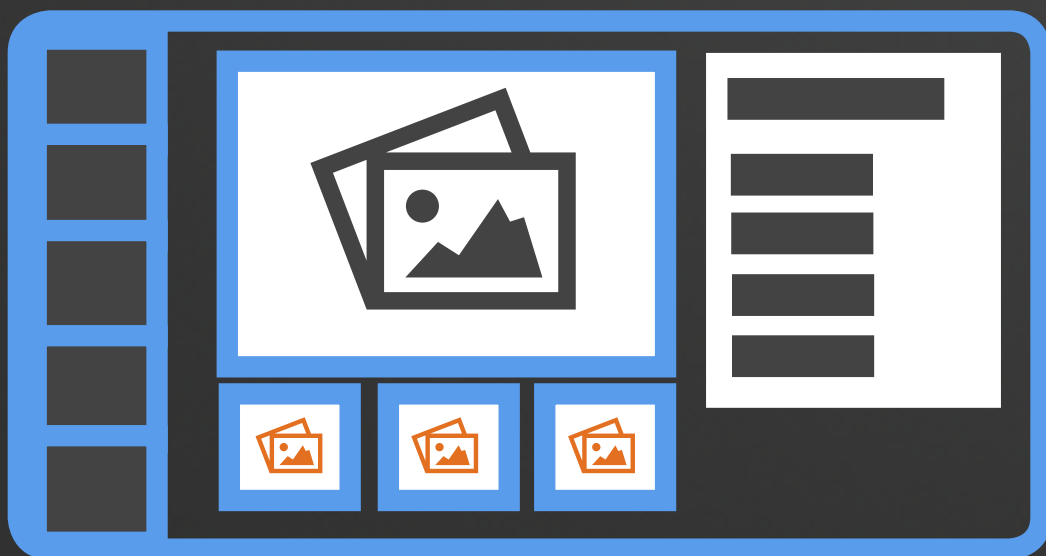


HOW FACEBOOK'S NEW NEWS FEED **CHANGES** YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY.





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Written and Designed By Anum Hussain

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Introduction.

On March 7, 2013, Facebook announced the biggest change to News Feed in its seven-year history. During the opening of this announcement, CEO Mark Zuckerberg shared how almost [50% of News Feed content today is photos and visual content](#).

Naturally, Facebook took this information and translated it into a new, visual-focused, News Feed design. These News Feed improvements have serious implications on how brands are engaged with on Facebook, and what content these brands need to be posting for ultimate Facebook success.

How do these changes impact Facebook's News Feed algorithm? What do these changes mean for marketers? And how does this change your content strategy? That's where this guide will help.

This deep dive will review the unveiled changes to Facebook's News Feed, how the News Feed algorithm works, and what immediate marketing takeaways are clear in order for you to adapt your content strategy.

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- 17** HOW CONTENT APPEARS IN USER NEWS FEEDS.
- 24** 8 MARKETING TAKEAWAYS TO ALIGN YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY WITH THE NEW NEWS FEED.

A RECAP OF FACEBOOK'S NEWS FEED ANNOUNCEMENT.

A Recap of Facebook's Big Announcement.

On March 7, 2013, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the biggest change to the Facebook News Feed in its seven-year history. Zuckerberg emphasized the importance of giving the world the “best personalized newspaper in the world.”

That inspiration led to the creation of a multi-news feed, visually engaging, Facebook makeover. The makeover comes in three major parts:

 Rich, visually engaging stories  Choice of different feeds  Mobile consistency and experience

Let's dive deeper into each of these parts.

“We want to give everyone in the world the best personalized newspaper in the world.”

-Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook CEO

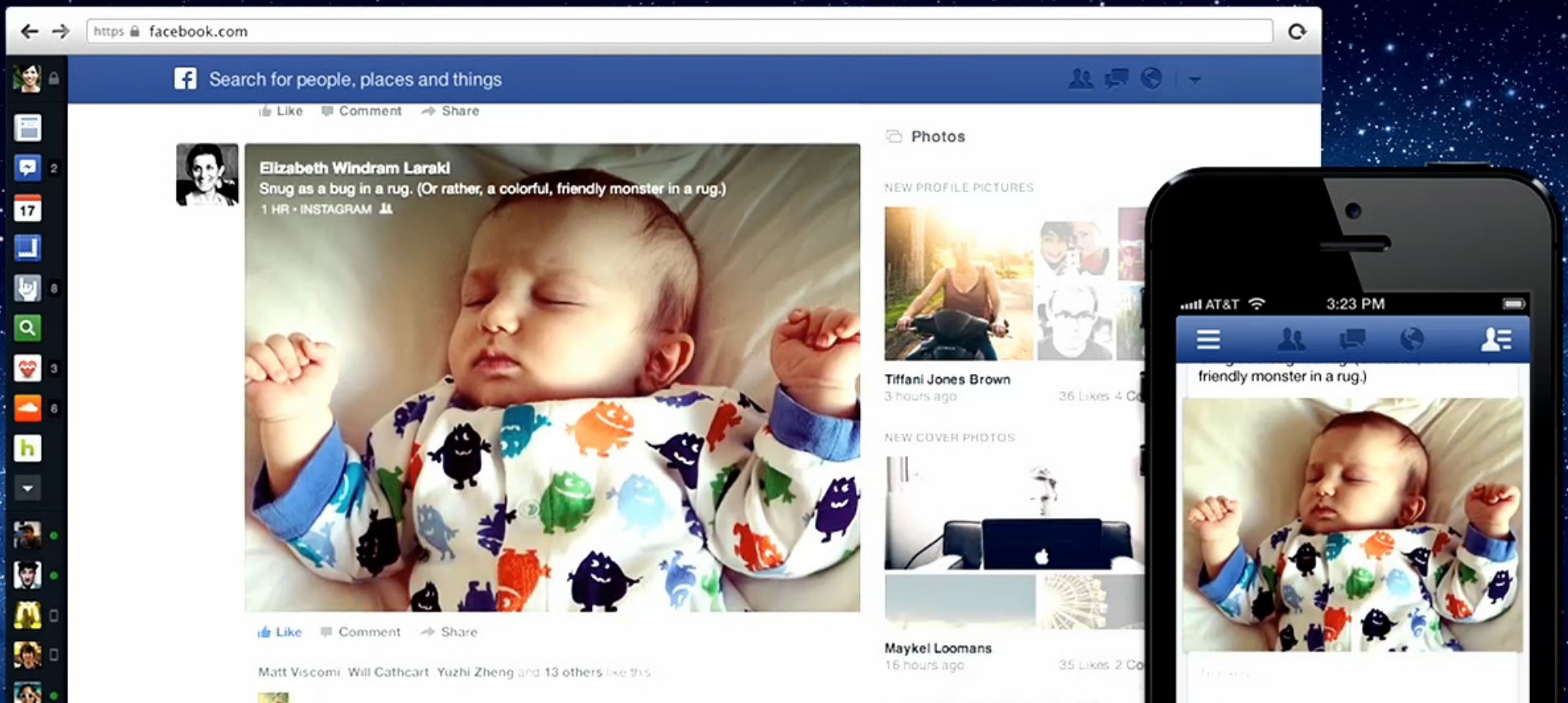
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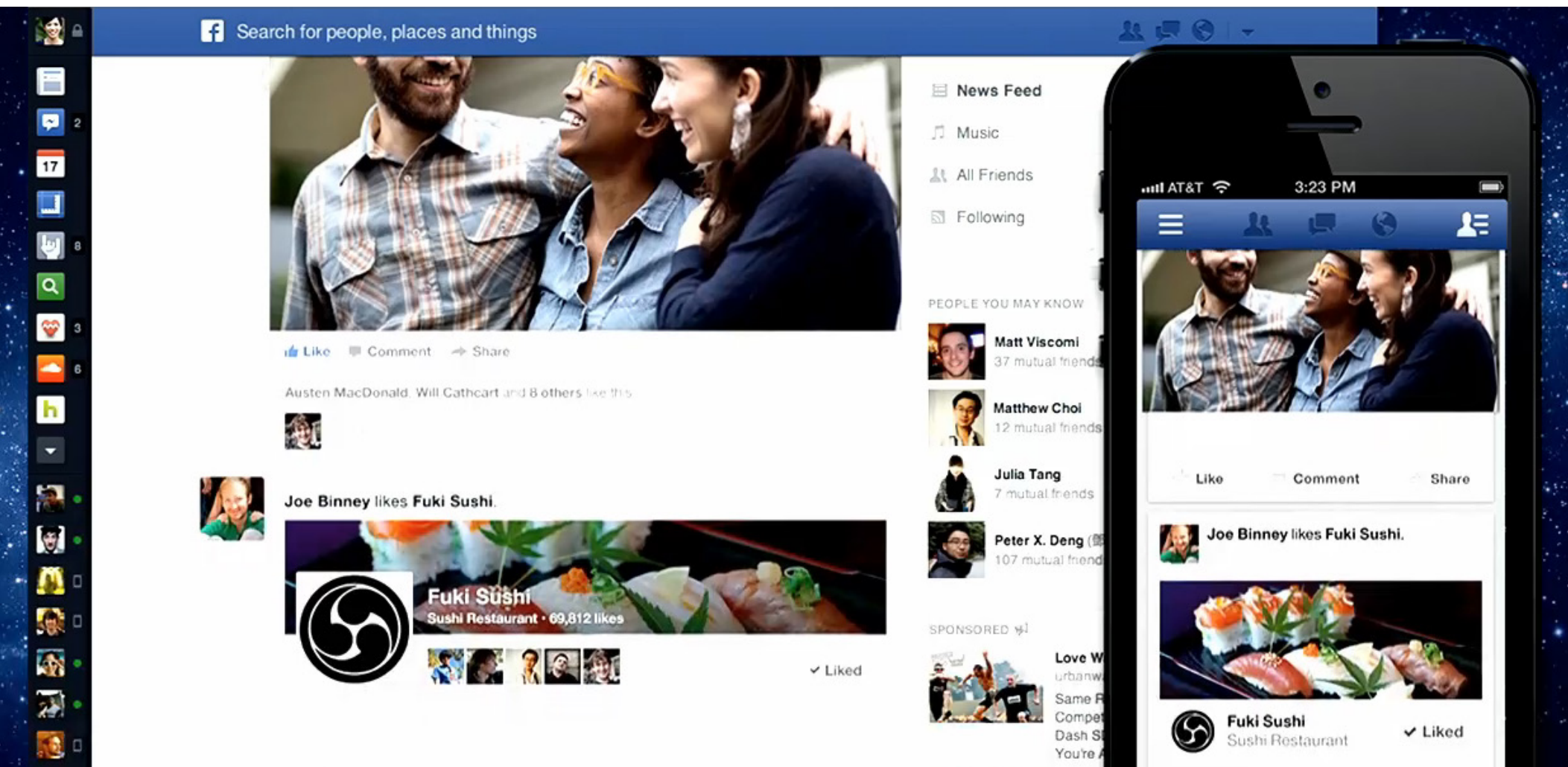
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Rich, Visually Engaging Stories.

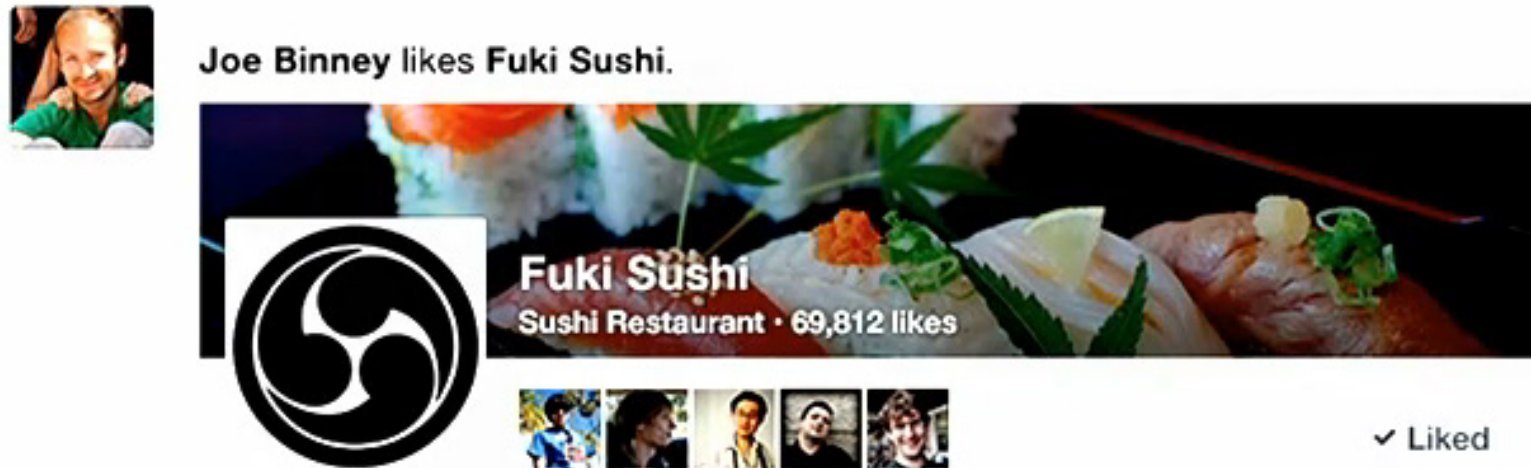
Visuals on Facebook are now much more enticing. With the explosion of visual content, this comes as no surprise. In fact, [90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual](#), and [visuals are processed 60,000X faster in the brain than text](#). Facebook has capitalized on such trends and information, as you can see in the screen shot below.



The first thing you'll notice on the new News Feed is the obvious enlargement and enhancement in the way visual content is displayed. When you upload a photo through your page, it comes up much larger than ever before. The purpose of this is to put the spotlight on each particular user or page, one at a time. The question is: What will your brand do with this spotlight? We'll clue you in on some hot optimization tips later in this guide, so stay tuned!



In addition to photos that are uploaded and posted as a status update, there have been some visual changes to the way users interact with your brand page. For instance, in the old News Feed, if someone 'Liked' your page, your brand's logo or 'profile photo' would show up. This would sometimes include a featured page post to go along with the story. Now, this story shows up a little differently:



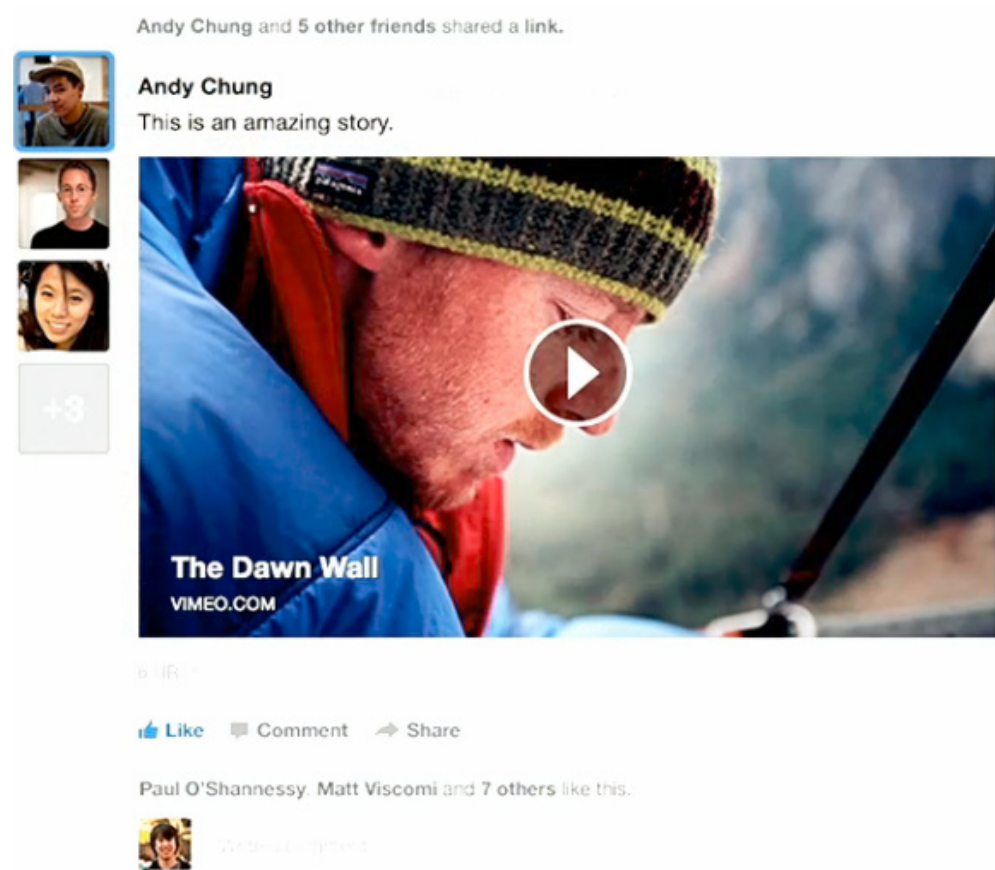
You can see that elements of the timeline layout have been brought to the News Feed. Your cover photo is now more important than ever. What do users learn about your brand just from your cover image? Will they get a sense of what you sell? What you value? What you believe in? Under the cover image story, you see the faces of other people who like your page too. This helps users recognize which brands their friends are connecting with.

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Those same faces you see under your brand's cover image could easily be found on the left side of a photo or video post. Previously, video posts would show up much smaller and be much less significant in the News Feed. You might remember the way link posts used to look -- well, videos were featured in the same way.

Now, videos are much more pronounced, featured in exactly the same manner that images are featured. You can get a sense of what this looks like in the image to the right:



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The small images you see aligning the sides of these News Feed stories are something you'll want to pay attention to as you're navigating this guide. This is because the new design caters to content that has been shared frequently within a certain person's network. In the example previously, you saw a video that was shared by five different people, and by clicking on each face, you could see the activity and commentary that was left by each user.

A similar concept applies to stories that are popular both within and outside of the Facebook platform:

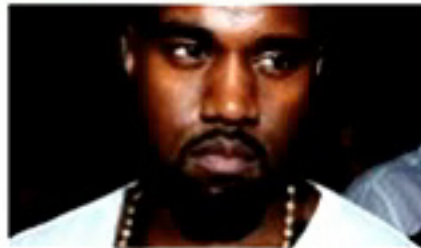


Recent Articles about Taylor Swift



Top 10 pop song 'goat editions': Taylor Swift, Kanye West, Bon Jovi

Share 5,936 Shares



Kanye West Disses Taylor Swift...Again! on Cambio

Share 5,522 Shares

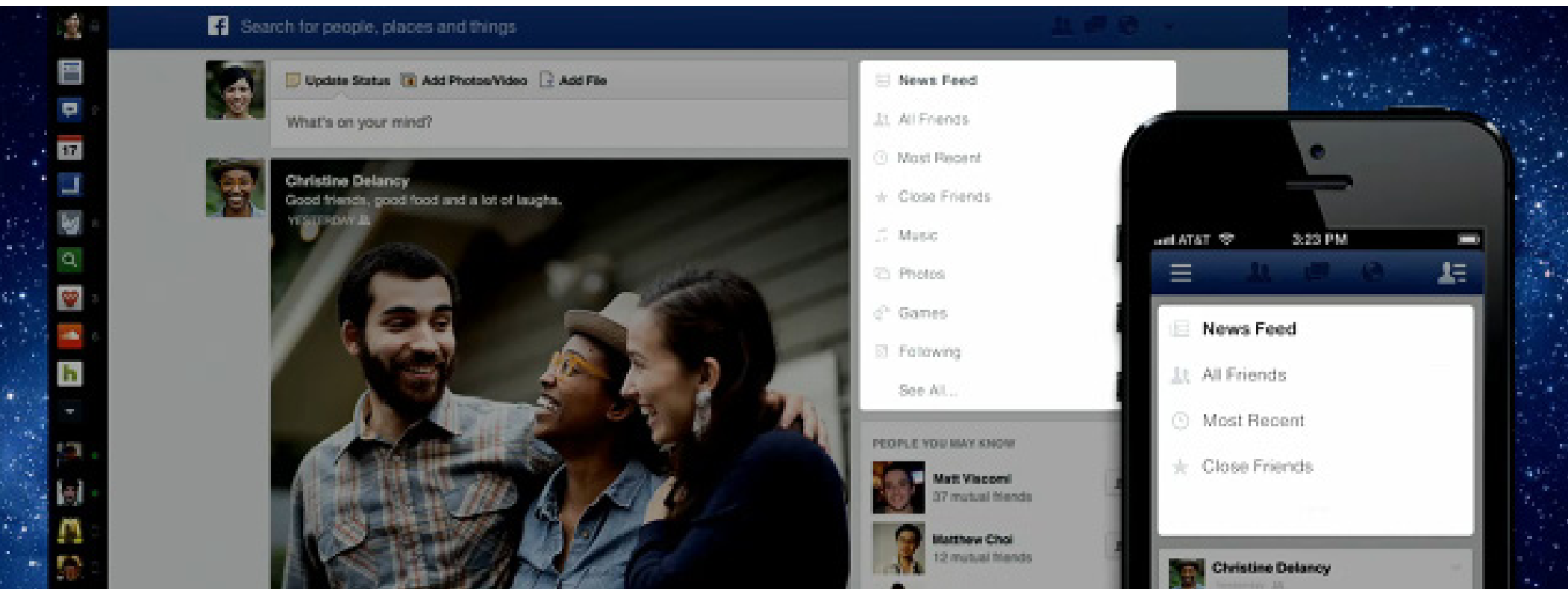


Taylor Swift's New Song About Feminism Is Pretty Catchy (And Blunt)

Share 4,942 Shares

Choice of Different Feeds.

The second new feature announcement from Facebook is “Choice of Feeds,” or the ability to toggle between different feeds of information by topics. It’s inspired by the idea that people’s News Feeds should include a mix of content from family and friends as well as news and information from the pages of businesses and public figures you follow -- but that users should also be able to filter out these messages from one another. In fact, Zuckerberg noted that currently, [30% of the content in the News Feed is content from Facebook Pages as opposed to individual users](#).



An Overview of the Various News Feeds:



NEWS FEED



ALL FRIENDS



MOST RECENT



CLOSE FRIENDS



MUSIC



PHOTOS



GAMES



FOLLOWING

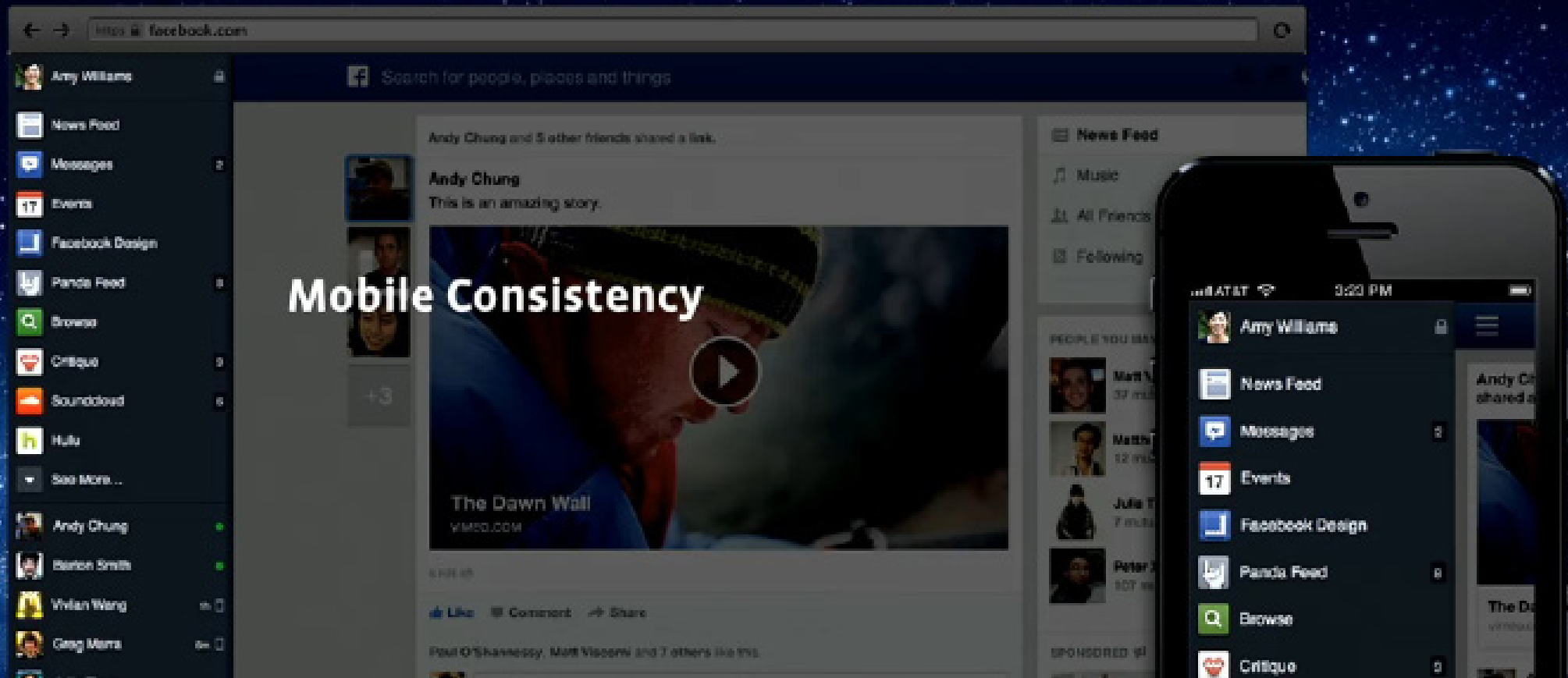
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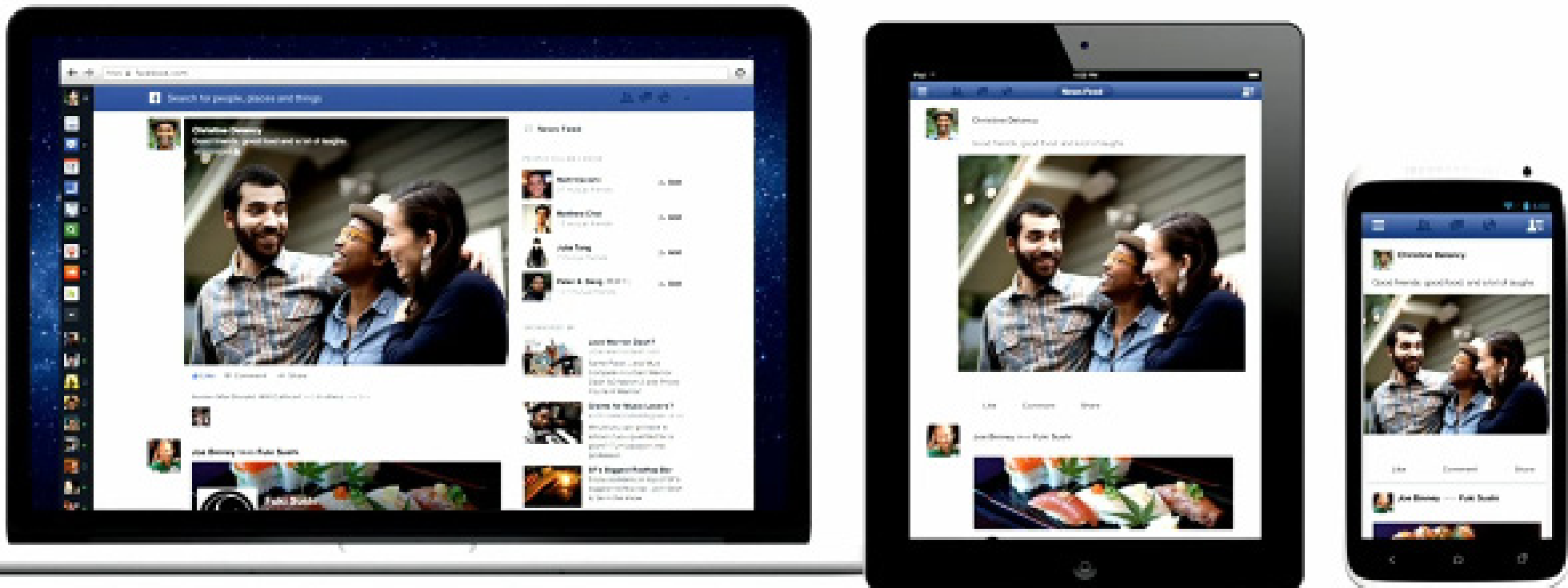
Mobile Consistency and Experience.

Lastly, Facebook now has the same look and feel across all devices -- mobile, tablet, and web -- creating a much more unified and simplified user experience. Most notably, the left-hand menu is accessible wherever you go within Facebook, and it's easy to navigate to the very top of the News Feed when you notice new stories have been posted.



Facebook has restructured and redesigned its network based on the strong demand and appreciation for visual content from its users. Now, it's time for marketers to restructure their content strategy due to this same demand from prospects, leads, and customers.

High quality content is more important than ever with these new Facebook changes. Optimizing for the new News Feed goes beyond just the Facebook Page. This change actually affects your entire content strategy as a whole, from images and status updates to blog posts and media coverage. The following sections will show you exactly what matters for marketing now, and how you can effectively optimize your content for success.



**HOW CONTENT
APPEARS IN USER
NEWS FEEDS.**

How Content Appears in User News Feeds.

Content is shown in user News Feeds based off EdgeRank, Facebook's News Feed algorithm. EdgeRank, as many marketers know, is comprised of three elements: affinity, weight, and time decay.



AFFINITY

Affinity is the score between the viewer and the 'edge' creator. How closely you are tied to the person creating the content determines this score.



WEIGHT

Weight is the value given to the comments and actions any given post receives. As they "Like" it, comment on it, tag it, etc., it gains in relevance to the community at large.



TIME DECAY

Time Decay is just that, the decaying value of the content as time passes. Today's news is news. Yesterday's news is history.

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Is EdgeRank Changing?

Question:

Previously you guys used fancy algorithms to decide what was included in the News Feed. Are those still used, or will the user get more control?

Answer:

The idea going forward is for the News Feed to behave “like a newspaper would.” The ranking algorithm won’t change but there will be more sections, essentially, like in a newspaper.

-Rachel Metz of MIT Technology Review in an interview with Facebook

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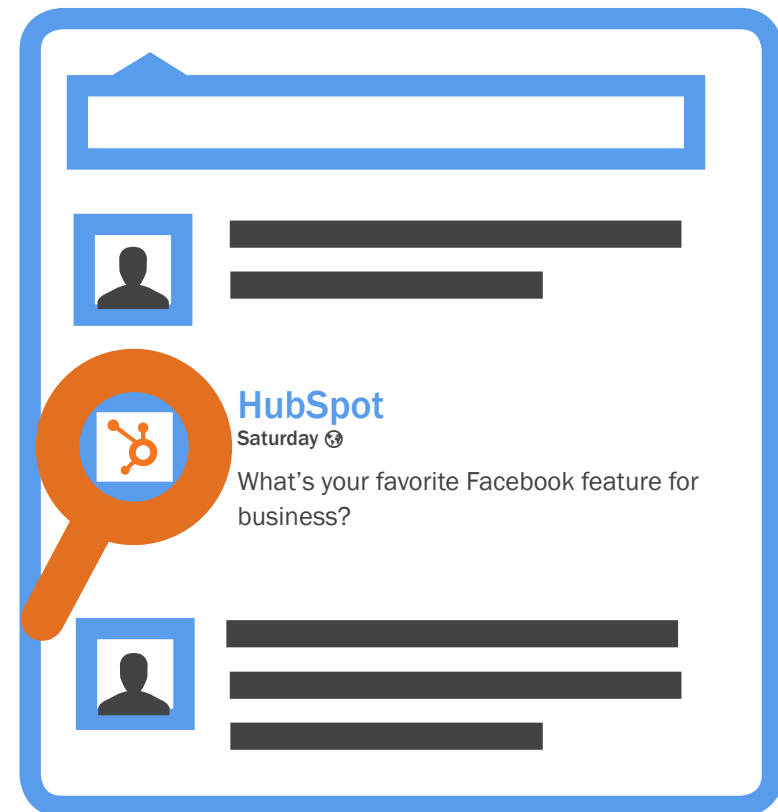


How Do You Optimize for EdgeRank?

Optimizing for EdgeRank is easier said than done. Although [Facebook says there will be no change to the algorithm](#), we believe things will get a bit trickier. When you talk about it, optimizing for EdgeRank is as simple as posting the content that your Facebook audience will engage best with. What content will give them a positive impression of your brand, leading to a calculable action such a like, share, or comment on the post?

But when it comes time to actually posting the right content, it becomes increasingly difficult to decide what to post, when to post, and how to know if that work is actually returning the proper results.

In order to optimize for EdgeRank on the new News Feed, it's important to know what has worked in the past to help shape your strategy for the upcoming changes.



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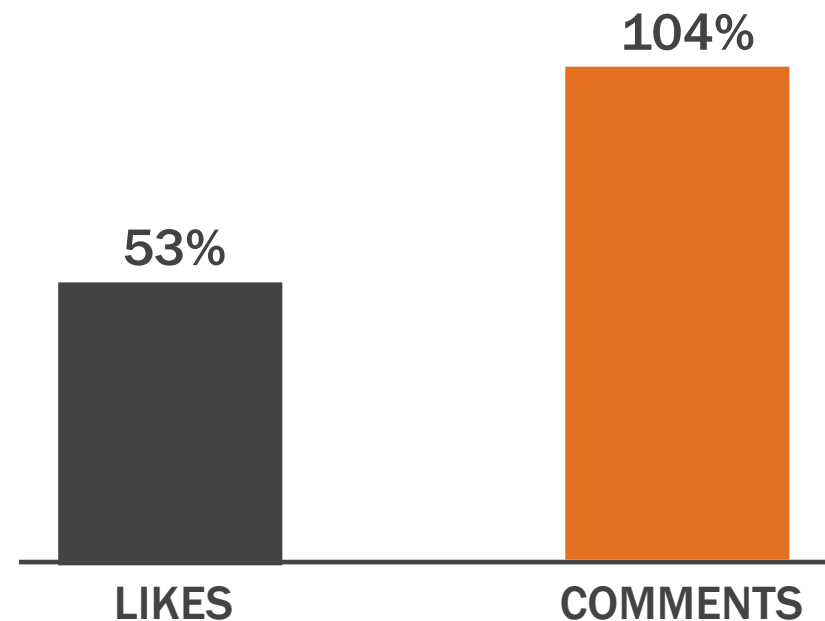
As noted, Facebook said no changes have been made to the algorithm. However, the new Choice of Feeds feature and higher prominence on Rich Photos may change how you go about optimizing for EdgeRank.

Here's a typical conversation we hear when it comes to Facebook:

👤 "What content works best on Facebook?"

👤 "It depends on your business."

According to our own research, [photos generate 53% more likes than the average post and 104% more comments than the average post](#). In our study of 1,545 B2B and B2C companies in October, "the average post" included text, link, and photo posts. Text and link posts are those published through the "Status" option on a page's composer. They can take the form of text-only posts or link-based posts that pull in an image thumbnail.



With the emergence of a photos-only feed, the weight placed on photos could increase even more, calling on the ever growing importance of visual content.

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Naturally, if photos are garnering the most likes and comments, they are also gaining the most value based off the EdgeRank algorithm. We adopted a strategy of, whenever possible, using photos to promote content. This means using images to promote a link, rather than just the link. Here's what this difference used to look like:



Learn about Facebook's new ad creation tool!



Facebook Launches New Ad Creation Tool to Help Marketers Align Campaigns With Goals
blog.hubspot.com

Facebook streamlines its ad creation interface to help guide Facebook

Like · Comment · Share

Promote ▼



Facebook Launches New Ad Creation Tool to Help Marketers Align Campaigns With Goals - <http://bit.ly/P9P9jz>



Like · Comment · Share

Now that a photos-only feed is being introduced, the importance of these visuals is going to skyrocket in importance. As you can see to the right, whether you're posting an album of photos or an individual picture, the emphasis on these visuals in the news feed is powerful. With studies showing that [40% of people will respond better to visual information than plain text](#), these larger, more prominent images will help brands share their messages.

In Zuckerberg's introduction, as mentioned, he shared that almost [50% of News Feed content today is photos and visual content](#).

Companies will have to invest time in creating and sharing compelling visuals, or suffer the possibility of getting left behind on Facebook. We'll discuss this further in the next chapter.



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**8 MARKETING
TAKEAWAYS TO
ALIGN YOUR
CONTENT
STRATEGY WITH
THE NEW NEWS
FEED.**

8 Marketing Takeaways to Align Your Content Strategy with the New News Feed.

Now it's time to focus on what all this means when it comes to your content strategy. According to [Facebook](#), "This change is a visual redesign of News Feed only and does not change how we surface the most interesting stories to people."

While it has been made clear that Facebook won't be making any changes to its EdgeRank algorithm, we disagree that it won't change how content gets surfaced on Facebook. If users have the choice of tuning out messages directly from the brands they Like by looking at their All Friends Feed, chances are they'll do it from time to time. The only way content from a brand page will get into a user's All Friends Feed is if a user's friends share content from that brand page.

That being said, here are eight marketing takeaways from the new News Feed that you can use to adjust and improve your Facebook content strategy.



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1 Publish More Visual Content

If there's one concept our offer has been pushing thus far, it's the concept of visual content. Facebook's new look is flooded with enhanced images of every variety -- an entire feed can be viewed solely comprised of these vivid photos! Just one month after the introduction of Facebook timeline for brands, [visual content -- photos and videos -- saw a 65% increase in engagement](#). This metric is bound to increase even further with the upcoming Rich Photos emphasis.

Prepare for the roll out of these updates by creating visually compelling content. If you've been previously posting text-based statuses and links, think about how you can convert those ideas into visuals. To the right is an example of how we took simple text and converted the words into an appealing Facebook visual.

This photo could appear in both a photos-only News Feed, or a "following" brands News Feed, giving it the opportunity to gain greater reach.

“People shop and learn in a whole new way compared to just a few years ago, so marketers need to **adapt** or risk extinction.”

- BRIAN HALLIGAN, CEO, HUBSPOT

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2 Plan Photo-Focused Ads

While Facebook did not speak to how these News Feed changes impact ads, according to an interview published by the [MIT Technology Review](#), when asked how the new design will affect ads, a Facebook representative said, “The idea of making things richer, more immersive, includes ads.”

Furthermore, the article states, “Speculation about the changes include the possibility that Facebook will add additional mini-feeds segmented by content (such as one just for photos), as well as bigger, more targeted ads.” Only time will tell, but it’s important to start thinking about your ads from a visual perspective.

While previously posts with links primarily showed meta titles and descriptions, the new News Feed magnifies images, makes the title clearer, and provides a better summary of the content. Facebook’s response to the question about ads begs us to believe that ads will begin appearing in a similar fashion.

The main takeaway here is to start thinking about the visuals you can pair with your advertisements -- strong and persuasive ad copy won’t be enough in this new age of Facebook.



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3 Keep Your Copy Short

With the spotlight on photos, Facebook has also changed the way captions will display. While previously captions were scripted underneath the uploaded photo, captions will now overlay images in the News Feed.

This means that photos will be the primary way by which people engage with your visual posts. Any copy you provide should be brief and succinct. It has to provide any key information the user needs to understand the image, take action on your CTA, or want to share the value it describes.



4 Focus More on Your Evangelists

With the new Facebook News Feed, users will be able to look at content posted only from their friends. That means that even if someone likes and follows your business page, they may never see your posts because they filtered them out by looking at the content posted only from their friends.

Your solution to this is to focus more on your evangelists and customers. Your evangelists are the lovers of your brand. They are the people who find you remarkable, and share your updates with their own Facebook friends. Whether they are customers, or just pure fans of what you do, these people will be instrumental in your success on Facebook.

Find out what these evangelists are most passionate about, and share content that directly targets them. Do they love hearing the new donut flavors you're rolling out? Do they enjoy reading the marketing pick up lines you come up? Do they care about the newest features in your product? Whichever it may be, that is the content that your evangelists will share, too. And that action of sharing will put the content in the friends-only feed of all the evangelists' friends, increasing the reach of your content.



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5 Create More Compelling Content

The way Facebook is now surfacing top-shared articles reminds us of a LinkedIn Today-like method for featuring top content. This means it's in your best interest to use Facebook as a way to promote your more public-facing content -- such as blog content, for instance -- to try to get your best content more viral reach.

But here's the secret when it comes to creating viral reach: It's all about sharing compelling content. Facebook is exploding with content daily, and unless your content stands out from the crowd in terms of value and interest, it won't gain the visibility it needs. As shown below, Facebook will, in a news-like fashion, aggregate the most shared content from a publisher, and include the company logo alongside that. As a content creator, you'll need to work hard to create remarkable content that is shared so widely.



Most Shared on NPR



Why Even Radiologists Can Miss A Gorilla Hiding In Plain Sight

Share 212 shares



Pope's Resignation Redefines Papacy, Spurs Talk Of 'Global South'...

Share 394 shares



Women In Prayer Shawls Detained At Judaism's Holiest Site

Share 425 shares

6 Integrate Your Facebook & Pinterest Strategy

Content shared through third-party apps will begin to see greater visibility in your News Feed. This includes Pinterest, as showcased below. In fact, [98% of people surveyed with a Pinterest account said they also have a Facebook and/or Twitter account](#). Even more important, Pinterest drives sales directly from its website -- of people with Pinterest accounts, [21% have purchased an item after seeing it on Pinterest](#).

By using Pinterest in tandem with the Facebook Pinterest app, you can use the enhanced appearance of Pinterest images in News Feeds to direct more people to your Pinterest page. This can help drive people to purchase, as Pinterest creates an easy environment for driving sales. Use this information to integrate your Facebook and Pinterest posting schedules for greater returns.



Robyn Morris pinned to Purrry things on Pinterest.



Purrry things



Purrry things
Radio



Purrry things

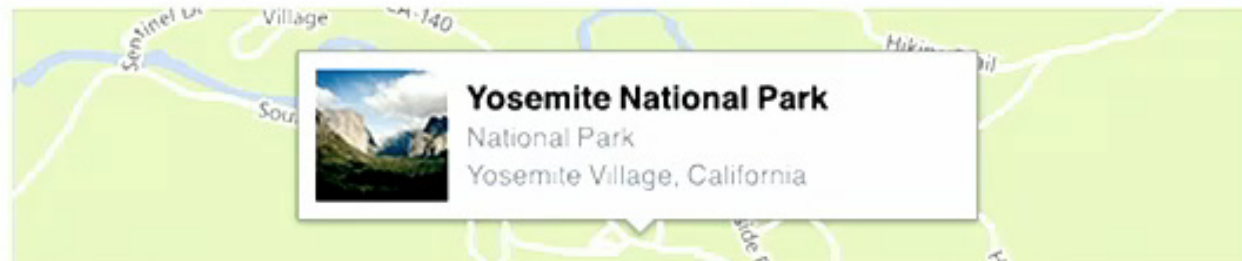
7 Influence Users to Check-In to Your Business

Location has been gaining more importance on social. On Google+, we saw the integration of Google places. And when Facebook launched Graph Search, it came equipped with the ability to search for content based on location. In addition, results in Graph Search are often local. For example, if you search for the word “coffee,” Facebook’s Graph Search will likely return results on coffee shops near you.

Facebook’s changes makes check-ins more visible and clear in News Feed, as you can see below. By finding ways to influence more people to check-in to your business, you’re creating more ways for people to see your business in the friends-only feeds. You could accomplish this by adopting a FourSquare approach and offering deals to the most frequent visitor -- via check-ins -- to your business. Or perhaps you simply make an announcement at a meeting or event reminding people that they can share their location. Point is, these check-ins will help your visibility on Facebook -- especially if you’re a small business!



Guilherme De Napoli with Sameer Madan at Yosemite National Park
An awesome day for a hike.



2 HR

8

Continue Increasing Likes of Your Page

While the number of Likes your Facebook page has accumulated has always been important, the new News Feed makes these Likes even more meaningful.

When a user previously liked your page, the excitement on the businesses end was around the increase in reach they could provide through their new fan's friends of fans. There was no immediate benefit. The new Facebook design makeover provides an immediate benefit.

When someone Likes your page, a new story is created in News Feed that shows the pages default and cover photo. This once again brings up how impactful your Facebook cover photo is, because every time someone likes your page, that cover photo will have the opportunity to influence the friends of you new Facebook fan.



Joe Binney likes **Fuki Sushi**.



✓ Liked

Conclusion.

The takeaways revealed in this guide are only the beginning stages of Facebook's evolving News Feed. Many questions still remain around potential impacts on brand pages, adjustments to the EdgeRank algorithm, and where exactly users can see brand posts.

The best marketers will be those who start planning ahead, and find a strategy to conquer the new News Feed as it rolls out to users. Here at HubSpot, we'll continue to monitor these updates, and share them as they become available.

In the meantime, there's two key words we want you to leave this guide with: visual content. Unless you invest marketing time and/or dollars into visual content creation, you may get left behind in the adapting Facebook world.

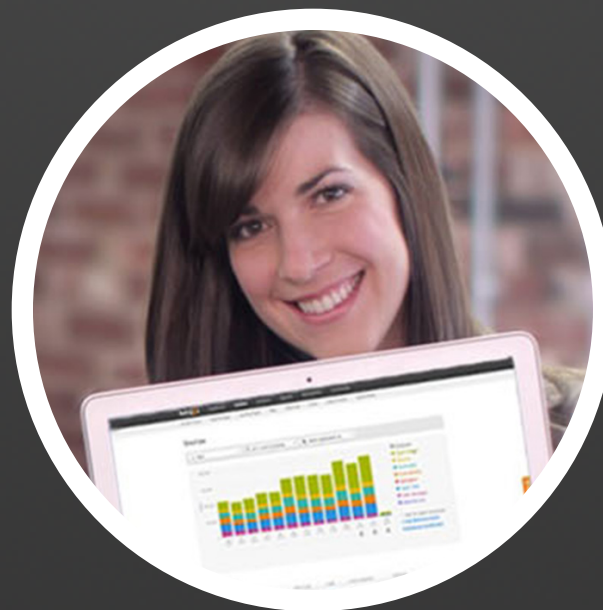
Good luck!

SHARE YOUR CONTENT WITH A FAST, PHOTO-FRIENDLY PUBLISHER.

Once you have your Facebook content strategy planned, be sure you have the right social media tools to easily post your visual content. [Start a free 30-day trial of HubSpot's social media tools](#) to publish your photos fast, and collect valuable marketing insight on their performance.



TALK TO US TODAY.



[HTTP://BITLY.COM/HS-FREE-SOCIAL-TOOL](http://bitly.com/hs-free-social-tool)