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**POV: SEARCH FYI — HOW FACEBOOK'S
DISCOVERY UPDATES IMPACT PHARMA
MARKETERS**

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SEARCH FYI — HOW FACEBOOK'S DISCOVERY UPDATES IMPACT PHARMA MARKETERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Late last year, Facebook rolled out a [significant update](#) to its Search functionality, launching post search and mobile search. This year, Facebook continues to introduce new ways for users to discover timely and relevant content. [Search FYI](#) — along with other new features, such as topic-based feeds — exposes users to new content and may alter the way they consume that content.

This POV will provide an overview of the recent search updates, along with implications for pharma marketers on Facebook.

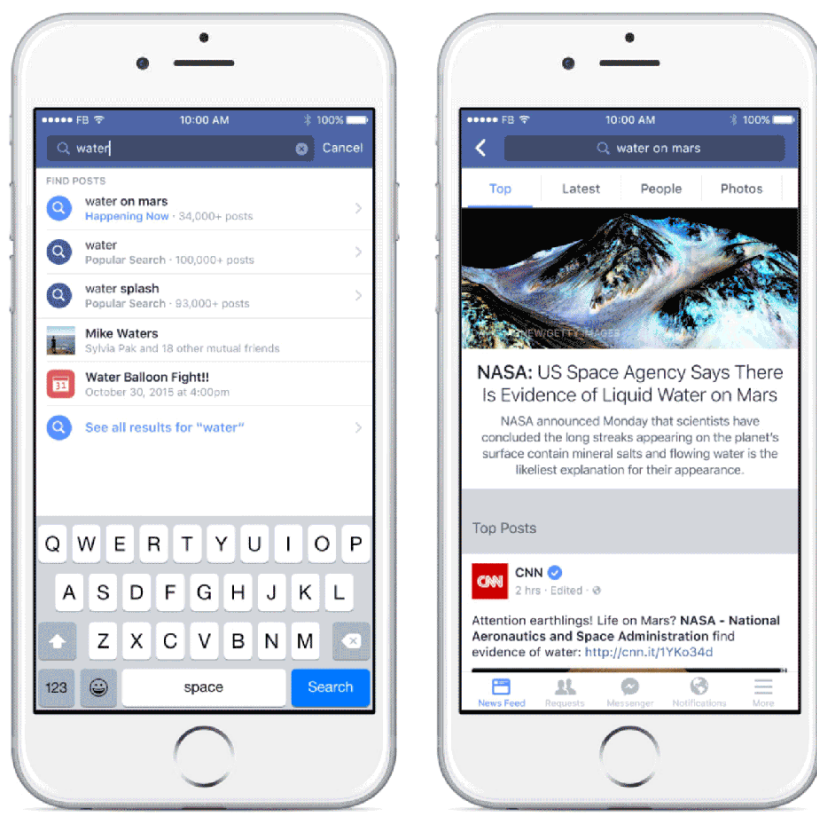
BACKGROUND

To compete with Google in the search arena, Facebook started to lay the groundwork for enhanced contextual searching last year. Now, Facebook hopes its newest improvements will help it chip away at Google's dominance.

SEARCH FYI

Facebook currently has more than 2 trillion posts indexed, with 1.5 billion searches every day. To make these searches more effective, Search FYI was built to help with several search tasks:

- + **Personalized search suggestions** — When users begin typing in the Facebook search box, Facebook will offer timely, custom search suggestions. If a user's network is talking about a particular story, Search will feature it as a result while it unfolds.
- + **Extended post-level search capabilities** — In addition to searching public posts and posts from friends and liked pages, users are able to pull-to-refresh to receive real-time results.
- + **Trending public conversations** — When users discuss interesting topics, they often include links to relevant posts for context. With this new feature, users can find public posts about a link, see quotes and phrases mentioned in the posts, and view overall sentiment.

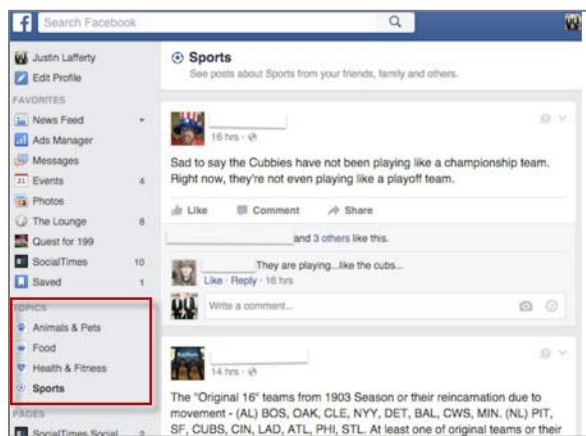


For example, searching “water” on Facebook now returns results for trending topics (e.g., “water on Mars”), friends and people in your network with the name “Waters,” pages and events with the word in the title, and an option to search all public content for “water.”

Brands with highly engaged and relevant content will have their posts returned in results more often than in previous versions of Search.

TOPIC-BASED FEEDS

Facebook may soon add another feature to expand its discovery capabilities. It is currently testing topic-based feeds. These feeds surface recent and relevant content based on questions about user interests, such as, “Which pets or animals interest you most?” Facebook links to these topics via a Topics section on the left sidebar of the News Feed. Posts about those interests are displayed even if the user is not connected to the person or page the content is from.



Available topics include Animals & Pets, Food, Health & Fitness, and Sports. Users will have the opportunity to select specific categories within the topic and exclude other categories. While not much is known about the Health & Fitness topic yet, users may be able to select disease states or awareness categories to stay up-to-date on health news important to them.

Topic-based feeds are similar to interest lists, which debuted user-curated lists in 2013. However, instead of users having to rely on others to build interest lists, which have limited editing features, Facebook's algorithm will return results tailored to the user. Users will be able to "train" this algorithm, providing feedback about posts' relevance to enhance those topics for the user. There is no word yet whether these topic-based feeds will display content in News Feed-like interest lists.

INSIGHTS

These search and discovery updates have several implications for pharma marketers.

PRIVACY IS IMPORTANT TO FACEBOOK ... MOST OF THE TIME

Facebook's decision to open all two trillion public posts to user searches comes at a time when it is restricting this same post-level data to social listening tools. As of October 31, the API for public post-level data has been depreciated. This means that tools helping marketers understand what users are saying about their brand online will **no longer include Facebook posts**, limiting the ability for author, theme and sentiment analysis.



While the API depreciation was framed as a move to protect user privacy, Search FYI gives Facebook more freedom to display these posts to users in the name of engagement.

Marketers should welcome Search FYI as an avenue to increase impressions on their content, and we may be able to leverage the new search capabilities for smaller ad hoc listening requests outside of social listening tools for some insight into user behavior.

EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING IT

Facebook is not the only social network upping its discovery game. Instagram recently introduced Explore to let users view trending content locally and globally. Snapchat's Discover allows users to browse content from editorial teams. Last month, Twitter launched Moments, enabling users and brands to curate and follow live, trending events.

Most social platforms have introduced these features in an effort to retain users. When a story has just started to trend, these platforms want users to go to their network to search for new information instead of leaving for one of their competitors.

Facebook has the advantage in this space by having the largest user base, and it is in the best position to leverage its network to enable relevant content for each user.

BETTER CONTENT MEANS BETTER ENGAGEMENT

After updating [News Feed preferences](#) earlier this year, Facebook is again placing more control of feeds in the hands of their users. Together, these moves mean users have more exposure to new content they may enjoy than ever before.

As Facebook's VP of Search Tom Stocky put it, "More access to this content will cause people to share more of it" ([source](#)).

CONCLUSION

The introduction of these discovery features reinforces best practices from other marketing disciplines, particularly SEO. It will likely become more important to ensure your Facebook content is optimized toward Facebook's search algorithm. Marketers should pay attention to how and what content Facebook prioritizes when returning results. Once there is some feel for



how they determine relevance, tweaking your content so it's aligned with Facebook's algorithm can and should help it be more visible.

Additionally, while writing content for a Facebook page's followers and target audience, marketers should keep in mind that users who have never been exposed to their content may now be seeing it for the first time.

Search FYI should be a welcome update to Facebook Search for users and brands. It provides users more control over their searches and connects marketers with those willing to consume their content. This search update is poised to change the search game for all.

If you have any questions about Search FYI or Facebook, please reach out to your Intouch Solutions representative.

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