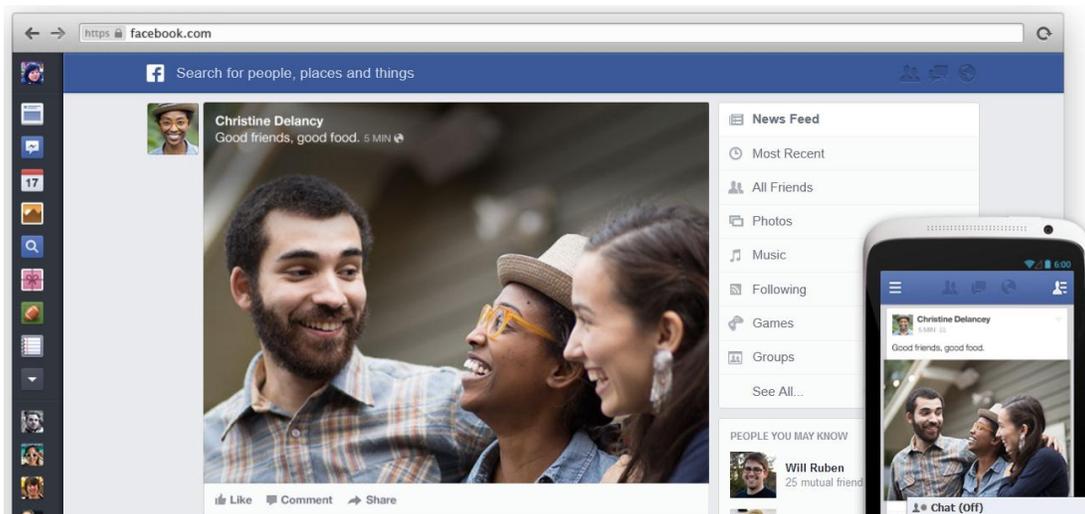


Facebook's News Feed Makeover: Four Implications for Pharma

INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, March 7, Facebook announced a major redesign to its News Feed, one of its most used and visible features. This point-of-view document was developed by Intouch Solutions' social media team to summarize the redesign and outline the implications for pharmaceutical companies.



OVERVIEW

In its announcement, Facebook likened the News Feed redesign to a “personalized newspaper,” where content is categorized and customized for each individual user. According to Facebook, the redesign is in response to user requests for more control over what content appears in the News Feed. Users will have more choices for how they filter, view and consume content based on what matters most to them.

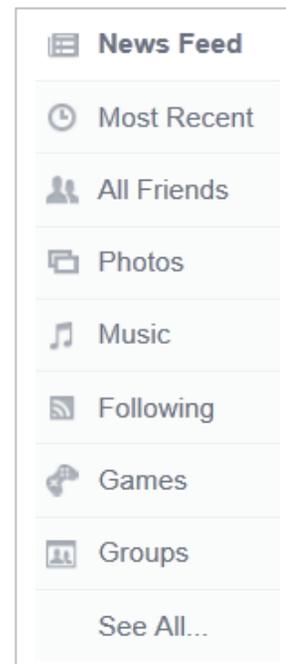
Facebook promises the revamped News Feed will provide a richer and more engaging user experience with less clutter. A new “switcher” tool bar (right) will appear at the top of the screen to allow users to change between content streams, which include friends, photos, music, games, groups, and “following.”

The “following” stream is a new News Feed option that allows users to see every post in chronological order from Facebook Pages they “Like.” Users still will have the option to view all individual feeds combined into an all inclusive feed as it is today.

Facebook also promises to address past issues that have plagued the News Feed, including problems with duplicate posts and posts appearing outside of chronological order (sometimes days after initial posting). This will ensure that users can see all posts in the order they were published, regardless of which content stream they want to view.

The mobile-inspired News Feed design will appear nearly identical across mobile, tablet and desktop platforms. Rollout across all platforms to all users will take place over the coming weeks.

To activate the new News Feed sooner, users can opt in at www.facebook.com/newsfeed.



IMPACT TO PHARMA COMPANIES WITH FACEBOOK PAGES

Though the News Feed overhaul may upset the average change-averse Facebook user, the redesign will not have major implications for pharma Pages in terms of regulatory compliance. This is true especially when compared to past updates, such as when Facebook announced it would [no longer allow the disabling of commenting on pharma Facebook pages](#).

There will be a difference, however, in the way pharma companies’ content is displayed and how users choose to view it. Pharma marketers should keep the following four implications in mind:

1. **Visuals have become even more visible.** Photos, photo albums and videos will appear much larger in the new News Feed, providing much greater visual detail. For pharma Pages that frequently post images or videos, this visual content now becomes even more prominent and inviting. Pages that have not focused on visual content in the past may need to reassess their approach to take advantage of the redesign. The increased focus on visuals may also provide new opportunities for disease states in which detailed visuals are critical for communicating information.
2. **With more filtering options, quality of content is paramount.** Users are likely to favor the “All Friends” News Feed which focuses on friends’ activity with very little (if any) organic Pages content. The All Friends News Feed will filter out any “Liked” pharma Pages’ content. Pharma Page content will appear, however, in users’ “Following” News Feed if they have liked the page, and in their “Photos” News Feed if the page post includes a photo.

Posting valuable, quality content will help ensure users allow pharma page content into their News Feeds. Quality, audience-centric content also encourages sharing by users ... and those valuable user shares will appear in the coveted "All Friends" news feed.

3. **"Likes" provide expanded engagement, and profile and cover photos increase in importance.** When a user Likes a Facebook Page, the user's friends will see a much larger image of the Facebook Page in their News Feed, including the profile picture and cover photo. So when users "like" a pharma Page, their friends will not only see that action more prominently, they will see large images of the cover and profile photos in their News Feed too.
4. **Facebook advertising will have a new look.** There's no question this redesign was made with advertisers in mind. Though pharmas have purchased a relatively small amount of Facebook advertising to date, the redesign offers expanded real estate, especially when it comes to images and videos. And the assured consistency across desktop and mobile experiences may help mobile advertising look more attractive to pharma. It remains to be seen, however, if greater real estate and increased prominence will translate to increased user click-through rates and increased ad costs as well.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Pharma pages can help followers adjust to the new changes by publishing how-to content that instructs users on where to find their content within the new environment.
- Marketers can expect engagement metrics to be impacted subtly in the short- or near-term as the changes roll out and users adapt to the new interface.
- The impact of these changes to current scoring of content (EdgeRank) is to be determined.

Intouch will continue to monitor the Facebook News Feed changes and will publish additional point of view papers as necessary. Please contact your Intouch representative for information about Facebook, the opportunities it presents, and related challenges inherent to the pharmaceutical industry.

Reference: <http://www.facebook.com/newsfeed>
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