

MARKETING

Facebook Watch could suffer same fate as Facebook's other video platforms

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Facebook Watch is the company's latest effort to bring in more video revenue. Image credit: Facebook

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As Facebook has struggled over the past few years to nail down a consistent video strategy, Facebook Watch may be the latest one of the company's video endeavors to boost luxury brands' social presence.

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Since Facebook reportedly is pulling funding of Facebook Live content in the new year, Facebook Watch could be the last hope for marketers, brands, advertisers and publishers who want to engage customers through video on Facebook. If Watch falls through the same way the platform's previous video efforts have, it will significantly change the video marketing world for luxury brands.

Facebook Watch

The emphasis on video in the media world has increased to the point where the "pivot to video" is a recurring meme on social media.

Yet as more publishers and brands look to social video as a way of engaging customers, a trend is emerging that should put those video hopefuls on their toes.

Over the past few years, Facebook has attempted multiple times to come up with a sustainable video solution on its platform without success.

Most recently, the platform was rumored to be pulling the plug on funding publishers' creation of content for Facebook Live, a process that is entirely unprofitable without the subsidies from Facebook.



Facebook's video woes. Image credit: Facebook

Facebook had been bolstering its live video feature by paying millions of dollars to publishers to create Facebook Live video content, causing media companies to build entire teams around creating real-time video. As first reported by Digiday, publishers are saying that Facebook is not planning on renewing any contracts for such a deal in the future and that publishers will no longer receive money from Facebook to create live video on the platform ([see story](#)).

Now, Facebook Watch has emerged as the new go-to Facebook video solution. But will it fare better than previous video efforts?

Facebook has been putting considerable effort into supporting Watch, reportedly spending up to \$1 million per episode for some of the more popular shows.

But this presents a similar challenge as Facebook Live: it is incredibly expensive to produce high-quality video content. Without Facebook's support, some of the luxury brands and publishers who partner with Facebook Watch may have to pull out to avoid bleeding money.

This puts them at the mercy of Facebook, which could stop funding them at any time the way it has with Facebook Live, making Facebook Watch an equally dangerous prospect for brands and advertisers.

Video woes

Despite the danger, the prospect of advertising with videos on Facebook is simply too good to pass up for many brands.

While Black Friday sees a high number of in-store visits, online traffic spiked this year, with 90 million and 52 million individuals on Facebook and Instagram, respectively, creating a combined total of more than 300 million engagements around content shared for the occasion.

This data comes directly from Facebook, which chronicled the ways customers talked about and engaged with Black Friday Nov. 24 from a social perspective. According to the data, Black Friday is more than just a day for shopping, but also a social event during which customers talk about and engage with posts from brands ([see story](#)).



Vogue is one of many publishers that will no longer receive subsidies to create Facebook Live content. Image credit: Vogue Italia

Facebook has also beefed up its capabilities for advertisers on publishers' videos, hoping to combat some of the

difficulty that media brands have come across with monetizing their videos on the social media platform.

The social media giant will now allow all eligible publishers to monetize in-stream video ads on their own platforms with Audience Network, according to a press release from Facebook. Ad breaks within Facebook Live and on-demand video have also begun beta testing ([see story](#)).

Facebook Watch has already attracted attention from luxury publishers such as Hearst.

The publisher is creating new shows for Facebook Watch, including a partnership with Carine Roitfeld's CR Fashion Book. In November, the group opened a new video and multimedia production studio ([see story](#)).

While Facebook Watch is still in its infancy, it presents both opportunities and challenges for brands and marketers, with an uncertain future for the fate of video advertising on Facebook.

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