

TROM

facebook's business



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Summary :

When you like a page (supposedly because you are interested in what that page posts), Facebook will not mention its secret to you: that you will rarely see that page's posts, very rarely.

Facebook labels itself as a social network, but in fact it is an advertising company that only wants to make profits.

How would you feel if Google were to make the following statement tomorrow:




"Since there are so many search results and people cannot possibly look through all of them, we are only going to display the results that 'you like' (only a few, out of potentially millions), and what you 'like' will be decided by an algorithm that we have created, so you can't adjust that." that we use, and you can't change that."

I Agree

Such a move might piss many people off and it would definitely limit what any search engine can do for you. Deciding what is 'good' for you to watch/read, or what is 'important', can be a very neat solution to filter the huge amount of information that you are exposed to online every day, but that should be an option, rather than a default setting that you cannot change, especially because such an algorithm may or may not do a good job of 'predicting' what each individual might be interested in at any given moment.

WELL, FACEBOOK DOES EXACTLY THAT!

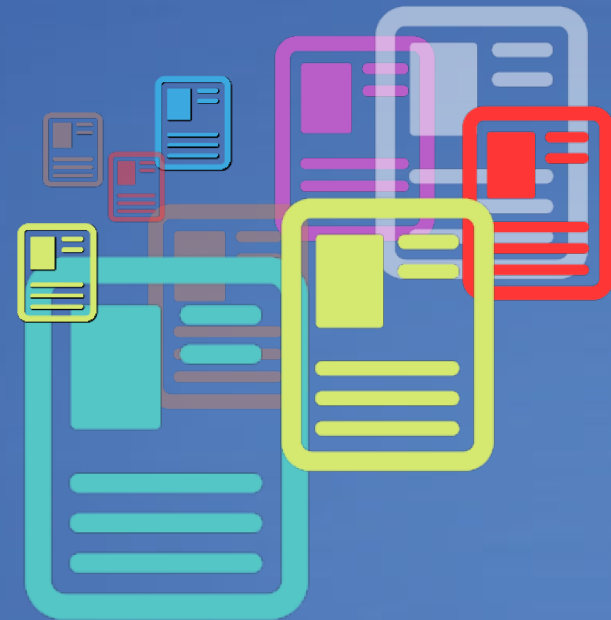
WHEN YOU  A PAGE (SUPPOSEDLY BECAUSE YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT THAT PAGE POSTS), FACEBOOK WILL NOT MENTION ITS SECRET TO YOU:

THAT YOU WILL RARELY SEE THAT PAGE'S POSTS, VERY RARELY.





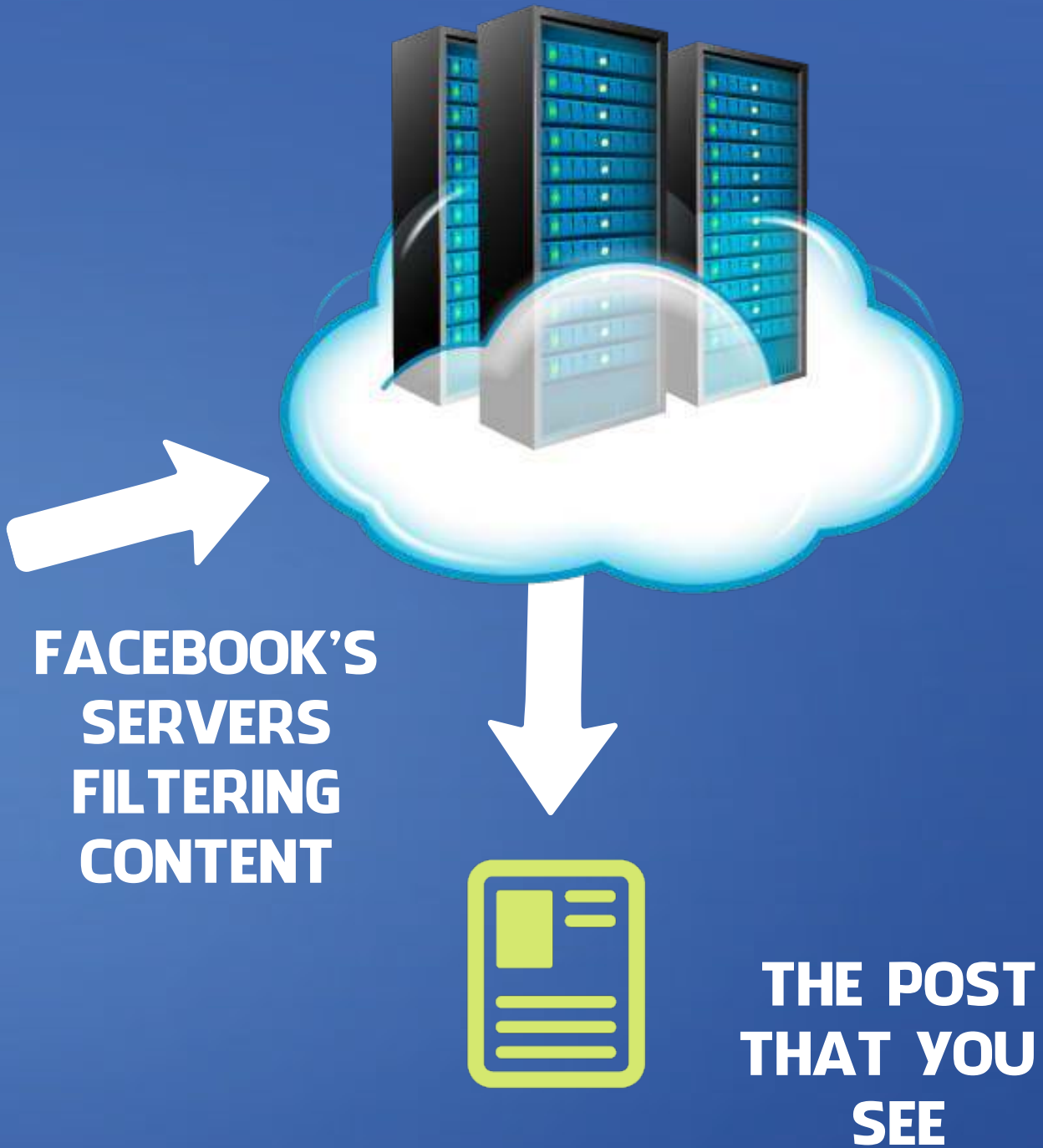
POSTS MADE BY PAGE



This will also happen with posts from your friends, as you will not receive notifications of all of their posts, either. This is because Facebook sorts and delivers to you only the ones that 'you may consider important'. It is all in their algorithm, based on what links you clicked and from what pages, what other pages you liked, and so on.

They do this because, as they say, people are unable to manage all of the posts and updates from all of the pages they have liked, or friends they have.

But shouldn't this be something that you, as the user, chose how to handle? I use an RSS feed reader (a way to get updates from multiple sources you like - websites, google keywords, etc.) and many times I do get too many updates, but I manage this myself by simply removing sources that I no longer find interesting.

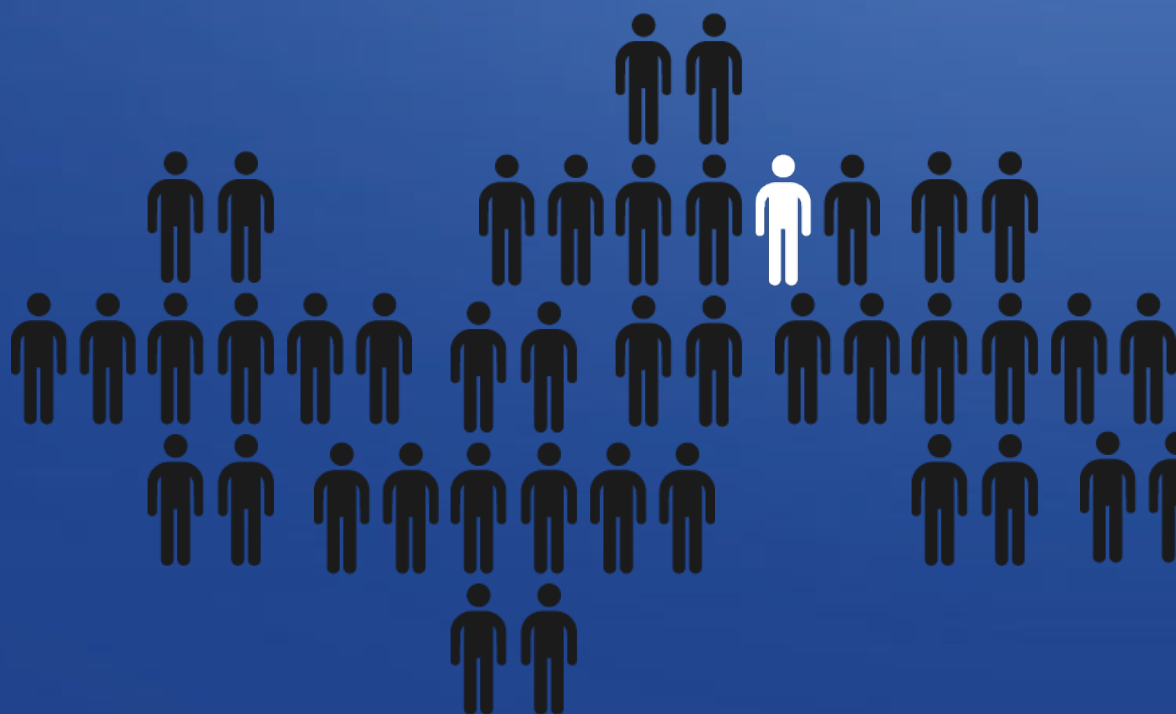


Facebook could add simple options for people to help them cope with the potentially huge flow of information. It wouldn't be hard to add a "See important updates" and "See all updates", and then explain what 'important' means and how their algorithm works. Don't be fooled by the options you have now with "Most recent" and "Top stories", as they are strongly filtered by Facebook. Even if you want to see all of a page's most recent posts, those also get filtered by FB's algorithm.

More to the point, these Facebook algorithms make all of our projects and updates almost invisible. Let me exemplify using a project that I partly managed for about 3 years or so (including its official magazine for which we posted many memes on social networks, per day): The TVP Facebook page has more than 210,000 likes at the time of this writing, but each post we make has only “reached” an average of about 11,000 of those 210,000 people, over the entire past year.

Since the recent 2015 algorithm update, which caused all Facebook pages to more sharply drop in reach, posts to the TVP Global Facebook page now only reach an average of around 4,600 people per post. That is just a bit over 2% of the total page supporters. Most of TVP Magazine’s original posts, which included photos and text, have only reached 1-2 thousand supporters over the past 3 months, out of the 210,000 total.

THAT IS BELOW 1 % OF ALL THE TVP FOLLOWERS, OR JUST 1 IN 105 PEOPLE RECEIVING THE POSTS WE MAKE.



It's no wonder that so many TVP supporters still have no clue that TVP has a free online magazine, even though we've been producing it regularly for the past 2 years and frequently posted 'educational' images on all social networks promoting it, every day, over that time period.

But even that 'reach' number makes little to no sense, because 'reach' only means that the notification of a post we made was included somewhere in your Facebook news feed and you 'saw' it, even if you just quickly scanned through your news feed looking for something else (birthdays, events, a reply from a friend, etc.) and our post happened to be in there somewhere. That counts as 'reach'. More than that, some posts may only reach 800 people, while a rare 'mutant' one hits 180,000 people (extremely rare), and so the averages do not reflect reality well at all, as these occasional 'mutant' numbers will always drive the averages higher than what is 'normally' experienced.



So, either we are failing completely at posting 'relevant' (from FB's perspective) posts, to get them to be seen by more supporters, or that FB is completely failing at providing a good service. We can't fail, though, as we post many new and original posts that are very important for The Venus Project and should be of strong interest to all TVP supporters. Then again, we are not the only ones who have been unable to reach the people who are interested in their pages, as it seems that pages across a wide array of niches are experiencing the exact same problem.

So, if it's not us, then it must be Facebook's 'innocent' fault, right? Maybe they don't understand how to make FB more useful for people, and their algorithm of predicting what is more 'important' for people is just not meeting its intended goals. Even if that is the case, FB should allow people to choose for themselves if they want to use the prediction algorithm, or instead have all their updates showing in the news feed. Or at the very least making the users better aware of their 'rules'.

But hang on a minute...

You can now pay Facebook to get your message (post) to reach more people! So... after all of the above rationalization attempts, it turns out that this algorithm isn't at all about offering a smart tool for 'poor users' who cannot possibly cope with so many posts in their news feed, but is instead simply part of a profit-motive business strategy!?! This is shocking...until you remember that Facebook is just a business, and recognize that we 'users' are what it sells, to other businesses.

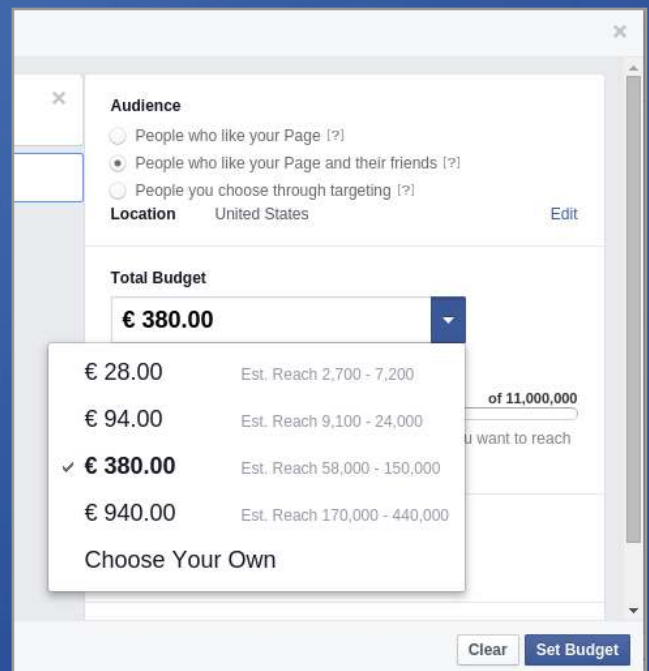
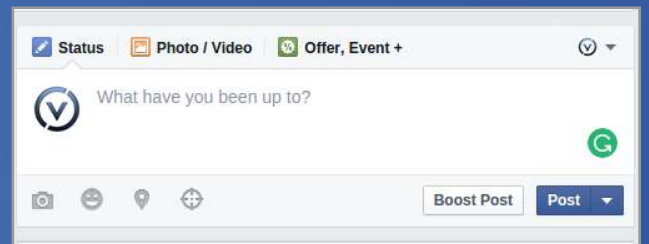
So, the more money you pay to Facebook, the more people (your own supporters?) you can reach with your message. If you want to 'save the world' and present solutions as to how, through science and technology, we can literally save hundreds of millions of lives and dramatically improve everyone's standard of living, but you don't have the money to spread your message, then, well, you will have little chance of getting your message widespread.



If you have an online presence somewhere (social network, forum, etc.) and your 'fans', followers, people interested in your page, etc., like and want to follow your page, but you then are told that you'll have to pay to reach out those same people (although there was no mention of this when you created the page), then this sounds to me like a low-grade scam.

Every time a page 'owner' makes a new post to a page, FB pops up a loud recommendation to 'boost' the post, meaning for you to pay them money for your post to reach more people, and it will show you many ads encouraging you to 'promote' your entire page, for some more money, of course. Not to mention the many ads that are displayed to everyone that has a FB account, ads that track your online activity to, again, recommend what you should buy.

They don't just appear in your sidebar, but also in your news feed, similar to regular posts. This is not a conspiracy - this is simply how Facebook works, and you can read all about this on their [website](#), as it's part of their business plan. The goal in today's world is to make money, and Facebook has gotten pretty good at doing this.



They are so good at doing 'business' that Facebook is worth 212 billion (2015) dollars as of this writing. It is worth more than 120 of the 180 currently recognized countries around the world (same, 2015). Over 67% of Facebook's fortune is owned by just a handful of people (11 or so), while it has 9,200 employees and 1,39 billion customers (users) that helped create a \$12,47 billion revenue for Facebook in 2014 alone, as Facebook relies entirely on its users to sell advertising or their premium content/features.(source)

But it doesn't stop there. Not only does Facebook intentionally restrict your page's outreach to your supporters and their ability to see content that they requested to view as interesting (or important) to them, all the while making a huge amount of money from users like us through ever-present intrusive ads, but Facebook also 'sells' Likes. Not in a direct way, of course, because that would look bad for any business, but indirectly through 'paid promoting' that increases the number of Likes to your page and individual posts (their monetized solution to the scarcity problem they created above).

Since this recent 'monetization of Likes' approach was introduced by Facebook, many other companies have sprung up to compete for your "Likes" cash, while the entire 'fiasco' behind getting more likes and reaching more people is little more than a byproduct of the monetary system's push for profit, which creates these abhorant behaviors. As a side note, when you buy likes, it is usually done via click farms (a bunch of poor people that are paid low wages to create facebook accounts and 'Like' pages they are told to Like).



Buy Facebook Fans



**THIS VERY WELL-DONE VIDEO BY A
SCIENCE-FOCUSED YOUTUBE CHANNEL
DESCRIBES THE 'SCAM' THAT
FACEBOOK IS ENGAGING IN**



Because our Facebook posts reach such a tiny percentage of the people supporting TVP's page, we are made to feel a strong need to repeat many posts, similar to how a spammer aggressively sends thousands of similar messages to reach more people. If we want to inform people that a new TVP documentary is now available, for example, this forces us to post it 2 times a day, every day, for months in a row, just to reach as many TVP supporters as we can. And of course, this is not sustainable, and a major waste of time, effort and the precious patience of those who directly watch the page more closely than others.

Facebook encourages pages to post "original and engaging content" to attract more people to Like, Comment and Share the posts to their own profile walls and other groups, because when supporters do that, a post can become more popular and reach more people (but it will never reach all the supporters). These recommendations may be helpful for pages that want customers and sell products, but TVP is all about growing knowledge and expanding Global RBE awareness among its supporters, rather than trying to sugar-coat posts to look so nice that you, the supporters, are emotionally enticed to click on links intended to sell you something. Not all pages are used by businesses, dear Facebook.

Facebook is just an example, of course, as nearly all social network sites are full of rules and advertising, with lots of people trying to use them to promote their business and, more often than not, creating 'havoc' with so many misleading posts they make (buy this, click here). There are also businesses who 'sell' followers and tips as how to get more people following your account, and they too are a product of a profit-focused world that enforces a negative loop effect on the public tools we use and how their rules operate (like Facebook, Twitter, Google - who do try to stop these 'spammers', but yet preserve plenty of room for other kinds of advertising that benefit them). This money-hungry world has nothing to do with the technology behind tools like facebook, twitter, the internet itself. It only controls how they are used/abused, and today, they are mainly used to extract profit from consumers, by both the ones who own the tools (like Facebook) and those who want to use them to promote their businesses. As a side note, you can read our article on online advertising to understand more about this 'practice'.

TVP is trying very hard to get important informational & educational messages and resources out there; not to sell something, make a profit, or to promote a business, while these escalating rules that Facebook and other companies employ are massively slowing us down in our 'mission'. TVP Magazine's readership has dropped by more than 60% over the last couple of months, as many fewer supporters now receive our posts on Facebook, the main social network we relied upon.

And finally, I'm sorry to inform you, but I lied at the start of the article when I implied that Google does not filter their search results, because they do, alongside perhaps all major internet companies.

This may not be such a bad idea, as some advantages can be found in this approach, but living in a world where profit is the main flavor all are salivating for, it should make us wonder if all intentions behind such filters are for the users' advantage, or a means through which such companies can promote more advertising to make a buck from it:





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