Teen Vogue Flounders With Apparent Sponsored Content From Facebook

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2 hours ago

Teen Vogue, the award-winning digital publication known for its transition from teenybopper fashion magazine to hard-hitting, youth-oriented news platform, became the target social media ire this morning after publishing a story about Facebook's efforts to "ensure the integrity of the 2020 election."

The story was a flattering, roughly 2,000-word profile highlighting five women of Facebook and Instagram—Katie Harbath, Sarah Schiff, Monica Lee, Antonia Woodford and Crystal Patterson—and their efforts to avoid the blunders of the 2016 election. Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg linked to the Teen Vogue story on her personal Facebook account shortly after it was published.

The piece was published without a branded content label, but one was added after the story started gaining traction on social media. That resulted in criticism online about the publisher’s failure to disclose it was branded content or include a byline and general confusion about why the article was published in the first place. Within a few hours, it was scrubbed from the website entirely.

> *— Teen Vogue runs Facebook story people think is sponsored content*
> *— Adds note saying its sponcon*
> *— Then removes note*
> *— FB denies to me that it’s sponcon*
> *— Teen Vogue tweets “literally idk,” then deletes tweet*
> *— Entire article suddenly disappears*
> *— ????https://t.co/tLeSZYgAgF*
>
> *— Rob Price (@robaeprice) January 8, 2020*

Considering Teen Vogue’s reputation for providing its young adult readers with political and legal analysis that keeps powerful establishments in check, as well as the fact that its latest news about Facebook wasn’t exactly positive, media watchers found the sudden change of perspective jarring and suspicious.

Though the story has vanished, whether or not it was sponsored remains a mystery.

Facebook spokesperson Lisa Stratton told Business Insider the piece was “purely editorial.”

A representative for Teen Vogue’s parent company, Condé Nast, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

https://www.adweek.com/digital/teen-vogue-flounders-with-apparent-sponsored-content-from-facebook/