



Agent Digital Academy presents

THE ALGORITHM EXPLAINED

What happened to Facebook?



BY FRED PORTER

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**IN THE PAST, WE
CAME TO RELY ON
FACEBOOK TO DO
AMAZING THINGS
FOR OUR BUSINESS,
WITH NO UPFRONT
INVESTMENT.**

**BUT THEN THINGS
CHANGED...**

**FRED PORTER
FACEBOOK PRO**



TIMELINE OF CHANGES FACEBOOK ALGORITHM

The Algorithm is the way Facebook automates the content it wants us to see, based on whatever it decides is relevant at the time.

Here's what has changed over the years...

Pre 2015 The good old days

Easy to get great organic post reach from your page in the newsfeed.

2016 Decline of organic reach

Organic reach for Facebook Business Pages starts decline, and the same is happening on Instagram. Facebook introduces live video.

Early 2018 Focus on family and friends

Posts that generate conversations will be placed higher. Organic reach drops even further, especially small pages with low engagement. Posts deemed "click-bait" or "fake news" from unreliable sources demoted. Posts that come from "quality" news sources promoted.

2019 Relevant Content Score

The new Facebook algorithm ranks all available posts that can display on a user's News Feed based on how likely that user will have a positive reaction. Priority to long-form, quality video. Introduction of Creator Studio for scheduling across Facebook and Instagram.

2015

Overly promotional posts

First major algorithm change targeting overly promotional posts. Posts created for the sole purpose of selling products demoted. Posts pushing people to enter giveaways or contests demoted. Posts using the same content as paid ads demoted.

2017

Data controversy

Public and political backlash on the misuse of personal data.

Late 2018

Ads Manager overhaul

Facebook removes Ad targeting options deemed discriminatory. Facebook improves the Pixel, Look-a-Likes and introduces automated features like Interest Expansion. Strict new policies over Ad wording.

2020

Where to from here?

Quality video is king. Trust the machine (it's smarter than us). Focus on both pre- and post-purchase experience.

Best practice for Organic Posts

Facebook has a preference for authentic (motivational, aspirational, positive) and timely posts (immediate interest, current events, trending topics)

How will you generate conversations around your posts?

The new algorithm for ranking and displaying content on your News Feed is based on four factors:

The **Inventory** of all posts available to display. This includes everything posted from friends and publishers.

Signals that tell Facebook what each post is. What type of content, the publisher, its age, purpose etc. You want your content to signal to Facebook that it's meaningful and relevant to your target audience.

Predictions on how likely a user will have a positive interaction with your content.

A **Final Score** assigned to the content based on all factors considered.

- Post less often with better content. Don't overpost in an effort to be seen. Be consistent.
- Be timely. Plan your posts, come up with a recipe based around timely themes.
- Schedule to Facebook and Instagram natively using the new Creator Studio from Facebook.
- Facebook favours it's newer formats, so use Facebook and Instagram Stories to drive even more engagement. Make sure you tell a story! 360-degree and 3D photos, polls, and quizzes.
- Consider if a Facebook Group is right for you (you'll still need a Facebook Page). Groups are a great way to build an engaged community.
- Video is king. Longer videos with higher completion rates rank higher. How will you get people to watch at least half of your video?
- Upload photo and video direct to your page. Facebook wants professionally produced, TV style video content for FB Watch and IGTV,
- According to Facebook, live videos generate six times as many interactions as regular videos. Don't be boring, hold their attention for at least half of your broadcast. Keep it brief to start with.
- Priority is given to local events and local posts (geo-targeted). Team up with local business.
- Avoid outbound links. Facebook doesn't want you sending traffic away from their platform. Save your links and sales message for your ads!
- Let them find you. Use the Call To Action Button on your Facebook Page to send customers to your website or Messenger.
- Rethink all the content you put out there. What's the best pre- and post-purchase experience you can give them? Create content that provides just that.
- Boosting Posts can be a quick way to get more reach, but you'll have better results with Facebook Ads if you know what you're doing.
- Work with the algorithm to maximise your organic (unpaid) reach before you spend..

Best practice for Paid Ads

Despite Facebook's changes in its algorithm, paid ads and sponsored content are not affected. On the upside - there is now more room for those of us who are prepared to spend a little on our ads, and it doesn't need to be much.

Posts vs Ads

Be wary of boosting posts, use Facebook Ads for that instead. Get the best possible organic reach and don't do the hard-sell in your posts. Remember the difference, you won't be penalised for selling when using Facebook Ads - that's exactly what they're meant for.

Even though costs are rising, Facebook is still one of the best (and cheapest) ways to reach new customers.

There will always be a place for business to advertise on Facebook and Instagram, because Facebook wants your money and will work hard to get you results so you can spend more.

- Use **Facebook Business Manager**
- Use Ads for Sales, Links and Competitions
- Run Video Views and Engagement Campaigns to build your audience cost effectively
- Use Retargeting to make your Sales, and push out a different message (or exclude) those who have already purchased
- Install the Facebook Pixel and track your Conversions
- Setup your audiences before you build your first campaign
- There are new visibility and placement options for Ads, use them! Facebook favours its new formats.
- Try Instant Experience and Send to Messenger, as Facebook likes you to keep people on their platform
- Put mobile first. Facebook and Instagram now offer mobile only experiences and new features designed especially for the small screen. Try Collections Ads (like a mobile carousel) and 15 sec Vertical Video (Story Ads).

Setting up Facebook Business Manager takes only about 5 mins and opens up advanced features

- Sign up (it's free) at business.facebook.com
- Claim your Pages
- Setup your new Business Ad Account
- Link your Instagram Account
- Allocate permissions to your People/Agency