

MARKETING

Facebook to crack down on brands with poor customer reviews

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Users will soon be able to review ads on Facebook. Image credit: Facebook

By DANNY PARISI

After the backlash Facebook has faced for its plethora of issues, from data breaches to accusations of lax moderation of advertising and ecommerce, the social network has announced it will begin cracking down on vendors with subpar business models on its platform.

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According to a report from the Wall Street Journal, Facebook will now allow customers to review ads from a business or brand on Facebook and punish brands with poor reviews. This move is meant to appease Facebook's users who feel as though the platform often puts their interests as secondary to monetization, but will likely alienate brands and ecommerce partners.

"By giving users the ability to provide live feedback on their shopping experiences, Facebook is holding brands that advertise on its platform accountable for poor experiences they're providing," said Katie Hickey, marketing manager at **Usabilla**, Amsterdam. "From the brand's perspective, this new tool should not be viewed as a punishment, but rather an opportunity.

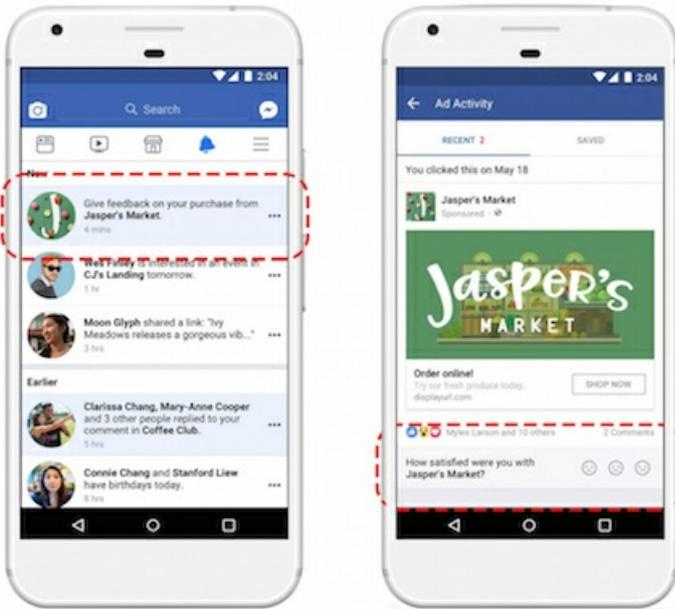
"With this new tool, a brand can easily gain customer insights it may have once been unaware of and work to improve the customer experience it's providing," she said.

Ad review

Facebook is reportedly looking to crack down on brands that advertise and sell products through its platform.

According to a report, Facebook is launching a new ecommerce feature called "Recent Ads Activity." With this feature, buyers can give feedback to a brand or business about issues such as slow delivery times, false advertising and other issues.

Facebook will begin prompting users who have purchased items through its platform to leave feedback for sellers.



Facebook's review prompt. Image credit: Facebook

The goal is that brands with poor reviews will be incentivized to improve their business models.

If they do not however, Facebook will offer them an ultimatum: fix the business model or have all ads placed through Facebook revoked.

Facebook's status as an ecommerce hub is still fairly new. Because of that, the platform has introduced this new feature to curb the tide of sketchy, small sellers that rely on less-than-upfront business models.

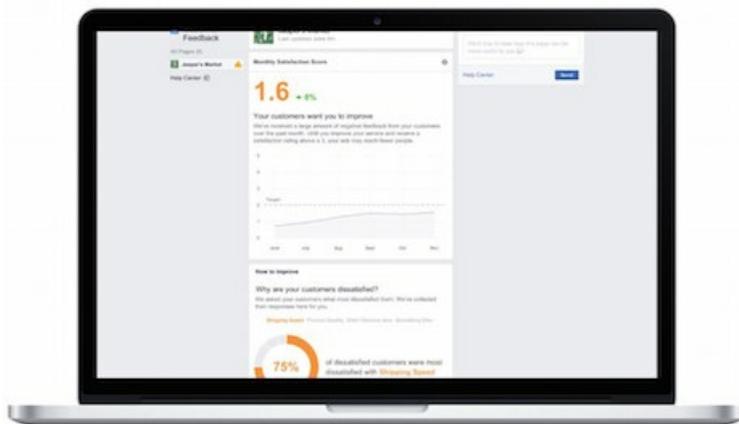
In doing so, Facebook is hoping to clear the way for more respectable brands and sellers, which will increase the likelihood of consumers shopping through its platform again in the future.

Rebuilding trust

Facebook's new ad review feature comes at a dire time for the company.

The platform's privacy scandals seem never to end as the company has yet again been revealed to have given users' data away without their consent.

Just a few months after the Cambridge Analytica scandal, a new report from The New York Times has found that Facebook gave away years' worth of data on consumers to smartphone manufacturers including Apple and Samsung. While the partnership between Facebook and these companies has been public knowledge, the extent of the data given away, including that of customers who did not consent to this specific partnership, is only now being revealed ([see story](#)).



Low review scores will be punished. Image credit: Facebook

After the scandal involving Facebook users' data privacy and the improper access and usage of that data by Cambridge Analytica, the platform's founder Mark Zuckerberg appeared before a congressional hearing on April 10 to speak about exactly what happened.

At the hearing, Mr. Zuckerberg was emphatic that advertisers and developers will never take priority over consumers'

data safety. In response to the controversy, Mr. Zuckerberg announced that Facebook would strictly limit what consumer information advertisers would be able to access ([see story](#)).

The ad review feature is the latest effort on Facebook's part to improve the way users interact with the platform as it seeks to earn back their bruised trust.

"Customers desire seamless and efficient shopping experiences, and irrelevant ads can quickly and easily ruin this for shoppers," Ms. Hickey said. "According to data from a soon-to-be released report from Usabilla, intrusive ads are the biggest frustration for online shoppers on both desktop and mobile.

"To help ease frustrations, brands must become more mindful of the types of ads they're serving users and how relevant they are to the overall shopping experience, or risk losing customers due to frustrating and inefficient shopping experiences," she said. "Having a great product means very little when the overall customer experience is lackluster or annoying."

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