

Content Strategy Exercise

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Part I: Identifying Content Strategy Opportunities

Buy And Sell Groups

Facebook Moments

Part II: Re-Envisioning Content

Create New Page

Part I

Buy And Sell Groups

Opportunity Overview

It has never been easier to buy and sell your unwanted belongings on Facebook. *Buy and Sell Groups* provide an easy way for people looking to get rid of unwanted items and make some cash within a local community that they belong to. The flow for selling items is quick and simple, and it does an adequate job at facilitating the sale of an item. The problem is Buy and Sell Groups neglect people who are looking to buy a specific item; if you browse through the feed of a Buy and Sell Group, it quickly becomes apparent that there are many such people.

Currently, wishful buyers are forced to misuse the system which is not designed with them in mind. People posting requests for items are forced to enter obviously inappropriate prices (like FREE or \$99999) because giving a price in their situation does not make much sense (as they have nothing to sell). This missing feature is a burden on both sides of the transaction: the seeker will not get much help and the audience is at best visually disturbed if not generally confused.



Varun Gadh
February 21 at 12:38am

Looking for a spare headband!

FREE

📍 Pittsburgh, PA (15213)

I'm working on a project and am looking for a headband - do you have a spare one I could take? I could compensate you in well-executed high



Jay Tipre
February 18 at 5:25pm

buying tickets for Ig

\$54,545,546,116

📍 Pittsburgh, PA (15217)

Recommendations

There are a variety of ways to optimize the experience for the person who owns a desired item, sees a matching "looking for" post, and wants to sell. One could imagine a system that scans through all posts and matches sellers with seekers based on the similarity of two corresponding posts. Another option would be to suggest people who have sold items in the past that match (or are similar to) the current

item sought, in case the seller hasn't yet sold it, has more to sell, or could at least point the seeker in the right direction.

On a broader level, one can see a system with two "tags" for each post: "Buying" and "Looking For" with a small UI badge on each post indicating the type of post it is. In the "Looking For" scenario, we also might have to think about "Price" a little differently. One quick win would allow a way for both buyers and seekers to specify a "soft price" with a "negotiable" tag.

We could afford the seeker the ability to specify an exact dollar amount, but in many cases, a price range ("soft price") may make more sense. An alternate and perhaps more elegant content strategy solution would keep the price system as it is, and simply add an option to mark the price "(negotiable)" or "(price fixed)." Of course neither option would be required — people are able to use the system the same way they always could. I think this subtle distinction is important, as it is keeping with the skeleton/socially-determined design and the refrained voice in this product. Presently, the flow is nearly a blank canvas, affording people the ability to provide as much or as little information they want.

To make stronger and more rooted recommendations, I would need a high-level understanding of how the Buy and Sell feeds currently push certain posts to specific people (e.g. the parameters involved). Also, having data on a large set of Buy and Sell Groups would help me evaluate how these communities function, on average. For this exercise, I was only able to look at a few such groups. It's possible the varied community dynamics could offer insight on how to implement this buyer/seeker system by, for example, examining the ways people in the "looking for" category are already using buy and sell groups (e.g. what words and vernacular they are using, and how uniform this is across groups). It seems that examining natural behavioral tendencies might shed light on a seeker's mental model, allowing us to design with these understandings in mind.

Example Mockup to Demonstrate Concept



Henry Dixon
March 1 at 6:00pm

LOOKING FOR

Does anyone have an pair of headphones I can use for working out
\$ 50 (negotiable)

 **Message Buyer**

 **Like**  **Comment**  **Share**



Serena Anand
March 1 at 6:00pm

SELLING

Selling beats that I used once; like-new condition
\$ 70 (negotiable)

 **Message Seller**

 **Like**  **Comment**  **Share**

Example Mockup to Demonstrate Concept

First, I post:

Priu
Similar

Henry Dixon
March 1 at 6:00pm

LOOKING FOR

Does anyone have a pair of headphones I can use for working out
\$50 (negotiable)

Message Buyer

Like Comment Share

Serena Anand
March 1 at 6:00pm

SELLING

beats are headphones
Selling beats that I used once; like-new condition
\$70 (negotiable)

Message Seller

Like Comment Share

So these two seem like they could be a good match.

At this point, we could do something e.g. notify either me or Serena.

If that notification is ignored, we could then notify the other person.
This way, we have the highest chance of the two people connecting, and requires no modification to the well developed "Message Seller" flow because we sidestep the problem of two people trying to message each other at the same time.

Part I

Facebook Moments

Opportunity Overview

On the surface, Moments addresses a common problem in our smartphone-riddled society. Families go on vacations, friends go out to events, and everyone is taking pictures on separate phones and keeping them for themselves (other than a carefully selected one or two for Facebook or Instagram). The low-level problem is essentially: it's easy to share experiences, but it's not so easy to share the perspectives everyone captures to the group. Facebook Moments addresses this surface-level problem in elegant and exclusive way. Facebook has an understanding of our relationships to our friends, and with this understanding alongside state-of-the-art facial recognition and a touch of magic, the problem of defining a Moment (in theory) becomes near trivial. And voila, all adventurers or partygoers or families can shove their pre-selected photos (thanks Facebook!) into a Moment, which is essentially a shared album filled with pictures people took birthed from a group experience. Great. Now what?

That the real value of Moments orbits around the notion of *nostalgia* — of escaping the treacheries of day-to-day life and reminiscing on the "good times." One experience that comes to mind is that whenever someone in my family would break out an old photo album or videos from when we were younger, the whole family came together in fascination. Even a few of my brothers who tried to act tough, maintaining a sense of aloof indifference, were unable to take their eyes away. It is perhaps the most pure and rich form of escapism — rather than escaping into a video game, TV show, or comic book world — nostalgia is escaping into the past of one's own life.

Moments has evidently realized this (to an extent) — it affords likes and comments, though both are minuscule portions of the UI, making them feel unimportant and almost unnecessary, as though they were an afterthought. The marketing of the product right now addresses the surface opportunity of photo organization and securely sharing them with your friends. There is a mere two seconds of the main promo video suggesting that Moments will help you and your friends to "relive the

good times," but this lack of emphasis may be a good thing, as abstract ideas are hard to sell as compared to quick fixes to everyday products.

Recommendations

Because the product feels so new and not really developed beyond its core functionality, discussing low level content strategy opportunities seems unproductive. Though its main marketing strategy suggests otherwise, the power of Moments is not providing a private photo exchange among friends (who went somewhere or did something together). The power of Moments is that it can stand as a digital keepsake — a rich, eternal commemoration of an event that a group of humans bonded over. Unlike a shell you might bring back from a beach, these moments (even in their current implementation)¹ don't belong to a "me," they belong to an "us."

Moments serves as a collective, organically community-assembled keepsake of a time long past. If this is were Moments ended, it would still have been a good product. However, Moments could do much beyond this, offering both a collage-style record as well as a space to discuss, reminisce, and bask in the nostalgia with their own tribe.

Right now, Moments are firmly rooted in the past and for the most part, they should be. But what if the space to reminisce could also provide hope. One can imagine a prompt (or chatbot) saying:

"So we all agree Niagra Falls was fun. Anyone coming back next year? Let's make it a tradition!"

or

"What a trip! If you want to keep the fun rolling in a different venue, you guys should check out Mt. Tremblant — it's right nearby. Click here for more info, but I know weary travelers need their rest."

¹ The current system of allowing people to thank others who post photos is socially adept. Though the act of receiving thanks, the photographer concedes some ownership of the photos to the group, and he leaves with a sense that he provided some form of pleasure for his fellow members. Transaction complete. No more ego wars.

It brings people back together as they reminisce on the good (and not so good) times they had.

Because these recommendations are general enough (with some specific details sprinkled in), I'd mainly like a picture of how people are using Moments so far (i.e. in what kinds of situations; my examples tended towards buddy trips to the wilderness, which may be a tiny fraction of actual use cases). In the same vein, it would be interesting to observe user studies, as I suspect the lack of omnipresent explicit messaging in the app's UI may confuse technology-averse users, and maybe the UI could use a more friendly and explanatory tone.

Part II

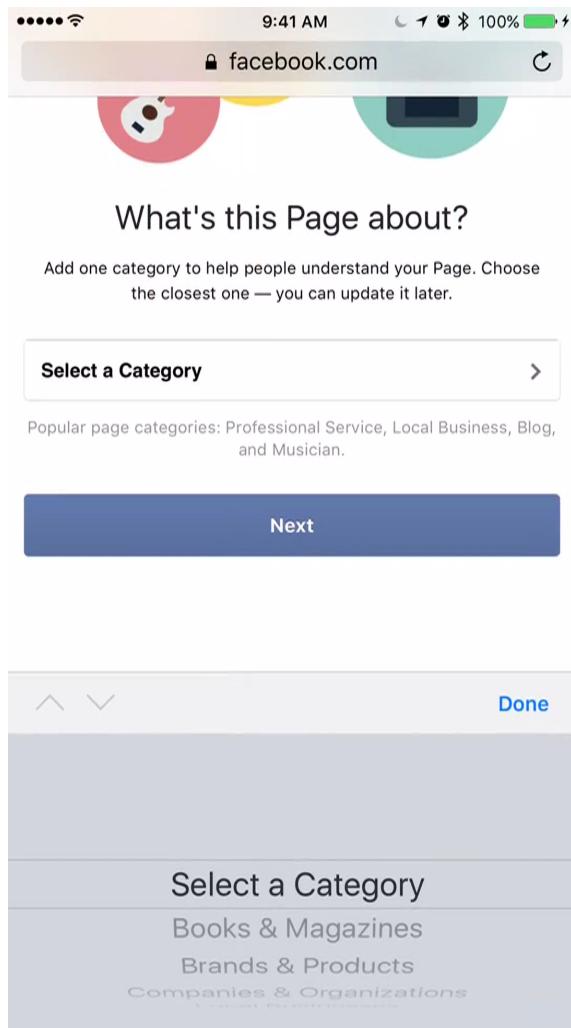
Create New Page

Evaluate Content and Provide Feedback

The flow of creating a new page has been vastly improved since the last time I used it, but there are still possible content strategy improvements. I enjoy the fact each step is a separate page, reinforcing the idea of forward progress and increasing the odds that someone will complete the process without giving up midway. The problem with this flow emerges when the person is faced with categorizing their page; the user is faced with a lot of options — a menu with a dozen or so options, and a submenu with a dozen more options based on the previous response; none of which fit just right. Although presenting the user with this barrage of options may succeed (theoretically) in giving Facebook a robust idea of what exactly the page was about, it is hostile to users just trying to make a page, who may become frustrated and mis-categorize the page out of either annoyance or indifference.

Rework the Experience

I don't believe you need a complete tear-down of the current system to fix many of its weaknesses; subtle, thoughtful modifications to the flow can have a big impact. Right now, the flow first asks for Page Name, then Categories, then Website. The website might be placed where it is because some people with pages may not have websites, and these people could find it to be a jarring request. However, the current UI makes it pretty clear with 3 buttons you can use to skip that step. If Website URL immediately followed page name, we have some kind of



picture of what this page is about. Using machine learning techniques and manmade algorithms for optimization, we could generate a cloud of related word “tags” (in the place of categories). Instead of tediously selecting category after category with less than delightful results, we can present a scrollable list of tags that people can pick if it applies to their page. A quick win from this shift is that it eliminates the painful choosing-a-category interaction, replacing it with delightful tap interactions that perhaps feel more authentic and true to the page.

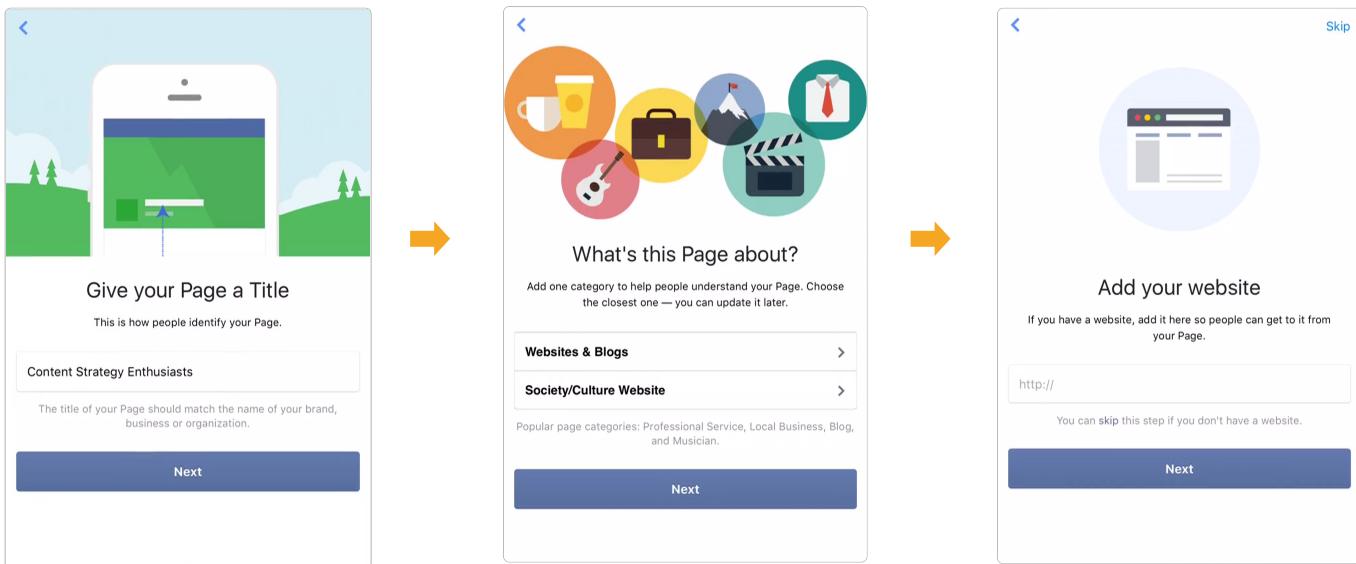
Another consequence of this tag-based approach is that we don’t need to get rid of categories completely. Rather, we can suggest relevant categories in the form of tags. And on a larger scale, one can imagine that because you can apply multiple tag attributes to your page, the information Facebook has becomes far richer — we would then have the ability to find insights such as:

- Pages formed with legacy categories and the tags they choose subsequently
- Whether certain clusters of tags are commonly used together across all Pages
- What kinds of custom tags are people adding themselves, and why the tag was necessary for them

All of this additional data would result in Facebook gaining a more nuanced understanding of the Pages ecosystem as compared with a hyper-simplistic categorical approach where the categories rarely feel quite right. But in addition to the gains by Facebook with more granular data, the people creating pages benefit in several ways: gone are those annoying list-select components, replaced by a fun and simple UX of swiping around and tapping words. I also imagine that by creating this nuanced “personality” about his page, the tag system helps the person making the page solidify a mental model of their page and might make them even more passionate about what they’re doing, now that the idea is out of the ether of imagination and into concrete words.

You can find mockups of this reworked experience on the following page.

Current Flow

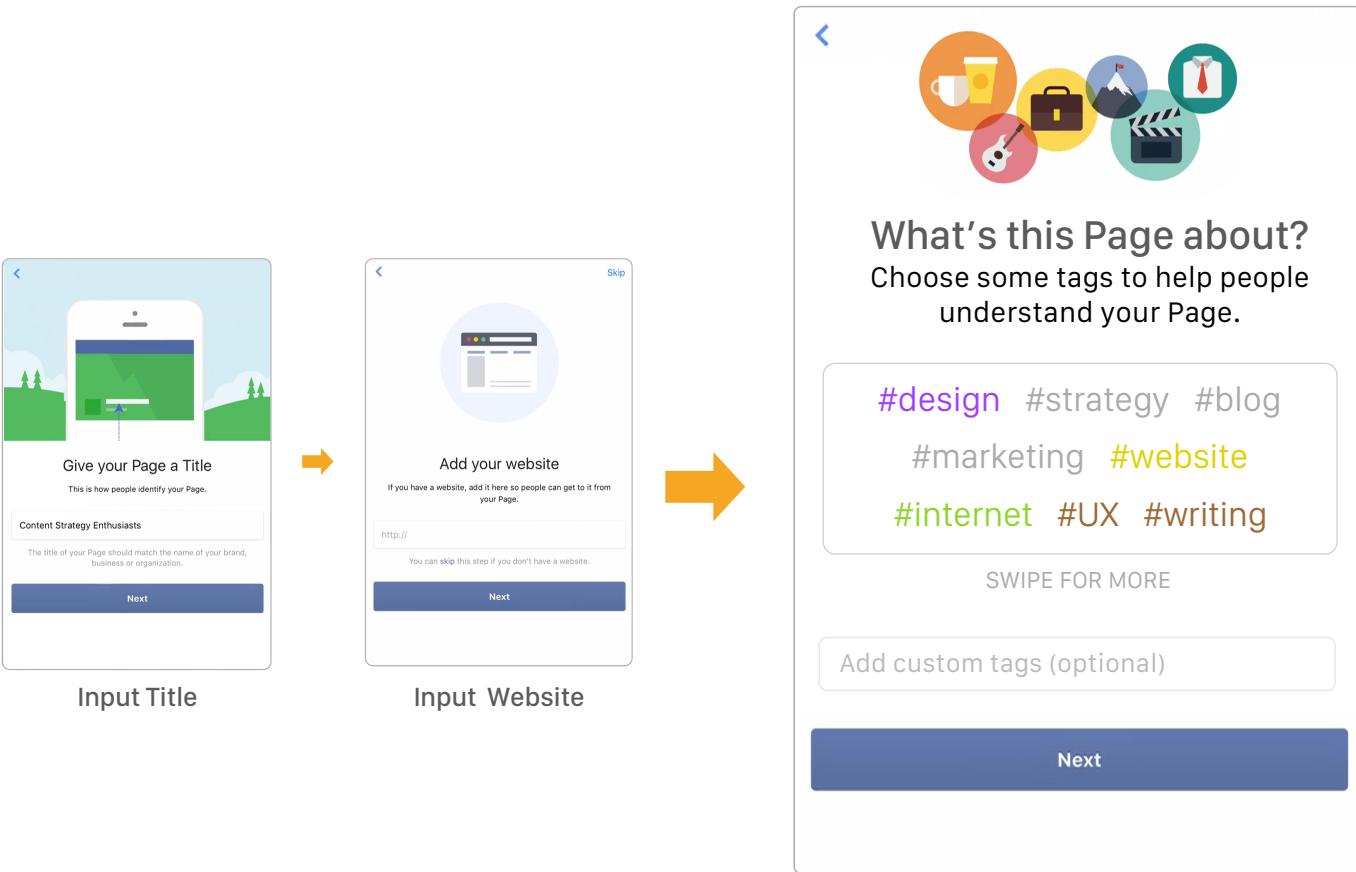


Input Title

Choose Categories

Input Website

Revised Flow



Input Title

Input Website

Tap Related Tags