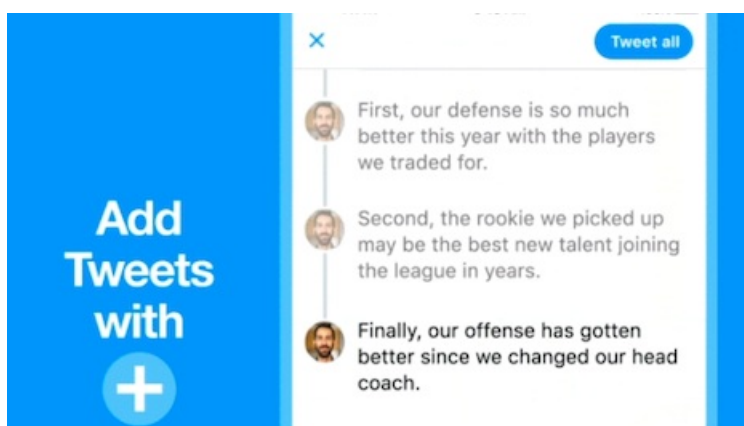


SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

Twitter's algorithm tweak could change marketers' strategies

October 3, 2018



Twitter will now allow users to switch off relevant tweets in their feeds. Image credit: Twitter

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

With algorithms for time-sensitive feeds under significant scrutiny from users, social platform Twitter has decided to revert to a previous system that is more favorable with consumers, but the news will likely help luxury marketers as well.

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Twitter previously changed its newsfeed algorithm to highlight the most relevant tweets for users instead of chronological, but this alteration alienated many users. The social media platform is currently testing an experience in which users can switch back and forth between a relevant feed and a chronological one, making it easier for luxury brands to be visible for longer.

"Luxury brands continue to experiment with various new types of content to provide the most value and engagement with their customers," said Jim Tomanchek, senior director of business development at [Sprinklr](#). "Twitter's change to an algorithmic timeline provides brands the opportunity to reach more of their customers when they're not on Twitter at the moment a tweet goes live.

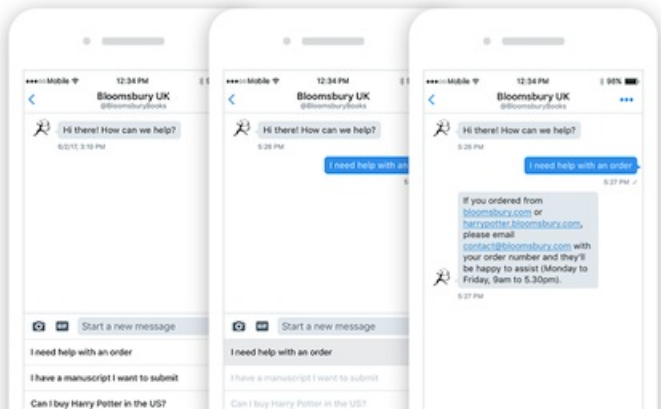
"With additional insight from longer lasting tweets, luxury brands can better inform and invest in their media and creative strategies without having to tweet several times a day to maintain organic brand awareness," he said.

Mr. Tomanchek is not affiliated with Twitter but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Changing algorithms

In a series of tweets this September, Twitter announced that it will be working on a solution in response to complaints in regards to the algorithm that promotes users' "most relevant" tweets at the top of timelines.

Many users felt as though they were missing content they would like to see and that the timelines were not always the most relevant, as Twitter planned them to be.



Chatbots, live video and more have all driven engagement in Twitter ads. Image credit: Twitter

This format forced brands to share more continuous content in the hopes of combat being buried by the algorithm. Marketers on Twitter now can focus more on the best quality content they can create rather than keeping up the quantity.

However, it will take a balancing act, as Twitter is not completely getting rid of the relevant timeline. Instead, it will allow users to turn the algorithm on or off in their settings.

A toggle button in settings will allow users to turn off "show relevant tweets" for their timeline.

While some Twitter users have complained about the algorithm since its launch, legal issues rather than user feedback could have prompted the change.

After a 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.



Many luxury brands leverage Twitter to connect to users

The scandal not only prompted experts looking closer into Facebook's operations, but it has also extended to other platforms including Twitter, especially in regards to political content.

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](#)).

For Twitter, the platform has been accused of hiding content created by politicians, more specifically members of Congress, as part of its algorithm.

The social media company persists that it does not make intentional decisions based on politics and uses its algorithm solely to make a more relevant feed for users. However, that algorithm inadvertently and unfairly hid politicians' content based on the actions of their followers.

It is not clear on whether the political content held back either was from either Democrats or Republicans.

Marketers and algorithms

Algorithms are highly impactful on brands' visibility and will continue to be as more technology emerges in the future.

As consumers increasingly use virtual voice assistants such as the Amazon Echo or Google Home for shopping, a

report indicates brand visibility and loyalty are at risk, for this very reason.

A survey from Digitas found that 85 percent of consumers have purchased the first product result offered by one of these devices, which in many cases is not from the brand they originally searched for. Millennials, who will make up half of the luxury market in a matter of years, show an even greater tendency towards settling for a device's pick ([see story](#)).

In response to these changes as well as Twitter and Facebook, luxury brands are taking other steps.

"Luxury marketers are developing innovative ways to use LinkedIn to target professionals and executives around the world who have strong purchasing power," Mr. Tomanek said. "According to LinkedIn, their audience has two times the buying power of the average Web audience.

"Additionally, luxury brands and influencers go together like peanut butter and jelly. So it's no surprise that luxury marketers are looking to Instagram to drive buzz around their products," he said. "As we head into 2019, we'll see luxury marketers increasingly make their influencer relationships more genuine and transparent rather than transactional."

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