES" and includes a Facebook share button and a plus sign for additional sharing options. Below the article is a large image of a man in a suit, identified as Aiman Amerul Munir, with a rating of "A+ A-". To the right of the article is a Google Cloud advertisement with the text "Know what your data knows." and a "Learn more" button.

Source: MalaysiaKini.com

to maximizing the results. Share buttons can be embedded from multiple plugin or widget creators like [“Add This”](#). But uniquely designed and integrated sharing can encourage interaction. MalaysiaKini, the largest online news outlet in Malaysia, has created a uniquely visible sharing element at the top of each story.

Whether on Facebook or linking a publisher’s website or app to Facebook, developing a set of tools and techniques that reflect the content, audience and revenue requirements of a media site will help maximize traffic and engagement going forward.



SUMMARY:

Facebook will continue to be a leading source of audience, traffic and revenue for online publishers. But as the market changes, it will continue to evolve the tools, metrics and algorithms that define the platform and provide value to its over 2 billion users. During the first two months of 2018, Facebook has made other important announcements concerning the News Feed that remain in testing in the US. These US developments will evolve and likely roll-out globally in the coming months. First, Facebook is testing a new social poll to evaluate the trustworthiness of news sources. News sources that online users recognize and find trustworthy will receive priority in the News Feed. (Source: [“News Feed FYI: Helping Ensure News on Facebook Is From Trusted Sources”, 19 January 2018.](#)) Second, Facebook will prioritize local news sources in the News Feed, so audiences “can see topics that have a direct impact on you and your community and discover what’s happening in your local area”. (Source: [“News Feed FYI: More Local News on Facebook”, 29 January 2018.](#)) Publishers face the challenge of how to stay up to date with these changes, understand the unique local impact on their audience and revenue, and then develop strategies and action plans to respond to them.

For most publishers, this means developing a robust set of traffic and revenue sources in addition to Facebook and re-investing in brand

awareness and audience value. Finally publishers must also quickly understand the implications of any Facebook change and then adopt the tools and techniques that make the most sense for the media’s business, audience and news goals.

In the case of Facebook’s most recent change to emphasize content’s role in creating meaningful social connections, publishers will want to:

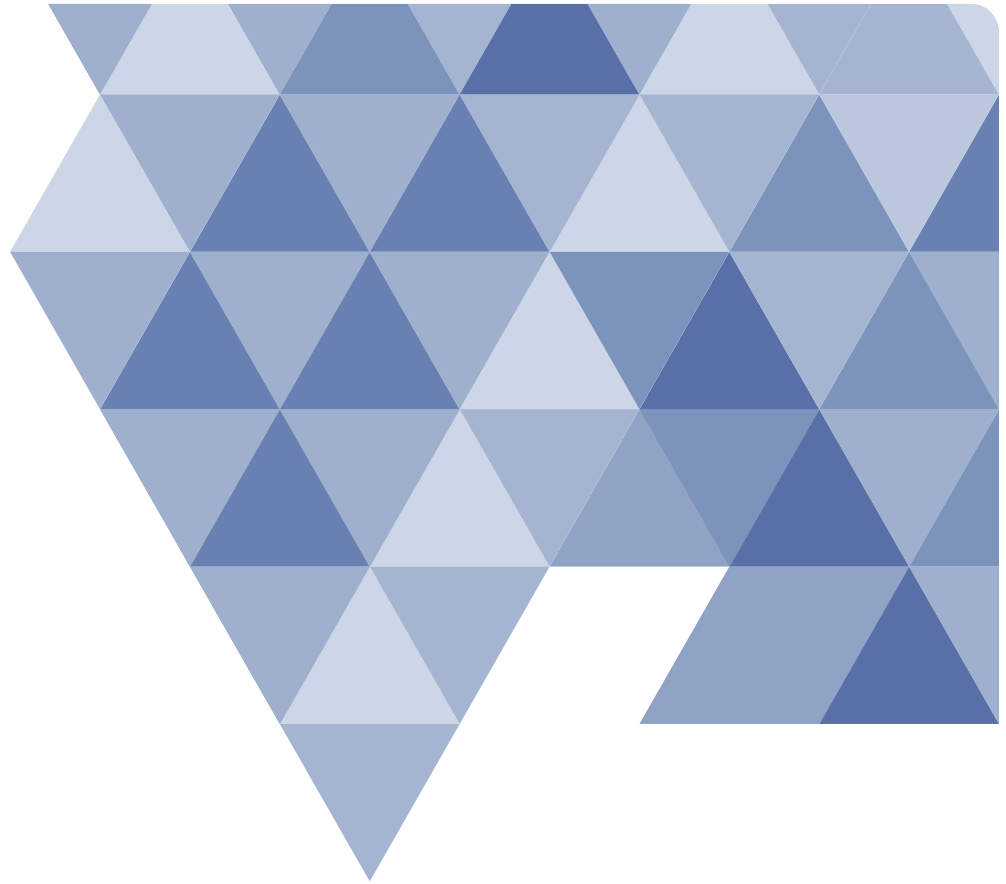
- Educate followers on the change and ways that the follower can compensate for the change.
- Understand their current posting behavior and distill the techniques currently in use that achieve the goal of more active engagement.
- Evaluate adopting new posting techniques that have a proven value in engaging audiences like notification management, targeted influencer groups, and live video.
- Review their website/app design for areas to use Facebook “social plugins” to encourage engagement.

Publishers should also evaluate their target audiences for alternative sources of traffic and engagement, reducing the reliance on Facebook as a source of traffic, engagement and revenue.

Finally, publishers with a heavy dependence on Facebook should evaluate creating a set of Facebook oriented key performance indicators

(KPIs), like percent of sessions or page views from Facebook. Regularly tracking these KPIs will make publishers aware of any significant change in their relationship with Facebook. Better to see the change coming than to try and catch up after the change is already implemented.





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