6 Things Marketers Should Know About Facebook's App Integrations by @virginianussey

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On January 25, Facebook announced a plan to fully integrate the three platforms: Facebook Messenger, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

The revolutionary project will empower users to message each other, regardless of the apps they're using, according to The New York Times.

People on Instagram will be able to effortlessly message friends on Facebook. WhatsApp users can reach out to friends on Instagram.

It was proposed by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, which came as a surprise to some after he'd previously advocated for the apps' distinct separation.

So far, the word is that Facebook's plans for the platform integration will be complete by 2020.

This is about to have a huge impact on digital marketers.

Here are six key things every marketer should know about Facebook's announcement.

1. This Is a Big Win for Folks Using These Apps

"[We want to] build the best messaging experiences we can; and

people want messaging to be fast, simple, reliable and private," say Facebook reps.

No surprise there! Think about it from your own perspective.

Being able to use the app you're already using to reach friends, colleagues, and family on other apps – without having to download a new app on your phone? Convenient!

There are more than 2.6 billion combined users on Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram.

By integrating the apps, Facebook doesn't have to try to coerce users into downloading the other messaging platforms they wouldn't use otherwise.

Instead, users just need one of the three apps to message friends and family across the platforms.

"We're working on making more of our messaging products end-to-end encrypted and considering ways to make it easier to reach friends and family across networks," said Facebook.

2. Marketers Need to Get to Know Facebook Messaging Ads

After closing another quarter beating earnings estimates ($16.9 billion last quarter!) Facebook will benefit its bottom line with new revenue opportunities through the apps integration.

Chief among those opportunities: new ad space.

It was just a few years ago that Facebook said it was running out of space in the News Feed to show ads. As long as Facebook gives advertisers robust targeting capabilities and good placement opportunities, then demand and inventory will grow.

With this integration, expect to see new ad formats and

placements within the Facebook Ads ecosystem open up on Instagram, Messenger, and WhatsApp.

The big takeaway here: It’s time to start running Facebook Messenger ads with automated chatbot “landing page” experiences.

Start looking at Facebook click-to-Messenger ads and developing your strategy for awesome engagement with competitive ROAS.

When you’ve nailed the click-to-Messenger ad, you’ll be ready when WhatsApp and Instagram release similar direct messaging ads.

3. Did You Know, Chat & Text Are Preferred to Email & Phone?

(Not so) news flash: most people prefer chatting over any other channel.

This includes communications via email, phone, and traditional mail.

Here are the stats:

- 45.8 percent of consumers prefer to use messaging apps to communicate with businesses over email.
- 55 percent of people are interested in reaching out to a business through messaging apps to solve an issue.
- 47 percent of consumers are open to purchasing via chat automation (chatbots).

Ergo, marketers should use chat apps like Messenger and WhatsApp as marketing channels.

4. Marketers Will Be Able to Streamline Chat Marketing Campaigns

The new app integration though will allow businesses to expand their marketing presence and reach new target markets.

Because consumers prefer chatting, chat marketing is the most engaging channel today. 60 percent open rates and 20 percent click-through rates are the norm.

That’s why learning to use a platform that lets you do chat marketing automation is one of the best things you could do for your campaigns and business today.

Creating a Facebook Messenger chatbot is easy with a visual campaign builder.

But creating a chatbot for WhatsApp and Insta today, while possible, is super technical and pretty pricey.

For instance, to construct a chatbot on Instagram, you can hire a developer to go to Github and copy open source code from the website.

This will create a basis for your bot that will be plugged into your VM instances under your computer engine.

From there, you continue to code until your bot is up and running.

WhatsApp isn’t much easier.

To create a bot on the messaging platform, businesses must apply for a beta program called WhatsApp Business API which still has limited public preview.

Of course, the bot you built for one app won’t work for other chat apps.

And so businesses usually choose one platform to invest in

development.

After the three communication apps are integrated though, businesses will be able to use a visual chatbot campaign builder to create bots without coding for all three global chat applications.

That makes reaching the 1 billion monthly users on Instagram, 1.5 billion on WhatsApp and 1.3 billion on Facebook Messenger possible from one convenient, easy-to-use chatbot builder.

(Ready to get started? See how to build a free chatbot for Facebook Messenger.)

5. Look to WeChat for Facebook's Big Goals

WeChat is a messaging system where users can complete online tasks and it dominates in China.

People use it to order clothing, buy a meal, call a ride – without leaving the application. We can only assume that Facebook wants to achieve the same through this integration.

Services haven't really been possible in other similar messaging apps just because users are fragmented.

But the consolidation of Instagram, Messenger, and WhatsApp can change all of this.

With Facebook's united system in place, businesses can invest in making their goods and services available to users across all the messaging apps!

6. Act Fast with Chat Marketing to

Get Early Adopter Advantage

If you’re seeing this all unfold, you can see what’s coming down the turn.

Chat marketing is about to become a dominant channel for business purposes.

So why wait to act?

It’s time to develop your chatbot marketing strategies.

Start creating marketing automations on Facebook Messenger, the first of the three chat apps with a messaging API allowing for integrations with your other business systems.

You can be the first on the scene and among your competitors when the messaging infrastructures are combined in 2020.

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