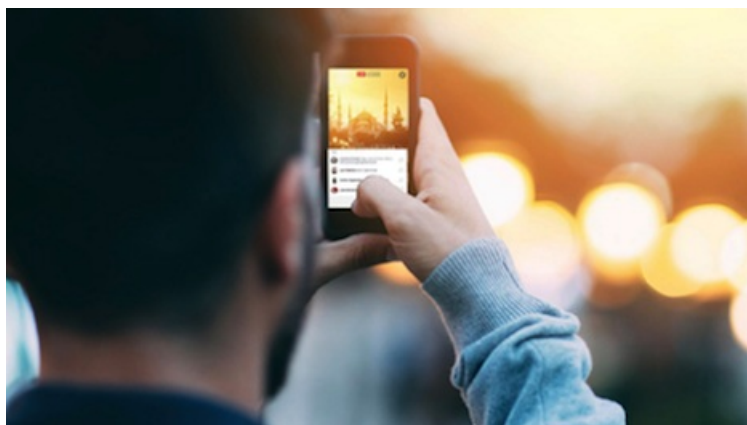


SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

Facebook launches reward-based market research program

June 13, 2019



Consumers believe brands should be transparent on social more so than their peers. Image credit: Facebook

By STAFF REPORTS

Social network Facebook is looking to make consumer research more transparent with the debut of an opt-in program.

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Study from Facebook is a mobile application that will track volunteer participants' app usage in exchange for monetary compensation. Facebook says this move is in response to the changing consumer expectations surrounding market research.

Incentivizing information

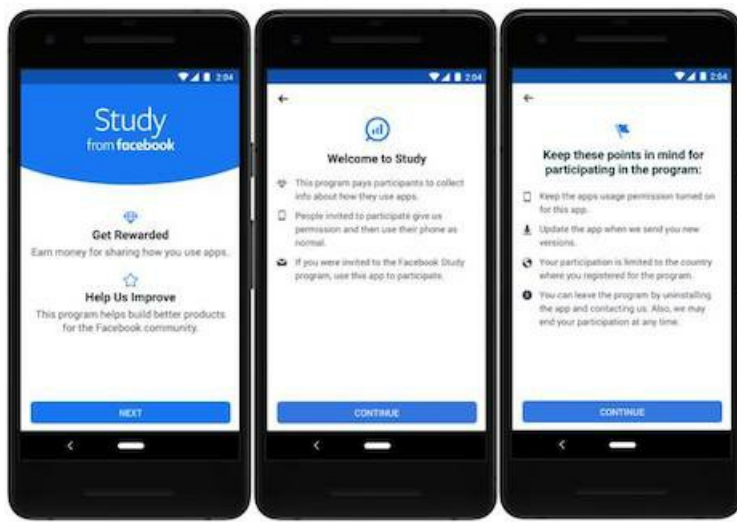
Study is launching first in the United States and India, with plans to expand it to other markets. For the program, Facebook has tapped Applause to handle aspects such as registration, compensation and user support.

The company has been running advertisements on Facebook encouraging users who are 18 and older to sign up for the program. Those who click on the promoted posts will be able to enroll in Study from Facebook.

Participants then have to download the Study from Facebook app from the Google Play Store. Before any data is tracked, consumers are told what information the program will be collecting.

Study is focused on app usage, and looks at data points such as what apps are installed on participants' Android phones and how long they use these platforms. It will not be collecting user IDs, passwords or content such as photos or messages.

Facebook says the market research will not be sold to its advertisers for targeting, and data collected on individual users will not be used to augment their user profile on Facebook Inc. platforms.



Study from Facebook. Image courtesy of Facebook

Users can opt out at any time.

According to [TechCrunch](#), Facebook previously had a more under-the-radar research program that persuaded users as young as 13 to install a VPN that would monitor more of their activity in exchange for financial rewards. Apple banned the Facebook Research app in 2018, and Facebook reportedly ended the program earlier this year.

Facebook's market research move comes as the company continues to face backlash over privacy issues.

Concerns about Facebook's revenue growth and a steady stream of data privacy controversies have contributed to the company's stock falling 40 percent from its record high. The social network is still recovering from the Cambridge Analytica scandal, accusations of disinformation and high-profile departures ([see story](#)).

Growth in data availability has opened up doors for marketing and is driving economic growth, but the tradeoff has been the individual's loss of control over their own information, according to an executive from Identity Praxis.

As the number of connected devices and smart technology the typical consumer owns grows, so does their ability to be tracked, leading to big business for big data. During the "You Heard It Here First: Personal Data is the New Luxury Good" keynote at Luxury FirstLook 2018: Exclusivity Redefined, the executive predicted that in the future, privacy will be afforded only by the affluent class, turning it into a luxury ([see story](#)).