



POV: FACEBOOK USERS GAIN CONTROL
WITH UPDATED NEWS FEED OPTIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Facebook's most recent News Feed update was a change of pace. Instead of updating how the site's algorithms serve content, more control was placed in the hands of users.



See First is the most prominent new feature, enabling users to choose which people and Pages they want to see most often. Facebook then prioritizes future content so those people and Pages appear at the top of the News Feed before any other content.

This POV will review the updated News Feed controls and how they impact pharma marketers.

BACKGROUND

The Facebook News Feed is a personalized stream of content from people and Pages. While users can choose who they wish to receive updates from, Facebook's algorithms dictate which updates are displayed in the News Feed. Not all content from all friends and Pages appears.

Facebook's new set of tools allows users to take control of their News Feeds in four ways:

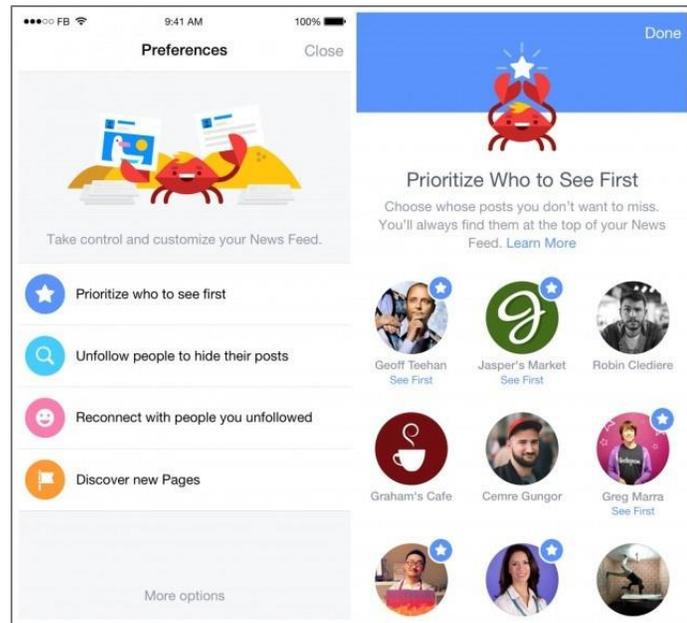
- **Unfollow** people and pages to easily hide their content
- **Prioritize** people and Pages that they will See First
- **Reconnect** with people and Pages they have recently unfollowed
- **Discover** new Pages based on their interests and network

Though users have had access to features like unfollowing for some time, the update provides them with easier access to and a clearer description of their controls.



The See First prioritization feature is perhaps the most novel. It allows users to select up to 30 people and Pages whose posts will always appear first in their News Feeds. Facebook's algorithm will then serve posts from other accounts below this See First section.

The Discover feature provides suggestions for users based on Pages a user already likes and Pages liked by similar users. It's meant to give people more ways to see posts they may be interested in but not already know about.



Accounts that have been prioritized will feature a star in News Feed preferences and on content shown from these accounts.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MARKETERS?

These updates impact marketers in several ways, but mostly they just reinforce best practices.

LIKES AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE

Page likes aren't quite the content delivery guarantee they once were. Getting a user to like your Page is the first, but not the only, step in organic engagement and content consumption. A dwindling percentage of users who like a Page are shown each post. Add to that an increase in boosted posts and paid media, and it becomes clear that there is a lot of competition for News Feed real estate.

A Page that has been added to a See First list will take priority over a Page that has only been liked.



Facebook acknowledges that a Page like no longer guarantees posts show up in News Feeds. However, this update allows users to circumvent these limitations for people and Pages that really matter to them. A Page that has been added to a See First list will take priority over a Page that has only been liked.

Page likes still hold value, since they increase the possible reach for every post, but marketers must understand that they are only one piece of the Facebook marketing puzzle.

MORE CONTROL MEANS MORE ENGAGED USERS

When Get Notifications for Pages was rolled out a few years ago, the notifications overwhelmed many users and cluttered their alerts. See First may be a cleaner way to help people prioritize their interests on Facebook.

Users who designate preferences on their See First list are likely to be more engaged on Facebook, since their News Feeds are tailored to content they want. If marketers are able to get users to add their Page to a See First list, more impressions may lead to more post likes, comments and shares.

This is good for marketers who provide quality content because, [as we've mentioned before](#), the quality of followers is more important than the quantity. However, marketers who don't already have quality content or high engagement risk losing even more eyeballs and opportunities to engage.

CONTENT IS STILL KING

Developing good content is more important than ever. To get users to want to follow a Page's updates via See First, content should be consistently relevant and provide value.

For example, over-the-counter treatments can provide a limited number of coupons to encourage users to add the Page to their See First list to make sure they don't miss out. Unbranded disease education Pages may highlight timely events such as conferences or online chats. This type of content provides more value than self-serving advertisements and is more likely to be engaged with and followed.

DISCOVER OPENS NEW DOORS

The Discover feature means caregivers who like disease state awareness Pages or patients who are involved in patient support groups on Facebook can find similar content more easily. New proprietary

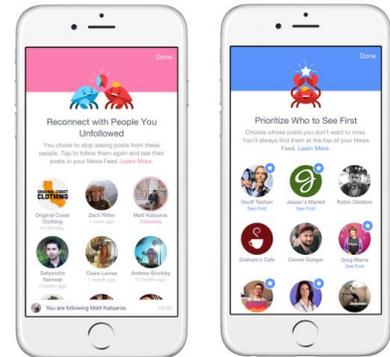


Pages can benefit from this as patients and caregivers may be exposed to this new information that they may find valuable.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Currently, only iPhone users have full access to these updates. See First has just begun to roll out to desktop and Android users, with access to all features anticipated “**over the coming weeks.**”

At this time, it does not appear that marketers are able to measure how many or which users have added their Pages to their See First lists.



RECOMMENDATIONS

These News Feed controls should be welcomed by both users and marketers, since users gain more control and marketers gain the ability to address more engaged users. Intouch recommends taking the following actions to address the update.

1. **Review your content plan** to ensure that it's value-added. For users to consistently interact with your content over time, it needs to be beneficial to them.
2. **Consider planning strategic posts** in the coming months to encourage users to add your Page to their See First lists. These posts will be especially beneficial for Pages that require timely engagement with their content.
3. **Encourage engagement on your posts** to help people who haven't added your Page to their See First lists see your content. Posts with high engagement (i.e., likes, comments, shares) will still be served up in News Feeds higher than posts with low engagement.

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

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