

**PROXIMITY**  
**BRIEFING:**

**New Facebook News Feed –  
What Brands Need To Know**

MARCH, 2013

↗ **FACEBOOK** has just introduced a completely revamped News Feed experience. The updated feed ensures that users remain highly engaged and offers them the ability to customize their news stream in a variety of new ways – from tailored streams based on content types to larger format photos and videos. For brands, this change reflects CEO Mark Zuckerberg’s January 2013 statement that “[Facebook is always] optimizing (ads in the News Feed) by improving targeting and relevance so we can show everyone content that they care more about...by designing better ad products that aren’t just about links and texts and images.” The new stream offers new challenges and opportunities for brands and Proximity has developed a Snapshot briefing to provide brand leaders with all they need to know about the update.

## ↗ WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Facebook's announcement today revealed the company's desire to create the "best personalized newspaper possible". Users now have the option to move between different views of their News Feed that focus on specific streams of content. Presently, the News Feed is made up of content posts of all types: status updates, links, videos, pictures. Users will now have the ability to apply certain filters to the News Feed stream they currently experience, curating their content to create a personalized newspaper.

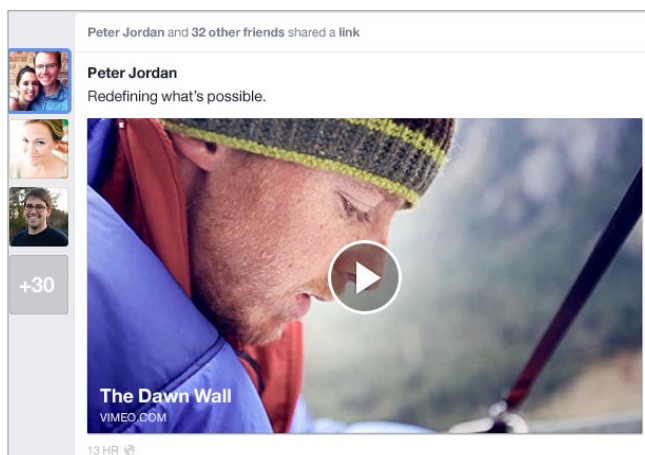
## NEW STREAM OPTIONS:

### FRIENDS AND FOLLOWING.

To allow users to view what's important to them, Facebook is rolling out the option of friends-only and following-only streams. While the 'Friends' stream is self-explanatory, the 'Following' feed will show updates only from pages, brands and individuals a user has subscribed to.

### PHOTOS.

The new 'Photos' view of the News Feed will allow users to see only photos being shared by the friends and brands they are following on Facebook.



*More screen real estate for photos and videos.*

### MOST RECENT.

Facebook's new 'Most Recent' feed will show all information from all people a user is friends with as well as brands and pages a user is subscribed to as it happens.

### MUSIC.

The increased popularity in the past year of music-streaming services – like Spotify, Songza and Rdio – that have integrated with Facebook Connect, has proved that many users are looking to share the music they are listening to and interested in. The 'Music' view of the News Feed will do just that, pulling in friends' listening behaviour as well as events, photos and relevant links.

### THE FORMAT.

Along with these new content filters, Facebook has also introduced a new, larger format for link and image posts, as well as ads that appear in the stream. Many have criticized the amount of whitespace in the News Feed based on the size limitations of individual posts. Users will now be able to see large, rich images in their feed.

**FACEBOOK ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE USER EXPERIENCE WILL BE THE SAME ACROSS DESKTOP, MOBILE AND TABLET INTERFACES.**

# KEY IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW NEWS FEED

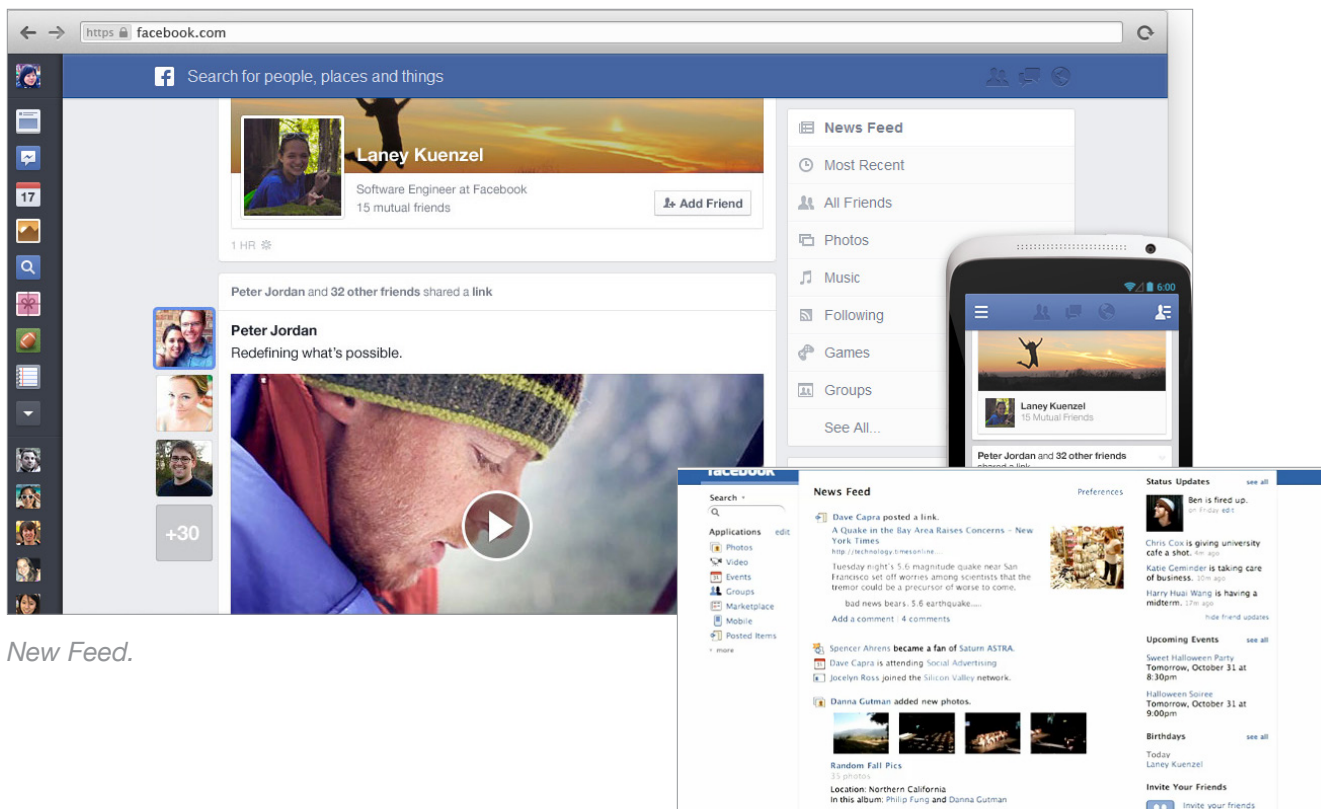
Brands will need to consider the implications that the update will have on their page, platform and content strategies in order to effectively communicate and engage with their users.

Key consideration areas include:

**PHOTOS ARE** one of the popular content types on Facebook. The updates to the size of pictures in the stream and the addition of a photo-only view will surely be very well received by users. In addition, the full integration of Instagram into the photo stream may reinvigorate interest amongst lapsed users and offer new ways to share and consume photos.

**TO DATE**, Facebook has tried to focus the way users interact with their service. By giving users new options on how to view their personal feed, we will see the emergence of new user behaviours. There will likely be a segment of Facebook users that sticks strictly to the Photo stream and may never see another status update. Some users may eschew the Following feed and choose to only see updates from Friends.

**THE NEW** larger and more vibrant ad units that will appear in the News Feed could lead to some backlash. For many users, this will feel like a greater intrusion into their personal stream as brand communications can now be more visual and impactful.



*New Feed.*

*Old Feed.*

# ↗ WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

Facebook revealed today that 25-30% of all content users see organically in the News Feed comes from brand pages and public figures. With the introduction of new stream types, brands will need to refine their content strategies to ensure that users see and engage with their content.

Key considerations for brand leaders to focus on include:

## **Publishing strategies and the role of the community manager will evolve.**

With a feed dedicated to recent content, the need to be the first and the best has been magnified. 'Real-time' content will now matter more than ever and the EdgeRank algorithm will likely only apply to the other streams.

The 'Most Recent' feed will create temptation to increase posting frequency on Facebook, creating a micro-blogging experience on the site. Brands have an opportunity to serve up more content on Facebook, since the platform now offers the duality of "sticky" content in the regular News Feed and timely fluidity on the recent feed.

## **Brands need to prioritize streams based on their objectives and strengths.**

With so many new streams to pick from, brands will need to focus their efforts – which stream are their fans most likely to be on? How should ad dollars be spent? What do their fans like best? Should brands now serve up all kinds of content or should they pick, and become known for a single type?




Such decisions will encourage brands to develop clear social value propositions that will aid in their challenge to differentiate themselves from one another.

## **Incorporating Instagram into social strategy has become critical.**

By being integrated into the 'Photos' feed of Facebook, updates from Instagram will now have a larger audience than they have to date. While the retro style of the Instagram format doesn't fit with every brand, the increased focus that today's update puts on the photo-sharing app gives brands a reason to investigate how they can become more relatable to their audience.


In addition, the photo-only stream will require brands to develop photo-specific content strategies that drive positive engagement and participation among the community.

**+ Other feeds to try**


-  **Most recent**  
Everything there is, in the order it happened.
-  **Following**  
All the latest news from the pages and people you follow.
-  **And even more...**  
Including feeds for your Close Friends and any other lists.


**FEB**  
**19**

**Upcoming Events**





**Alameda Point Antiques Fair**  
Sunday at 6:00pm  
Alameda Point Fairgrounds, Alameda, CA

[Join](#) 




**Greg's Turning 40 Birthday Surprise**  
February 28 at 8:00pm  
Monk's Kettle San Francisco, CA

[Join](#) 



**Tiny Telephone 15th Anniversary Party**  
February 28th at 7:00pm  
Tiny Telephone San Francisco, CA

[Join](#) 

## IN SUMMARY

The latest changes to the News Feed present many opportunities for brands to create deeper engagement with Facebook's users. That said, users have more power over how they hear from brands in their day-to-day Facebook experience – they can mute, ignore and customize their streams like never before.

Brands must refine their publishing and engagement strategies to ensure that they are still surfacing in the feeds and be clear on the value that their messages provide to their users.

**CONTACT INFO:**

Dave Lafond, President  
(416) 972 5352  
[David.Lafond@proximity.ca](mailto:David.Lafond@proximity.ca)

**BBDO** &  
**proximity**