Total Reach in Measure vs. Facebook

When working with Facebook or Instagram in Measure, you may notice that your total reach data is higher than the data in the networks' native reporting. These discrepancies in total reach are expected for Meta Platforms. Because Meta anonymizes user data before delivering it to third-party apps like Social Media Management, there are some circumstances in which a unique viewer might be counted multiple times.

In this article, learn more about how and why your total reach results in Measure may differ from your results natively, as well as some potential solutions.

What is reach?

Reach is a social media metric that measures the size of your audience, either during a specific date range (channel reach) or for a specific post (content reach).

Unlike **impressions**, reach only counts unique viewers, not repeat viewers. For example, if a post has been viewed by three people, but they each viewed it twice, the post's total reach would be 3, and its total impressions would be 6.

Tip:

The ratio of reach to impressions is **frequency**, a metric which measures the average number of views per person. In the example above, the post's frequency would be 2.

Like all metrics in Measure, reach can be expressed as either a **total** or an **average**. Discrepancies with native reporting only occur with total reach.

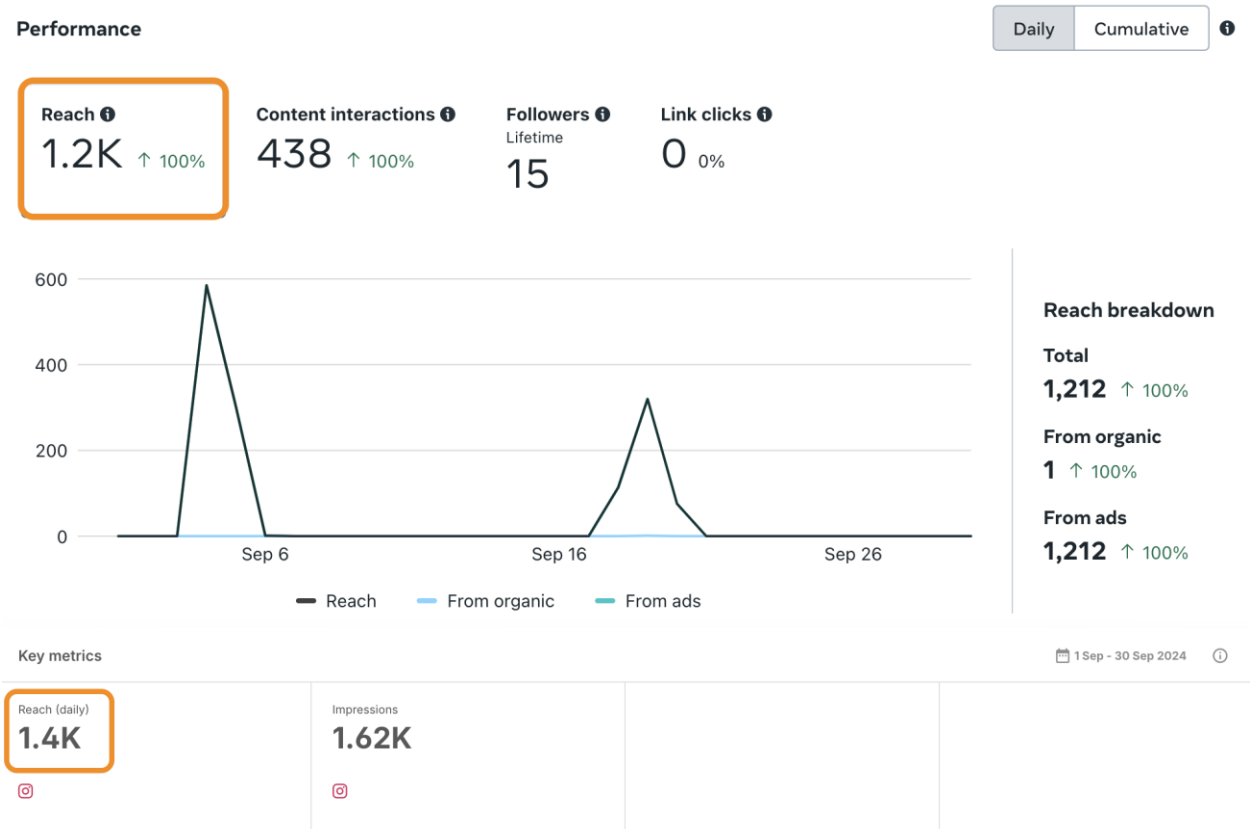
Calculating total channel reach

Channel reach is defined as the number of people who viewed at least one of your channel's posts during the selected date range. Meta reports your channel reach data to Measure once a day, and Measure adds these daily values together to calculate your total reach over time. However, because this data is anonymous, a unique viewer will be counted multiple times in Measure if they viewed your content on multiple days during your selected date range.

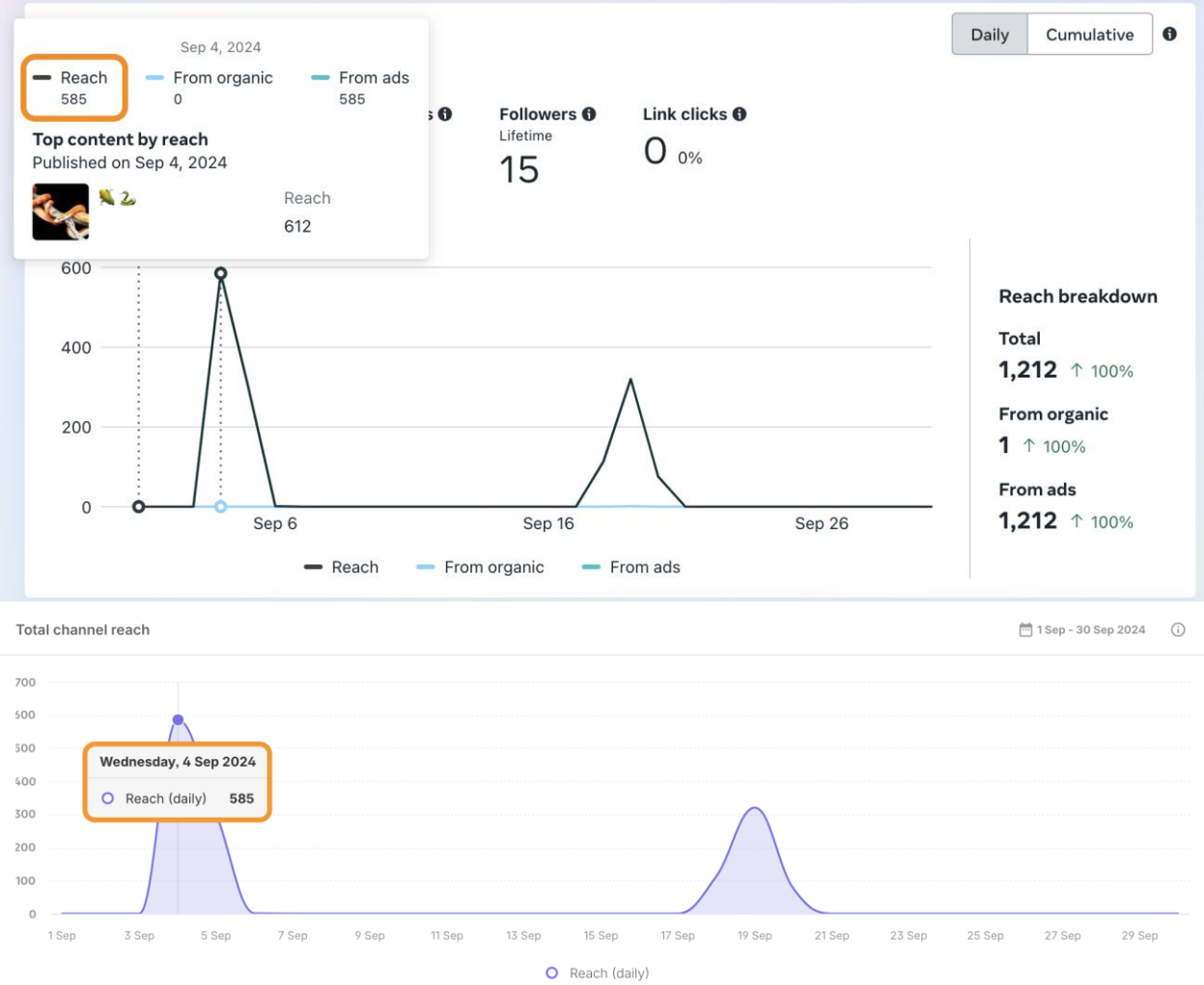
Consider the example below:

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Person A	2 views	3 views	1 view
Person B	1 view		
Person C	1 view		1 view
Daily total impressions	4 views	3 views	2 views
Daily total reach	3 viewers (A, B, C)	1 viewer (A)	2 viewers (A, C)
Combined total impressions	9 views		
Combined total reach (Meta)	3 viewers (A, B, C)		
Combined total reach (Measure)	6 viewers (Day 1 + Day 2 + Day 3)		

Meta is able to recognize that Person A and Person C are repeat viewers from previous days, but Measure is not, because the data we receive from Meta each day is anonymized. This gives us a higher total reach result than Meta:



Please note that only your combined reach data can be affected by repeat viewers. Your reach per day, which is available in Measure's **Time series** widget, will not be affected:



Additionally, you can use **average reach** to avoid this effect entirely. Your average reach per day will remain accurate even if a single person is counted on multiple days. Measure dashboard templates use **reach (avg.)** by default.

Calculating total content reach

Content reach is defined as the lifetime number of people who have viewed a post at least once. Meta reports your content reach data to Measure separately for each post, and Measure adds these post values together to calculate your total reach for all content. However, because this data is anonymous, a unique viewer will be counted multiple times in Measure if they viewed multiple posts published during your selected date range.

Consider the example below:

	Post 1	Post 2	Post 3
Person A	2 views	3 views	1 view
Person B	1 view	1 view	
Person C	1 view		
Daily total impressions	4 views	4 views	1 view
Daily total reach	3 viewers (A, B, C)	2 viewers (A, B)	1 viewer (A)
Combined total impressions	9 views		
Combined total reach (Meta)	3 viewers (A, B, C)		
Combined total reach (Measure)	6 viewers (Post 1 + Post 2 + Post 3)		

Meta is able to recognize that Person A and Person B are repeat viewers from other posts, but Measure is not, because the data we receive from Meta for each post is anonymized.

Please note that only your combined reach data can be affected by repeat viewers. Your reach per post will not be affected:

White snake resting on a branch.

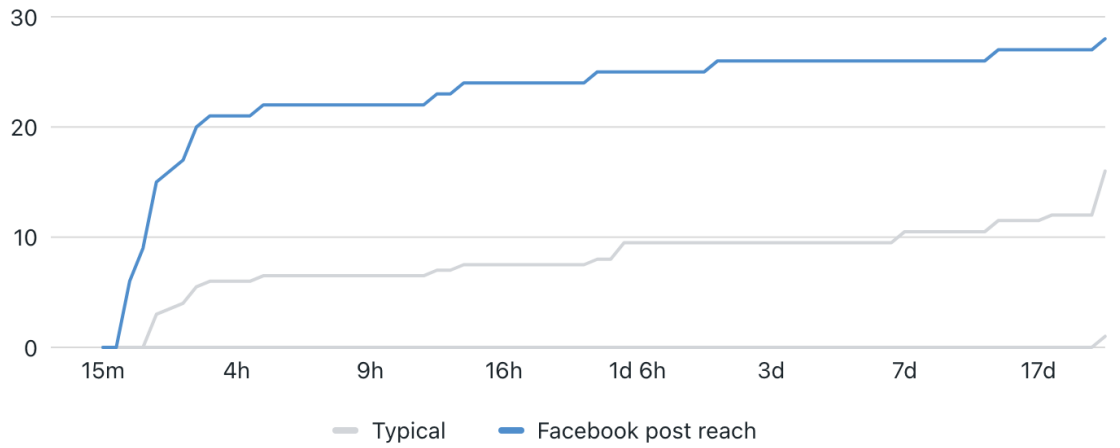
Post · Published on: Sep 4, 2024

Overview

Reach	Impressions	Interactions	Link clicks
28	29	4	--

Reach

28



From ads

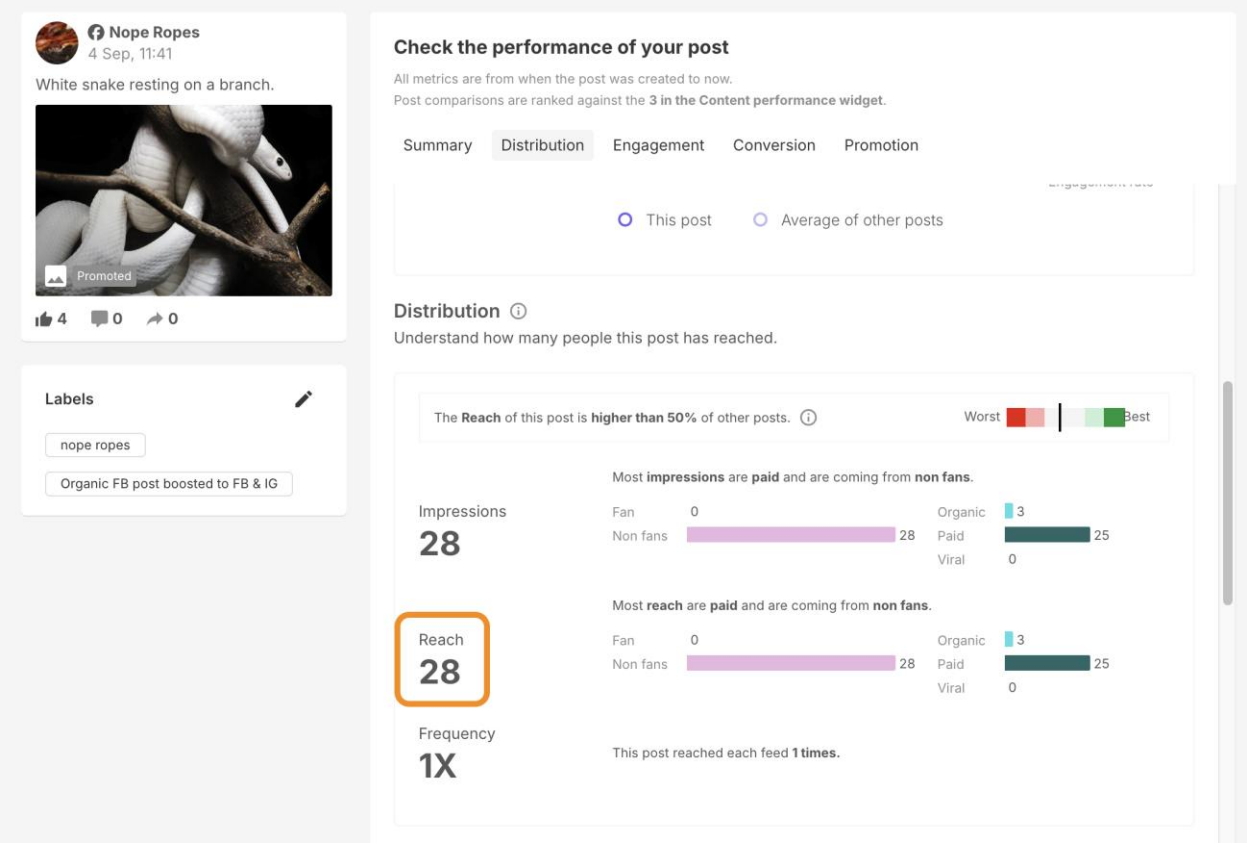
25

From non-followers

3

From organic

3



Additionally, you can use **average reach** to avoid this effect entirely. Your average reach per post will remain accurate even if a single person is counted on multiple posts. Measure dashboard templates use **reach (avg.)** by default.

Why doesn't Measure calculate total reach the same way Meta does?

Unfortunately, it's not possible for Measure—or any third-party app—to collect your true total reach data from Facebook or Instagram. They simply do not make this information available via their API. When working with anonymous, aggregated reach data, there is always a risk that results will be artificially inflated by repeat viewers. However, even when adjusted for this inflation, total reach is still a powerful and versatile metric that remains distinct from impressions.

If you're still having trouble interpreting your reach data in Measure, please don't hesitate to contact Support.