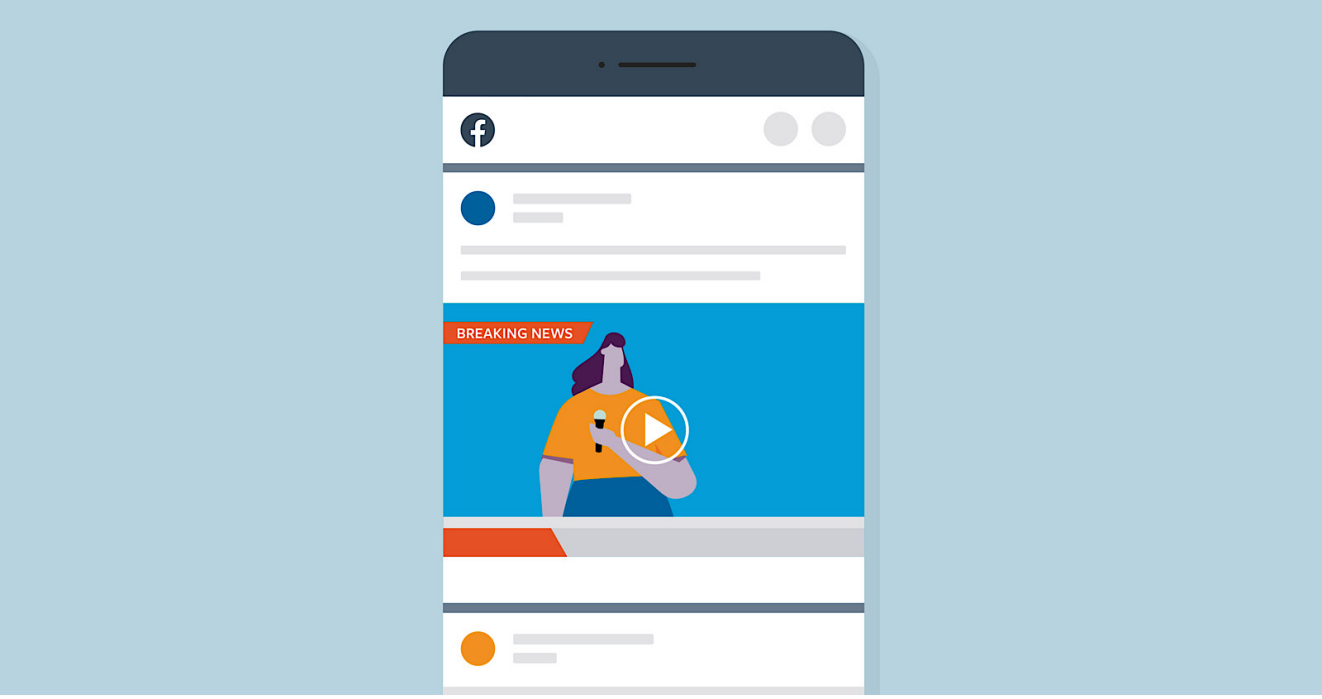
Facebook Algorithm Now Prioritizes Original Reporting via @MattGSouthern



As of today, Facebook is changing the way news stories are ranked in its main feed with an algorithm update that prioritizes original reporting.

In addition, Facebook's algorithm will now demote news articles without "transparent authorship."

Facebook says both of these updates are based on user research and built with the help of feedback from news publishers and academic experts.

Here's more about each of these changes to Facebook's ranking signals.

Prioritizing Original News

Facebook's algorithm will now prioritize news articles that have been identified as original reporting.

In order to identify original news articles, Facebook will look at groups of articles on a similar topic to determine which article is most frequently linked to as the original source.

When multiple stories on the same subject are shared by different publishers, Facebook will boost the more original one in peoples' feeds.

This change does not apply to news articles shared by personal connections such as friends and family. This only applies to articles shared by publishers' pages.

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There are flaws in this approach that immediately come to mind. For example, it's not uncommon for an original story from a small publisher to get picked up by a larger website.

In those instances, reporters may end up linking to the larger publisher more frequently because it's more well known.

By Facebook's standards the article from the big publisher would be seen as the original, despite that not being the case.

Facebook admits defining original reporting standards are complex and the company will continue to refine its approach over time.

Demoting Non-transparent Authorship

Facebook is emphasizing the importance of transparent authorship, saying lack of transparency is a sign of poor credibility.

Going forward, Facebook will demote news articles from publishers that do not have information about their editorial

staff.

News articles will be reviewed for bylines or a staff page on the publisher's website Information must include the first and last names of reporters or other editorial staff.

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> *"We've found that publishers who do not include this information often lack credibility to readers and produce content with clickbait or ad farms, all content people tell us they don't want to see on Facebook."*

There does not appear to be any other criteria for what is considered "transparent authorship" other than listing the first and last names of reporters.

Although, I would assume, the more information provided the better it will look for the publisher.

This change is not unique to the Facebook platform. Transparent authorship is an editorial standard in journalism.

> *"Editorial transparency is a professional standard supported by organizations like the Trust Project, SOS Support Public Broadcasting Coalition, Global Forum for Media Development, and Reporters Without Borders' Journalism Trust Initiative.*
>
> *We consulted with these organizations, in addition to more than 20 other global media experts, to develop these standards."*

There are flaws with this approach as well, Facebook admits. In some cases authors may be putting themselves at risk by including their personal information in articles.

Facebook is only prioritizing author transparency limited

markets to start, taking into account the press environment in which publishers operate.

What Does This Mean for Publishers?

As this change rolls out, original news and reporting may see an increase in distribution.

It’s important for publishers to keep in mind that their articles are still subject to Facebook’s existing news feed ranking signals.

With that said, Facebook says most news publishers will likely not see significant changes to their placement in peoples’ news feeds.

Source: Facebook

http://tracking.feedpress.it/link/13962/13690228