Facebook tries adding video and voice calls back into its main app

Facebook is testing adding voice and video calls to the main Facebook app, *Bloomberg* reports. The features are currently part of the standalone Messenger app, which Facebook originally spun out of its big blue main app in 2011 and officially removed in 2014.

Voice and video calls are two of several Messenger features that Facebook has introduced in its other products like Portal video cameras and Oculus virtual reality headsets. The company hasn't shared if it plans to bring other parts of Messenger back into the fold, but Messenger's director of product management did tell *Bloomberg* that "you're going to start to see quite a bit more of this over time."

Messenger features in everything might make Facebook a harder knot to untangle

Facebook confirmed to *The Verge* that it is testing voice and video calls in "several countries, including the US." The company did not share how many users will see the features or what this means for the standalone Messenger app in the future other than "for a full-featured messaging, audio and video call experience, people should continue using Messenger."

Adding voice and video calls to the Facebook app makes about as much sense as spinning off Messenger in the first place. Yes, it means there's one less app to switch between while you're doing other things on your computer or phone, but it also means you'll have to interact with (or at least see) Facebook on the way — something I'm not sure everyone is

interested in doing.

There’s also the risk that weaving Messenger into Facebook draws the same kinds of criticism that unifying Messenger and Instagram direct messages did. It seems like it makes a giant company like Facebook even harder to break up — which may be the point.

This isn’t the first suggestion that Facebook was considering getting Messenger back into Facebook, either. In 2019, the company tested bringing text chats back into the main app with a dedicated inbox and splashed “from Facebook” across Oculus, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/8/23/22638530/facebook-messenger-video-voice-calls-back-main-app