

## ☑ Facebook Looks for Its Fountain of Youth

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-looks-for-its-fountain-of-youth-1478025056?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-looks-for-its-fountain-of-youth-1478025056?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Nov. 1, 2016 at 2:30 pm ET

- “Is Snapchat Killing Facebook?”
- That is how one analyst titled a research note this week. The question might seem odd. Just 4½ years after going public, Facebook is already one of the top five biggest U.S. companies by market value. The social network has 1.71 billion monthly active users, or nearly one-quarter of the world’s population. And its [profit topped \\$2 billion in the second quarter](#), only six months after first cracking the billion-dollar mark.
- It is tough to dispute [Facebook’s advertising dominance](#), particularly with more than 90% of its users now on mobile. Facebook is expected to generate \$26 billion in global advertising revenue in 2016, up 64% from a year ago, according to eMarketer, making it the second-biggest ad publisher behind [Alphabet](#) Inc.’s Google.
- Still, Snapchat has what Facebook wants: those young whippersnappers. While far fewer in absolute terms, roughly one-third of Snapchat’s users are between ages 18 and 24, according to research firm MoffettNathanson, citing comScore data. That compares with 21% for Facebook-owned Instagram and just 15% for Facebook overall. Crucially, this young cohort accounts for about two-thirds of the total time spent on Snapchat, compared with 44% for Instagram and 14% for Facebook. That is important for advertisers, who gravitate to wherever youthful eyeballs go.
- Granted, with 150 million daily active users, Snapchat has a fraction of Facebook’s overall user base. Even so, Facebook isn’t sitting still. It has repeatedly tried to [replicate many features similar to Snapchat](#).

## ★☑ Instagram Adds ‘Shop Now’ Button for In-App Impulse Buying

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/instagram-adds-shop-now-button-for-in-app-impulse-buying-1478041969?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/instagram-adds-shop-now-button-for-in-app-impulse-buying-1478041969?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Nov. 1, 2016 at 7:12 pm ET

- As [shoppers turn to apps](#) to make purchases, Instagram wants in on the action. FacebookInc.’s popular photo-sharing network will roll out a new feature next week that lets you buy what you see in a photo—without ever having to leave its iPhone app.
- Instagram, [in a blog post](#), called the new feature an experiment. It is a big one, nonetheless. Instagram’s 20 U.S.-based brand partners including Kate Spade, Warby Parker, J. Crew, [Macy’s](#) and Target.
- Instagram said it isn’t getting a cut of the sale.
- The shopping test will only be for U.S.-based users of Apple Inc.’s iPhones. If it is a success, Instagram plans to expand to other countries, and to [Alphabet](#) Inc.’s [GOOG -1.26%decrease; red down pointing triangle](#) Android operating system.

## ☑ Facebook Profit Soars, but Growth Concerns Emerge

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-profit-jumps-sharply-1478117646?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-profit-jumps-sharply-1478117646?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 2, 2016 at 8:07 pm ET

- Facebook Inc., now on pace to reach \$27 billion in revenue this year, is defying the slowdown in growth that usually comes with increasing size.
- Facebook’s top-line growth rate is double any other U.S. company with revenue of \$20 billion or more, excluding those growing through acquisitions, according to data from Standard & Poor’s Capital IQ.
- Yet Facebook said that it can’t maintain its current pace. Starting in the middle of next year, Facebook will stop showing users more ads in their news feed, the tactic it has been using to juice revenue growth

for the past two years, the company said Wednesday. As a result, advertising growth will “come down meaningfully,” Chief Financial Officer Dave Wehner said during a call with analysts.

- Facebook expects to power growth by adding more users and boosting the amount of time they spend on the social network. Video is key to that strategy.
- Facebook and Google together garnered 68% of spending on U.S. online advertising in the second quarter—accounting for all the growth, Mr. Wieser said. When excluding those two companies, revenue generated by other players in the U.S. digital ad market shrank 5%, according to his estimates.
- “What should be a concern for everyone is the dominance of just two companies, Google and Facebook, who are capturing all of the growth in the ad marketplace,” said Jason Kint, chief executive at Digital Content Next, a trade organization that represents digital publishers such as Condé Nast, Business Insider, the Washington Post and Wall Street Journal owner News Corp. “No one is able to collect data on the scale they can.”
- Mobile accounts for nearly half of all the advertising purchased online in the first half of 2016, according to the Interactive Advertising Bureau, and mobile ads recorded the [fastest growth of any category](#) compared with the first six months of 2015.
- Facebook makes money by slotting ads into the news feed, the main scroll of pictures, videos and posts. But putting too many ads in the news feed could turn off users. Executives have said they are seeking “the right balance” of ads and other content in the news feed.
- Video could provide the next avenue for growth. Chief Executive [Mark Zuckerberg](#) said that Facebook would evolve into a [“video-first” company](#) by making video core to each of its apps. Executives predict that within five years, most of what people consume online will be video.
- Adding more video to Facebook’s news feed could boost the amount of time users spend on the site. That, in turn, could give Facebook the opportunity to sell more lucrative video ads and potentially divert dollars from what advertisers currently spend on television ads. TV ads are a roughly \$70 billion market in the U.S., according to eMarketer.

## Inside Donald Trump’s Data Analytics Team on Election Night

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/inside-donald-trumps-data-analytics-team-on-election-night-1478725225?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/inside-donald-trumps-data-analytics-team-on-election-night-1478725225?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Nov. 9, 2016 at 4:00 pm ET

- It is too early to assess the full impact Cambridge Analytica had on the Trump campaign. While its advice aided the campaign in targeting ads, some of its polling predictions, like those from most survey firms, were off.
- On Monday, Cambridge Analytica gave Mr. Trump less than a 30% chance of winning. “So many states were close to the margin of error that it could swing either way,” Mr. Oczkowski explained.
- But the unexpected win is likely to bring new attention to the company’s psychological approach, in which it used reams of information about voters harvested from databases, the internet and field operatives.
- Hillary Clinton’s campaign also invested heavily in data analytics, with dozens of mathematicians and data scientists working full time on insights used to deploy resources, make phone calls and focus on disputed areas.

## ★ Ad Measurement Feuds on Facebook, YouTube Hinge on Code

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/ad-measurement-feuds-on-facebook-youtube-hinge-on-code-1478689200?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/ad-measurement-feuds-on-facebook-youtube-hinge-on-code-1478689200?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Nov. 9, 2016 at 6:00 am ET

- It sounds dramatic. However, the way Facebook and Google implement tracking code from third-party measurement companies is at the heart of lingering tensions between ad buyers and the giants of the digital ad business.
- Ad buyers want more transparency into how third-party data is collected on Facebook and Google's YouTube, and ideally more oversight over the process since it helps them determine where and how to spend their video marketing money. Meanwhile, Facebook and Google—[which reeled in 68% of spending on U.S. online advertising in the second quarter](#), according to Pivotal Research—argue that they provide and allow for plenty of measurement, just with some restrictions to protect users' privacy and to keep pages loading quickly.
- It is common practice in digital campaigns for ad buyers to send publishers what are known as "tags," which are lines of code that enable them to track the performance of ad campaigns, like how many times an ad is delivered and whether people click on it. In recent years, [concerns have risen about whether digital ads can actually be seen on various screens](#), so ad buyers have also taken to bundling in additional code to track viewability.
- However, Facebook and YouTube have never allowed agencies to use their own tags or to collect their own viewability data on web video campaigns. Advertisers can send Facebook and YouTube tiny pieces of code that allow for some basic data on impressions (which can't be used for billing purposes). But for data on viewability, time spent and more sophisticated metrics, buyers have to rely on YouTube's and Facebook's custom integrations with third-party partners like [Moat](#) and Integral Ad Science, known as IAS.
- There's the rub. Some ad buyers allege that the way that viewability tracking firms measure data on Facebook and YouTube is fundamentally different from how the process works with the average web publisher. They grumble that, in particular, Facebook—even as it has touted its willingness to work with numerous third-party metrics firms following its recent [video overcounting mess](#)—doesn't always provide straight answers regarding how these integrations work.
- Most web publishers implement code from companies like Moat or IAS using what's called a "software development kit," or SDK, which enables these third parties to collect data directly.
- Facebook and YouTube do things a bit differently. Instead of allowing third parties to directly pull data from their sites or mobile apps, Facebook and YouTube receive tracking code from the third parties and then modify the code slightly. They also set up a different process to deliver data than is used via typical SDK partnerships.
- Facebook and Google say there are good reasons for their approach. (For a primer on how Facebook's third-party metrics work, [click here](#)). Simply copying and pasting code from third parties into their mobile apps could negatively impact the user experience by [slowing down the loading of pages](#), they contend.
- More important, each company is hesitant to let third parties see too much, since both Facebook and Google have reams of consumer data that is vital to their businesses and could set off numerous privacy alarms if exposed. They aren't alone in their hesitation. [Snapchat](#) is also not planning to allow any third-party code directly on its app, according to a person familiar with the matter.
- But the different methodology—particularly the involvement of Facebook and YouTube in setting up the data collection process—has left the advertising world with a sense that their third-party tracking isn't fully third party.
- They are "still not technically being independently third party measured," said Mitchell Weinstein, senior vice president of ad operations at the media buying firm IPG Mediabrands. Tal Chalozin, co-founder at ad tech company [Innovid](#), agrees, adding that "the publisher needs to be completely disconnected" for there to be unbiased measurement.
- Moat Chief Executive Jonah Goodhart argues that while his company's work with Facebook and YouTube is unique, it's still completely objective. He's adamant that Moat's data on Facebook and YouTube is solid and just as robust as any other partner, yielding more than 60 different metrics. For example, with Facebook, Moat has two full-time employees focusing on gauging whether its data collection is accurate via an extensive set of testing using a set of Facebook test accounts—without Facebook's involvement.

## ☑ Mark Zuckerberg Continues to Defend Facebook Against Criticism It May Have Swayed Election

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerberg-continues-to-defend-facebook-against-criticism-it-may-have-swayed-election-1479079554?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerberg-continues-to-defend-facebook-against-criticism-it-may-have-swayed-election-1479079554?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 14, 2016 at 9:52 am ET

- Mr. Zuckerberg, Facebook's chief executive and co-founder, said in a lengthy post that less than 1% of the site's world-wide content could be classified as fake.
- "Overall, this makes it extremely unlikely hoaxes changed the outcome of this election in one direction or the other," Mr. Zuckerberg said [in a post on his Facebook page late Saturday](#). He said the fake news occurs across party lines.
- Mr. Zuckerberg said that Facebook is developing tools to reduce fake news on the site, but that its responsibility should be limited.
- As readers reacted to Mr. Zuckerberg's post on Saturday, the CEO took to the comments section to address a handful of specific questions. He rejected the idea that Facebook identify itself as a media company because its primary use is connecting friends. "News and media are not the primary things people do on Facebook, so I find it odd when people insist we call ourselves a news or media company in order to acknowledge its importance," he said.
- The election has forced Facebook to reckon with the way the platform has [shaped political discourse through its news feed](#), the central river of information, images, videos and news that is visited most often by Facebook's users.
- Facebook has often expressed pride in the way it can shape users' actions and purchase decisions, and has used that to generate billions of dollars in advertising revenue. But Mr. Zuckerberg's post contends Facebook's power is limited in shaping political views.
- Facebook's power as a source of information raises questions of whether it should force its users to see opposing views or hire an ombudsman who can oversee news on the platform, she said.
- About 44% of Americans get at least some of their news from Facebook, according to Pew Research. Prompts from the company this year encouraged more than two million users to register to vote and, Mr. Zuckerberg said, the company estimates it got a "similar number of people to vote who might have stayed home otherwise."
- [A 2012 study by Facebook](#) showed that the company's messages to users "directly influenced political self-expression, information seeking and real-world voting behavior of millions of people."
- Candidates, notably [Donald Trump](#), used Facebook to connect directly with voters. Some of Mr. Trump's posts ignited debate within Facebook over [whether they should be removed](#) for violating the company's decency standards.
- The algorithms underlying the news feed reward posts that drive a lot of engagement, in the form of shares, likes and comments. But that same formula encourages fake news, hoaxes and misinformation, according to critics, which include former and current Facebook employees, who are openly disturbed by the election of Mr. Trump.
- Another concern is that Facebook's algorithm puts its users in a "filter bubble" where they only hear news and information from people who agree with them. Mr. Zuckerberg has repeatedly rejected that assessment, including on Saturday.

## ★☑ Facebook Says It Found More Miscalculated Metrics

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-says-it-found-more-miscalculated-metrics-1479303984?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-says-it-found-more-miscalculated-metrics-1479303984?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 16, 2016 at 10:03 am ET

- Facebook Inc. said it has uncovered several more flawed measurements related to how consumers interact with content, raising more questions about the metrics marketers lean on to decide whether to buy ads on the social media network.

- Now, after finding more examples of data miscalculations, Facebook said it would provide additional independent review of some measurements to calm unease over the social network's data.
- The unveiling of the additional errors may trouble some advertisers and web publishers that rely on Facebook for distribution and monetization.
- As part of its effort to assuage advertiser concerns about the soundness of its metrics, Facebook will provide viewability data from third-party metrics companies such as Moat and Integral Ad Science for display ad campaigns. Previously, this data was limited to video campaigns.
- In addition, the social-media network said it is working with ratings firm Nielsen to count Facebook video views, including both on-demand views and live viewing, as part of Nielsen's Digital Content Ratings metric.
- Lastly, Facebook said it plans to form a Measurement Council made up of marketers and ad agency executives, and will roll out a blog to communicate more regularly on updates about measurement.
- As for the newly discovered bugs, the errors apply to only four of more than 220 metrics that Facebook counts.
- The lack of fully independent third-party ad verification was a [major sticking point](#) following Facebook's recent video counting mishap, particularly considering Facebook's growing dominance in the ad world.
- One way Facebook could calm frustrated ad buyers would be to undergo an audit via the Media Rating Council, the media industry's independent research watchdog.
- Following the recent overcounting error, the Association of National Advertisers [publicly advocated for an MRC audit](#). This is something Facebook is now considering, Ms. Everson said.

## ★ Facebook Fends Off Crises With Confidence

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-fends-off-crises-with-confidence-1479465000?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-fends-off-crises-with-confidence-1479465000?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 18, 2016 at 12:20 pm ET

- In the past several weeks, Facebook has defended itself against criticism that its platform fueled misinformation and division in the presidential election, assuaged advertisers after inflating user metrics, and reversed a decision on censoring its content after [a public spat](#) with the prime minister of Norway. Those followed flare-ups earlier in the year over perceived liberal bias in its "trending topics" feature and claims of cultural insensitivity around the launch of its Free Basics service in India.
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- "A lot of this blowback is Facebook has become a victim of its own success—it's omnipresent," said Antonio Garcia-Martinez, a former Facebook product manager and author of "Chaos Monkeys," about his time at the social network. "Their unwillingness to embrace that role to some degree or another isn't going to fly anymore."
- The election ignited a storm of criticism that fake news on the site inflamed political divisions by feeding bias. Last week, Mr. Zuckerberg responded by saying the idea that fake news influenced the election is "pretty crazy." He later said that fake news is less than 1% of all content on Facebook. Mr. Zuckerberg also said Facebook is developing tools to reduce fake news on the site.
- Still, recent concerns about its growth prospects and how it will cope with its controversies have weighed on its stock price. Last month following the record earnings report, its shares slumped when Facebook said there was a limit to how many more ads it could pump into its news feed.
- Facebook has known controversy in one form or another since its founding. After the launch of its news feed a decade ago, millions of people threatened to abandon Facebook and some picketed its offices, upset that users' activity was being made more public. Mr. Zuckerberg held firm, emboldened by data showing a spike in user activity.



# Facebook Announces First Stock Buyback For Up to \$6 Billion

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-to-buy-back-up-to-6-billion-of-stock-1479504896?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-to-buy-back-up-to-6-billion-of-stock-1479504896?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 18, 2016 at 5:26 pm ET

- Facebook Inc. on Friday announced a \$6 billion share repurchase program, its first since going public four years ago.

## ★☑ Mark Zuckerberg Explains How Facebook Plans to Fight Fake News

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerberg-explains-how-facebook-plans-to-fight-fake-news-1479542069?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerberg-explains-how-facebook-plans-to-fight-fake-news-1479542069?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 20, 2016 at 9:08 pm ET

- Facebook is looking to label certain stories as false, build tools to classify misinformation and work with fact-checking groups, Mr. Zuckerberg, chief executive and co-founder, [said in a post](#).
- In the past week, Mr. Zuckerberg has defended Facebook against claims that fake news on the site distorted public discourse about the U.S. presidential election. Two days after the election, Mr. Zuckerberg said that the notion that [Facebook helped tip the election](#) in favor of [Donald Trump](#) was “a pretty crazy idea.”
- On Friday, Mr. Zuckerberg reiterated that misinformation is a small part of Facebook content, but that it takes this problem seriously. Mr. Zuckerberg said the disclosure about the steps was unusual for Facebook because it doesn’t share specifics about works in progress.
- Facebook is turning to outside groups for help in fact-checking, Mr. Zuckerberg wrote. It is also exploring a product that would label stories as false if they have been flagged as such by third-parties or users, and then show warnings to users who read or share the articles.
- Facebook earlier this week announced it would bar fake-news sites from using [the company’s ad-selling tools](#). Mr. Zuckerberg said he is looking into “disrupting the economics” of sites that traffic in fake information.
- Mr. Zuckerberg reiterated that Facebook doesn’t want to become an arbiter of truth itself.

## ☑ Instagram Takes Aim at Snapchat With Live Video and Vanishing Photos

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/instagram-takes-aim-at-snapchat-with-live-video-and-vanishing-photos-1479741171?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/instagram-takes-aim-at-snapchat-with-live-video-and-vanishing-photos-1479741171?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Nov. 21, 2016 at 9:25 pm ET

- Taking a page from the playbooks of both Facebook and Snapchat, Instagram introduced two new features Monday: live video streaming and private photos and videos that disappear after being viewed.
- With ephemeral video and photo messages, Instagram matches a feature that is the hallmark of Snap Inc.’s Snapchat—arguably Instagram’s biggest rival.
- Snapchat doesn’t have live video (yet), but if it did, it might resemble Instagram’s get-it-while-it’s-live version: Once a stream is finished, it can’t be viewed. Instagram’s parent company, Facebook Inc., has been [pushing live video hard](#), along with Twitter Inc.’s Periscope and [Alphabet Inc.’s GOOG - 1.26% decrease; red down pointing triangle](#) YouTube—but those videos get saved and can be replayed later.
- By keeping live video ephemeral, Instagram hopes to make it less about broadcasting and more about hanging out, said Kevin Weil, Instagram’s head of product. As such, live video is part of [Instagram Stories](#), the section of the Instagram app where people and brands share photos and video that

disappear after 24 hours. (Stories, which has 100 million daily active users just three months after its debut, was Instagram's first big challenge to Snapchat.)

- In Instagram's private messaging feature—Instagram Direct, which you access by tapping the paper airplane icon—you can send specific friends photos and video that are timed to disappear after they're seen.
- Like Snapchat, these shared visuals can have filters and doodles. Message recipients will be able to "replay" a disappearing message, allowing them to see it twice. And if they screenshot what you send them, you'll receive an alert. The rollout of disappearing photos and video starts Monday on iOS and Android.
- With these moves in place, Instagram locks horns with Snapchat, matching nearly every feature. Yet Mr. Weil said they're more than just me-too additions. "We want you to be able to capture and share your moments the way you want to with exactly who you want to. We couldn't do all that without features like these."

## ✓ Virtual Reality's Long Walk Before Running

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/virtual-realitys-long-walk-before-running-1480271531?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/virtual-realitys-long-walk-before-running-1480271531?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

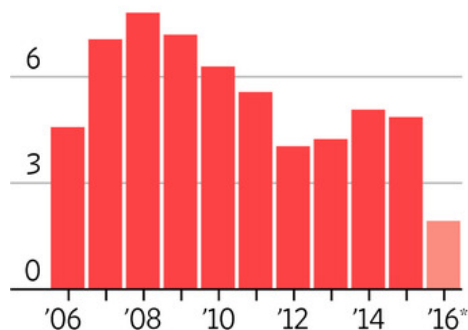
Nov. 27, 2016 at 1:32 pm ET

- So, while VR has much in the way of long-term promise, early sales are providing a hard dose of reality. None of the companies involved have disclosed actual numbers, but several indications have emerged suggesting a relatively low sales volume to date. Last month, Facebook CEO [Mark Zuckerberg characterized the launch](#) of the Oculus Rift headset earlier in the year as a "slow start."

### Hard Reset

U.S. sales of videogame hardware, in billions

\$9 billion



\*January–October (nearly half of sales take place November–December)

Sources: NPD Group (sales); Getty Images (photo)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



A customer tries the PlayStation VR at Sony Square NYC in New York

- This doesn't mean virtual reality isn't generating significant interest. Retailer [Best Buy](#) said in its earnings call this month that more than 700 of its stores now have dedicated virtual reality "departments" that have provided more than 300,000 demos even before the holiday shopping crunch begins.
- Offsetting this is the fact that major videogame publishers haven't really embraced virtual reality yet with their major franchises.

# ★ Facebook Looks to Harness Artificial Intelligence to Weed Out Fake News

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-could-develop-artificial-intelligence-to-weed-out-fake-news-1480608004?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-could-develop-artificial-intelligence-to-weed-out-fake-news-1480608004?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 1, 2016 at 11:00 am ET

- Yann LeCun, Facebook's director of artificial intelligence, or AI, research, said technology could be used to help stamp out fake news or detect violence in live videos by filtering the content on the site. But Facebook's policy and product teams haven't figured out how to introduce AI responsibly.
- Facebook is trying to remove some of the stigma and mystery that surrounds AI in popular culture. On Thursday, it released six informational videos about the technology. Mr. LeCun said [AI is integral to the company's operations](#), from learning how users experience their news feed to monitoring the site for terrorist propaganda.
- How Facebook could use AI to prevent the spread of false information—[a criticism Facebook faced](#) following the U.S. presidential election—is unclear. Facebook uses AI to detect certain words that signal a story might be simply “clickbait.” Discerning fact from fiction is a much bigger challenge, posing the risk of removing too much content with an AI filter.
- After initially dismissing the problem of fake news, Chief Executive [Mark Zuckerberg](#) two weeks ago laid out several steps Facebook is taking to tackle the issue—including [building systems to detect fake stories](#) before users flag them, which would involve AI. “Tens” of employees have been pulled off other projects to focus on fake news, people familiar with the matter say.
- Facebook, which employs hundreds of people world-wide to monitor content on the site, is now in the “research stage” of using AI to automatically detect depictions of violence and other problems in live videos, said Joaquin Candela, Facebook's director of applied machine learning.
- Facebook said a lot of its network wouldn't work without AI, such as its news-feed ranking algorithm, which creates individualized streams for each of the 1.79 billion people who access Facebook at least once a month. Every day, 2.5 billion posts are translated into other languages on Facebook.
- Mr. LeCun said the ethical questions his team considers deserve more attention, such as how AI can be properly tested without causing harm and how it can be designed to avoid systematic bias.

# ★☑ Oculus Touch Review: The Best Virtual Reality Controllers So Far

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/oculus-touch-review-the-best-virtual-reality-controllers-so-far-1480950003?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/oculus-touch-review-the-best-virtual-reality-controllers-so-far-1480950003?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 5, 2016 at 10:00 am ET

- On Tuesday, Oculus will finally launch its Touch motion-sensing controllers. While they're arriving later than rivals, they're the best VR grips yet. Rift finally feels complete.
- With Touch controllers, the Rift tracks the movement and location of your hands. With triggers, joysticks and easy-to-reach buttons placed on a plastic grip, Touch catches up to the interactivity its rivals, [HTC Corp.](#)'s Vive and [Sony Corp.](#)'s PlayStation VR, have had for months. But Touch edges ahead, too, with sensors in plastic rings that wrap around your fingers.
- These sensors know when you're pointing your index finger, making a fist or even giving a thumbs-up. Vive and PlayStation's motion-tracking wands can't do that—and aren't as comfortable either. With its ring design, the Touch handsets allow you to move your fingers without feeling like you'll drop a controller.
- Oculus has also fortunately ensured there will be things to do with the Touch controllers—[more than 50](#) games and apps are available now, Oculus says, with dozens more due next year.
- And while there's plenty to play, you'll pay for the privilege. A Rift-ready Windows PCs and the Rift headset will total at least \$1,800. The Touch controllers, without which Rift feels incomplete, are an extra \$200. Then you still have to buy games, which can cost up to \$60. (Many are free, for now.)



- However, Sony's PlayStation VR still offers [the best overall VR experience](#) for your living room. It's got its own fantastic selection of games and a more comfortable headset. It's also about half the price—and that's if you don't already have a PlayStation 4 console.
- If you want to explore the more creative, nongaming aspects of VR, however, the Rift is proving to be a cutting-edge tool.
- With these three apps, all requiring the Touch controllers, Rift is a legitimate creative tool. If VR is ever going to go mainstream, it needs be [about more than videogames](#). With Touch, Rift can now serve as a testament to the technology's massive potential.

## ★ In Southeast Asia, Facebook and Instagram Are Where People Shop

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/where-facebook-and-instagram-are-about-shopping-1481023577?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/where-facebook-and-instagram-are-about-shopping-1481023577?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 6, 2016 at 6:26 am ET

- Social-media websites such as Facebook and [Naver](#) Corp.'s [035420 4.31%increase; green up pointing triangle](#) Line are luring consumers by using messaging as a tool and introducing shopping features, rapidly expanding into e-commerce in a region of 620 million people that includes Indonesia and Thailand.
- Their success has been propelled by millions of small to midsize enterprises, growing smartphone penetration, and a fragmented e-commerce landscape where the region lacks a dominant competitor like [Amazon.com](#) Inc.
- About 30% of online sales in Southeast Asia—a region with 150 million digital consumers—occurred through social networks in 2016, estimates consulting firm Bain & Co. That compares with just 7% of the roughly 287 million internet users who are likely to buy from social networks in the U.S., according to London-based market-research firm GlobalWebIndex.
- Facebook and Line have launched shopping features to create revenue streams specifically for the Southeast Asian market. More shoppers means more advertising dollars from businesses vying for visibility for their products.
- Consumers in Southeast Asia rely on sales assistants for advice and enjoy bargaining, behavior that is playing out through Facebook's Messenger platform, said Nadia Tan, head of the company's small-medium businesses unit in Southeast Asia. In Thailand, for example, users send twice as many Facebook messages to businesses each month as the global average, the company said.
- This follows the rollout last year in Southeast Asia of a section called Shop, which allows entrepreneurs who already run business pages on Facebook to have their products prominently displayed on its news feed.
- Using Shop, consumers can view photos of products such as T-shirts and sewing machines on Facebook, and then use Messenger to discuss a sale, get directions to the physical store or find a link to buy on an official website.
- Facebook doesn't disclose how much revenue it gets from online shopping on its site, but says Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are among the 10 markets where Shop is most heavily used.
- Small and midsize enterprises in Southeast Asia rely on social media because it is the cheapest and most efficient way to generate buzz for their products, as online marketplaces traditionally apply transaction fees.
- Buyers typically discover products on Facebook or Instagram, then reach out to the seller using messaging apps such as Line or WhatsApp to find out more details and complete the purchase in person.
- Not all efforts by social-media companies to expand in shopping have succeeded. TwitterInc. tested a "Buy Now" button in 2014 that allows users to buy goods from retailers such as Best Buy. But because of too little interest among merchants and users, Twitter said it [scaled back](#) its effort on the shopping button in May.

## ★ Facebook Finds Two More Ad-Metrics Discrepancies

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-finds-two-more-ad-metrics-discrepancies-1481310105?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-finds-two-more-ad-metrics-discrepancies-1481310105?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 9, 2016 at 2:01 pm ET

- In September, The Wall Street Journal reported that Facebook had been [overestimating a video-advertising metric](#) for as long as two years in some cases. Then last month, the company revealed it had [found four more measurement discrepancies](#) after undertaking an extensive audit of all of its advertising-related data.
- That announcement seemed to put Facebook's ad-measurement challenges to bed. But on Friday, Facebook said it had uncovered two more discrepancies and was working to make specific changes to its ad-data output.
- Beyond the two new discrepancies, Facebook also said it has changed the methodology it uses to help advertisers estimate how many people will potentially see ads on Facebook. The new methodology relies less on projecting data using smaller samples of Facebook audience. This change should decrease or increase Facebook's ad-reach estimates by less than 10% the company said in the blog post.
- Individually, none of these metrics should affect Facebook's billing, since marketers typically sign ad contracts that guarantee a certain delivery of broader metrics, such as the total number of times an ad is shown to consumers over a set period. Still, the fact that this issue keeps arising will likely irk ad buyers, some of whom have publicly been calling for Facebook to rely less on its own internal ad data and work with more third-party ad-measurement firms when negotiating deals.
- Constant issues with reporting brings down advertiser trust on FB metrics on which they base they decisions to use FB or not. If advertisers don't trust FB this will impact on their willingness to invest in this platform and might cause them to move towards more trustworthy platforms.
- Ian Schafer, founder and chairman at ad agency Deep Focus, credited Facebook for being communicative regarding these issues, and recognized the complexity of providing so much data for a slew of new products like Facebook Live.
- That said, Facebook's growing dominance in digital advertising—and its perceived technological expertise means most marketers will hold Facebook to a higher standard. "The are trying to get it right," he said. "Yet they are a data business, with a huge responsibility. And advertisers don't like margins of error much."

## Facebook's Oculus Reshuffle Creates Vacancy at the Top

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-oculus-reshuffle-creates-vacancy-at-the-top-1481664664?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-oculus-reshuffle-creates-vacancy-at-the-top-1481664664?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 13, 2016 at 4:31 pm ET

- In a blog post Tuesday, Oculus said it is creating two divisions - one focused on mobile, the other on PCs - and that CEO Brendan Iribe is stepping down to run the PC group. Jon Thomason, who joined Oculus this summer as its head of software, will run the new mobile VR group at Oculus.
- That creates an unusual vacancy at the helm of Oculus. Facebook rarely overhauls the top ranks of the companies it acquires. The founders of Instagram, bought for \$1 billion in 2012, and WhatsApp, bought for \$22 billion in 2014, still hold the same roles. But they haven't been beset with the same public disappointments as Oculus, which [Facebook bought for \\$2 billion in 2014](#).
- Mr. Luckey remains at Oculus, Facebook says, though it is unclear what role he occupies. "Palmer's still at Oculus and he'll have more to share on his role soon," an Oculus spokeswoman said.
- The moves cap a rocky year for Oculus. Shipping problems and a higher-than-expected price bungled this spring's launch of the Rift virtual-reality goggles, which face mounting competition from the likes of [HTC Corp.](#) and [Sony Corp.](#) The headset still lacks a hit game to appeal to mainstream consumers.

- Oculus is trying to rekindle enthusiasm for its devices with new launches, such as the \$199 Touch hand controllers for grabbing and moving virtual objects, a Rift accessory which [won strong reviews](#) earlier this month.
- At its developer conference in October, the company offered a peek at a [new stand-alone headset](#) it is developing and announced that it will pay \$250 million to developers creating virtual-reality content, on top of the \$250 million already spent.

## Facebook Inches Closer to Fact-Checking Its News

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-plans-to-demote-fake-news-on-its-site-1481824802?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-plans-to-demote-fake-news-on-its-site-1481824802?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Dec. 15, 2016 at 7:19 pm ET

- Facebook said it has identified several markers of sites that consistently peddle fake news, and it will demote posts from those sites in people's news feeds.
- It is also outsourcing the delicate task of determining whether individual stories are true or false to a few external organizations and tweaking its news feed algorithm based on their rulings. It is unusual for Facebook to entrust outsiders with this much power to influence the way posts are played in the news feed, the central stream of information that is customized for each user by Facebook's algorithm.
- Facebook has long portrayed itself as a neutral technology platform, but the steps outlined Thursday show how it is being forced to acknowledge some responsibility for the type of content that spreads across the site and to arbitrate on the quality of news items featured on its feed.
- Social-media sites such as Facebook and Twitter Inc. shoulder "a great deal" or "a fair amount" of responsibility for preventing the distribution of fake news, according to 71% of the U.S. adults polled.
- Mr. Zuckerberg later acknowledged the problem of false information later in November, laying out [several steps Facebook was testing](#) to tackle the issue. By drafting the help of a network of fact-checking groups affiliated with the Poynter Institute, a journalism nonprofit based in St. Petersburg, Fla., Facebook is seeking to keep the task at arm's length.
- "Our goal is to reduce these hoaxes just like we fight other scams on our platform, but I want us to be especially careful about never being arbiters of truth ourselves—which is why we're working with third-party fact-checkers," Mr. Zuckerberg said. "We'll keep looking for unbiased third parties to add to our list of reviewers."
- As it has before, Facebook will rely on users to flag fake news, but will make such an option easier for users to find.
- Under the new process, if a link attracts enough fake-news reports or complaints, Facebook will send it to fact-checking groups, who will have access to these results through a Facebook-built tool.
- The fact-checking organizations—[Snopes.com](#), [PolitiFact](#), ABC News, [Factcheck.org](#) and the [Associated Press](#)—will sift through the flagged stories to determine if they are fake. It will be up to those organizations to determine whether or not to fact-check them.
- A user questioned Mr. Zuckerberg on his Facebook page: "How will you know if these fact checkers are not politically motivated or affiliated themselves?" Another user wrote that the selected sites have a "Left Wing bias."
- If a fact checker determines articles are untrue, those stories will appear lower in Facebook's news feed and publishers can't promote them with Facebook ads, the company said. The links will also carry a warning label to indicate that their accuracy is in dispute.
- Facebook is also trying to identify fake-news sites that masquerade as legitimate news organizations, to limit their ability to generate traffic and ad revenue from Facebook. If a link on Facebook redirects a user to several different pages or winds up on a home page that is largely ads, it is likely a spam network, not a real news organization, Mr. Mosseri said.
- Facebook also is testing a metric that monitors which stories users share much less frequently than average, which Mr. Mosseri calls "informed sharing."

# Facebook Messenger Brings Group Video Calling to Apps and Web

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-messenger-brings-group-video-calling-to-apps-and-web-1482184260?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-messenger-brings-group-video-calling-to-apps-and-web-1482184260?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 19, 2016 at 4:51 pm ET

- On Monday, Facebook updated Messenger on Apple Inc.'s iOS, [Alphabet](#) Inc.'s [GOOG - 1.16% decrease; red down pointing triangle](#) Android operating systems and the desktop web, adding six-way video calling.
- With the update in place, up to six people can see each other live while chatting. But you can invite a larger group, up to 50. In that case, only the person speaking at the time will be seen. If several are speaking at once, the loudest will be seen.
- Group video calling sets Facebook Messenger apart from Facebook's other messaging app, [WhatsApp](#), as well as Snap Inc.'s Snapchat, Apple's FaceTime and [Google Duo](#). These all allow users to communicate one to one.
- This is more like the group video chats previously offered by [Microsoft](#) Corp.'s Skype and Alphabet's Google Hangouts—services that have found more popularity among enterprise customers. However, like Snapchat, Facebook Messenger is trying to keep things fun, adding digital masks (fake glasses, mustaches and the like) that stick to your face as you chat. That feature is on iOS for now, but available on Android soon, Facebook said.
- You can start a group video call in a pre-existing group text chat, using a camera icon in the upper right corner. If you want to start a new group call, just tap the "Calls" button on the bottom of the app, then select "Start group call." You will have the option to start the call in either video or voice. People you call will receive a notification and be able to join in on the video chat whenever they are ready.

## ★ At War With Snapchat, Instagram Arms Itself With Stickers

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/at-war-with-snapchat-instagram-arms-itself-with-stickers-1482253201?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/at-war-with-snapchat-instagram-arms-itself-with-stickers-1482253201?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Dec. 20, 2016 at 12:00 pm ET

- Facebook Inc.'s Instagram is adding on yet another feature found in Snap Inc.'s popular rival, Snapchat. You can now place stickers on top of photos and video shared with friends in the [Instagram Stories section](#) of the app.
- Instagram Stories is already, in many ways, Facebook's direct response to Snapchat. The picture-messaging service's runaway success with the same audience as Instagram could pose a threat to user retention. Both let you share photos and videos that vanish after 24 hours to their followers in the app.
- Instagram Direct messaging also has a Snapchat-like setup, with private photos and video disappearing after two viewings. And now you can add stickers to these messages, too.
- One of the major areas where Instagram Stories differs from Snapchat, so far, is with its new ability to [stream live video](#) feeds to followers.
- While it is fair to say that Instagram is checking off boxes on Snapchat's feature list, it is tough to [find a popular social media app](#) without stickers these days. Facebook's Messenger and WhatsApp apps, [Tencent Holdings'](#) WeChat, Line Corp.'s Line, [Apple](#) Inc.'s iMessage and [Alphabet](#) Inc.'s Google Allo and many others let you paste the digital cartoons into messages. And Twitter [lets you place stickers](#) on photos shared in tweets over its social network.

## EU Accuses Facebook of Giving Misleading Information on WhatsApp Purchase

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-accuses-facebook-of-giving-misleading-information-on-whatsapp-purchase-1482235851?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-accuses-facebook-of-giving-misleading-information-on-whatsapp-purchase-1482235851?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Dec. 20, 2016 at 1:51 pm ET

- The European Union on Tuesday accused Facebook Inc. of giving “incorrect or misleading information” to investigators who were probing its [purchase of chat app WhatsApp in 2014](#), a surprise charge that exposes the company to a hefty fine.
- The European Commission, the bloc’s top competition-enforcement body, said it suspects that Facebook inaccurately claimed during the 2014 takeover that it was unable to reliably match user accounts between Facebook and WhatsApp—something the company started doing two years later when it began [combining user data across the services](#).
- A Facebook spokesman said the company initially reached out to EU antitrust officials earlier this year to inform them of its intention to start linking up information between WhatsApp and Facebook after “we figured out a way to reliably match the users across the two services.”

## Facebook Hires Campbell Brown for News Role

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-hires-campbell-brown-for-news-role-1483730082?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-hires-campbell-brown-for-news-role-1483730082?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Jan. 6, 2017 at 2:14 pm ET

- Campbell Brown, a former CNN prime-time host, is joining Facebook to lead its News Partnerships unit, which works with media companies that publish content on the social media site.

## The Top Selfie-Worthy Museum Shows of 2017

[https://www.wsj.com/articles/art-shows-that-shine-in-selfies-1483977882?mod=Searchresults\\_pos8&page=1](https://www.wsj.com/articles/art-shows-that-shine-in-selfies-1483977882?mod=Searchresults_pos8&page=1)

Updated Jan. 9, 2017 9:03 pm ET

- To draw visitors and grab global attention, museums and galleries are mounting shows with strong digital potential. Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat are turning exhibits into pop-culture experiences. Shows with multi-sensory elements or artist-created interactive environments that shine in selfies are at a premium.

## Facebook to Push for Better Journalism

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-to-push-for-better-journalism-1484146801?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-to-push-for-better-journalism-1484146801?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Jan. 11, 2017 at 2:38 pm ET

- Facebook Inc. said it would advocate for what it determines is good journalism and forge closer ties with news organizations, a sign of it taking a more active role in managing the content on its site.
- The goal of the “Facebook Journalism Project” is to give users “information that you can trust,” said Fidji Simo, director of product for Facebook. “We care about it from the standpoint that people want to be informed.”
- Facebook has long been reluctant to portray itself as a media company, instead calling itself a neutral-technology platform. Chief Executive [Mark Zuckerberg](#) has said he is wary of Facebook becoming “arbiters of truth.” Ms. Simo echoed that sentiment, saying Facebook’s goal isn’t to tell people what they should and shouldn’t read.
- Still, in the past couple of months, Mr. Zuckerberg has acknowledged that Facebook shoulders some responsibility for how its technology is used by its 1.8 billion monthly users. About 44% of Americans get at least some of their news from Facebook, according to a survey by Pew Research conducted last year.
- The changes come in the wake of criticism that Facebook’s news feed, by design, puts legitimate and fake news on equal footing, [hurting public discourse during the U.S. presidential campaign](#). In December, Facebook said it would aim to curb fake news through partnerships with fact-checking organizations and tweaks to its algorithm.



- On Wednesday, Facebook said it would allow publishers to exert influence on Facebook products when they are still being conceived by the development teams in hopes of building content that publishers and users will adopt.
- Still, Facebook allying itself with some established media companies and taking a stand for news literacy could stoke concerns, often voiced by conservatives, about liberal bias among Facebook employees and the news promoted by the site.

## ★ Publishers Aren't Seeing Revenue From Instagram's New Ads

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/publishers-arent-seeing-revenue-from-instagrams-new-ads-1484173551?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/publishers-arent-seeing-revenue-from-instagrams-new-ads-1484173551?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Jan. 11, 2017 at 6:23 pm ET

- Unlike Snapchat's ultra-exclusive [Discover platform](#), which is limited to a few dozen partners who commit to creating unique content on a daily basis, any media company can set up an Instagram Stories account.
- And while Snapchat's partners get a piece of the ad revenue generated on their Discover channels, publishers as of now are not getting any revenue cut from Instagram Stories, [which just rolled out its first advertising on Wednesday](#).
- Most publishers told CMO Today they are patient, as they expect Instagram to eventually share ad revenue or create some other form of ad revenue for Stories.
- A spokeswoman for Instagram, which is owned by Facebook Inc., said the company has no comment on how the Stories business model may evolve.
- In the meantime, publishers see a growing opportunity to weave marketers' messages into their Story content. Currently, publishers are permitted to charge marketers for this "sponsored content" and keep all the revenue.
- The new Instagram Stories ads sold by Instagram are very Snapchat like: the placements are full screen vertical videos that can run for 15-seconds, or static photos that run for five seconds. The charter list of advertisers includes [L'Oreal](#), Bacardi, [McDonald's](#) and [Wendy's](#), Instagram said.
- Instagram said Wednesday that Stories now reaches an astonishing 150 million people a day (the same number that use Snapchat on a daily basis).
- Philippe von Borries, co-founder and co-chief executive of Refinery29 said that, historically, Instagram has followed Facebook's lead when it comes to ad products. Given that Facebook has started testing mid-roll ads in videos, that could signal a similar move by Instagram down the road.
- "Instagram Stories are a lot more organic, and the content tends to be very loose and experimental," he said. I don't think anyone is up in arms [about monetization]."

## Facebook Moves to Curtail Fake News on 'Trending' Feature

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-moves-to-curtail-fake-news-on-trending-feature-1485367200?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-moves-to-curtail-fake-news-on-trending-feature-1485367200?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Jan. 25, 2017 at 5:18 pm ET

- Facebook Inc. is overhauling its "trending topics" box, part of its effort to curb fake news and expose users to a broader range of information.
- Starting Wednesday, Facebook's software will surface only topics that have been covered by a significant number of credible publishers, a move designed to cut back on hoaxes by giving more weight to information sources that have been around longer.
- What's more, the topics will no longer be personalized to every Facebook user, which could puncture users' so-called filter bubble and expose them to a [variety of different news sources](#) and events.

- Facebook has changed its trending feature several times since last spring, after allegations that Facebook contract workers who selected the headlines altered what appeared, for political reasons. In August, Facebook fired the contract workers and [opted for a largely software-driven approach](#). This change, which did away with headlines in favor of hashtags and keywords, quickly [led to the appearance of false stories](#) in the box.
- After the November U.S. presidential election, employees and outsiders criticized Facebook's laissez-faire attitude toward fake news and its role in creating and enforcing echo chambers, in which like-minded users share and read articles that confirm their beliefs.
- Facebook is now doing more to fight fake news, but remains wary of directly deciding what is and isn't true. Last month, it [entrusted fact-checking groups](#) to flag certain stories as false, which it then would demote in the news feed.
- Now, Facebook will take into account the "historical engagement" of a particular publisher—how long a publisher has maintained a presence on the social network—which it hopes will prevent newer fake news sites from generating traffic through Facebook. The trending algorithm will also factor in how many publishers are reporting on the same topic.
- The trending box now will display topics that are popular in whatever country a user is in, and all users in each country will see the same links.
- Even so, Facebook said it would not rehire the trending topics curators or add more people to vet the topics by hand.

## Hugo Barra to Join Facebook After Leaving Xiaomi

[http://www.wsj.com/articles/hugo-barra-to-join-facebook-1485405300?reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](http://www.wsj.com/articles/hugo-barra-to-join-facebook-1485405300?reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Jan. 26, 2017 at 1:35 pm ET

- Mr. Barra, a former executive at [Alphabet](#) Inc.'s [GOOG -1.26%decrease; red down pointing triangle](#) Google, [left Chinese smartphone maker](#) Xiaomi Corp. this week. His title at Facebook will be vice president of virtual reality, Oculus said in a post on Twitter.
- Mr. Barra's role, however, will expand beyond Oculus to encompass [all of Facebook's VR efforts](#). Facebook has been working to make VR work on smartphones.
- It is also [working on a stand-alone VR device](#) that won't require a personal computer or mobile phone to work.
- Facebook expects to invest for up to 15 more years before virtual reality becomes a truly mainstream platform, Mr. Zuckerberg said last week while giving testimony in a Dallas court in a patent-infringement case against Oculus.

## Facebook Is Trying Everything to Re-Enter China—and It's Not Working

[https://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerbergs-beijing-blues-1485791106?st=t60fx40p7f0zqb2&reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/articles/mark-zuckerbergs-beijing-blues-1485791106?st=t60fx40p7f0zqb2&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Jan. 30, 2017 at 10:45 am ET

- Facebook Inc.'s chances of getting back into China appeared to take a rare turn for the better when an employee noticed an official posting online: Beijing authorities had granted it a license to open a representative office in two office-tower suites in the capital.
- There was a catch. Facebook's license was for three months, unusually short. Facebook executives found the limitation unexpected and frustrating,
- Facebook never opened the office. The official posting disappeared and now exists as a ghost in cached versions of the government website. "We did, at one point in time, plan to have an office," said Facebook spokeswoman Charlene Chian, "but we don't today."
- The episode is part of Facebook's running tale of woe in China, where it has been trying to set the stage for a return. [Blocked on China](#)'s internet since 2009, Facebook has courted Chinese officials, made Chief

Executive [Mark Zuckerberg](#) more visible in China, hired a well-connected China-policy chief and begun developing technology that could cull content the Communist Party [deems unacceptable](#).

- It has made no visible headway. And as time passes, Facebook is watching from the outside as Chinese social-media giants mop up the market that might have been its own. Weibo, along with [Tencent Holdings](#) Ltd.'s WeChat and QQ, are now [dominant in China](#), and it may be too late for Facebook, said industry executives including Kai-Fu Lee, Google's former China head and now [CEO of Innovation Works](#), a Chinese incubator.
- "It's important for Facebook to respect the laws and regulations of China," said Guo Weimin, vice minister of the State Council Information Office. "The Chinese government has always had an open approach to social-media networks. Cooperation with new media is welcome on our side."
- Mr. Zuckerberg, who declined to be interviewed for this article, has said he considers China crucial to Facebook's future. "Obviously you can't have a mission of wanting to connect everyone in the world and leave out the biggest country," he told analysts in 2015. "Over the long term, that is a situation we will need to figure out a way forward on."
- Prospects were brighter in 2005, when Facebook registered "[www.facebook.cn](#)." It launched a Chinese-language version of its website in 2008 and was a serious contender in China. A Facebook page purporting to be of then-premier Wen Jiabao had tens of thousands of "likes."
- Things changed in 2009, when regulators [blocked Facebook and Twitter](#) in an information lockdown after [riots in China's Muslim Xinjiang](#) region. State media said riot leaders used social media to stir unrest.
- Mr. Zuckerberg maintained his intense interest in China, studying Mandarin and hosting Chinese officials at his Menlo Park, Calif., headquarters. He traveled [to China](#) to meet business leaders and government officials to maintain communication.
- Facebook has rapidly expanded its sales teams in Singapore and Hong Kong in anticipation of more business in Asia, particularly in China, people familiar with the teams said.
- Amin Zoufonoun, Facebook's head of corporate development who has helped drive some of its largest acquisitions, is eyeing potential deals including joint ventures that could help jump-start Facebook's China growth should it be allowed to return, said people familiar with Facebook.
- Over the past year, Mr. Zuckerberg has directed engineers at Facebook to start building and adapting products that can be used in China, according to people familiar with the effort. Facebook has been working on technology that could block some content in China, said people briefed on the effort. The [New York Times](#) previously reported that Facebook is working on a tool to allow a third party to block content.
- Facebook has already agreed to take down, in some countries, content that is illegal there, including pro-Nazi material in Germany. Chinese law would demand more, and censorship is a price that has led Western internet companies such as [Alphabet](#) Inc.'s [Google to abandon the market](#).
- Facebook executives worry that agreeing to heavy censorship could create a backlash among the site's 1.8 billion active users, said people familiar with the company.
- Another obstacle for Facebook may be the aftermath of Google's departure. [In 2010, Google said it would stop censoring](#) its search engine after [concluding China-based hackers](#) were attacking human-rights activists' Gmail accounts. It pulled its engine from the mainland, redirecting users to its Hong Kong site. [Chinese officials denied](#) connection to attacks on Google.

## Facebook Tunes Into Television's Market

[https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-tunes-into-televisions-market-1485900480?st=6jv7d6pfev5gyry&reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-tunes-into-televisions-market-1485900480?st=6jv7d6pfev5gyry&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

Updated Jan. 31, 2017 at 6:52 pm ET

- The social network is developing a video-centric app for television set-top boxes, including [Apple](#) Inc.'s [AAPL 1.21%increase; green up pointing triangle](#) Apple TV, people familiar with the matter said, giving it a home for video content—as well as a new vehicle for video advertising.
- Facebook is also in discussions with media companies to license long-form, TV-quality programming

- Tapping more of the \$70 billion U.S. TV advertising market could help offset its growth plateau. Video ads command a premium over text- and image-based ads within the news feed. Though video ads already contribute to Facebook's growth, deep-pocketed advertisers still spend the bulk of their marketing budgets on television ads.
- Facebook has competition from other tech companies. YouTube, part of Google parent Alphabet Inc., and Snap Inc.'s Snapchat are also angling to get more TV advertising. Google said last week that ads it sells on YouTube generally cost less than its search-engine ads. Snapchat is pushing more toward a content-licensing model, a move that media executives say Facebook has noticed.
- Facebook's users world-wide spend an average of 50 minutes a day on its products, regardless of the type of content, according to the company.
- Facebook has been known for short-form video clips. But media companies say they are in talks with Facebook to provide it with long-form "TV-like" content upward of 10 minutes in length. That content could include scripted shows and sports and entertainment content created specifically for the platform, according to media executives familiar with the discussions.
- Nearly every product team at Facebook is working to incorporate more video across its features and apps, according to people familiar with the matter. Last week, it began testing "Facebook Stories", a photo- and video- montage feature that is a carbon-copy of a popular feature on Instagram.
- Facebook has vowed to avoid pre-roll video ads, the spots popular on YouTube, because it believes it would turn users off. Earlier this month, Facebook began [testing "mid-roll" ads](#)—a format that recalls a typical TV spot—in the middle of live videos, and plans to introduce them in all videos. The ads will be 15 seconds long, and will only appear after a video is played for at least 20 seconds, according to media executives briefed by Facebook.
- Last week, Facebook also [tweaked its news feed](#) to boost the visibility of videos over 90-seconds long. The move could result in more advertising space for Facebook to sell, publishers briefed on the project said. Facebook has told publishers that it plans to share revenue from mid-roll ads with them.
- In October, Facebook introduced a feature allowing users to stream videos from the Facebook app to their TVs through devices like Apple TV or Google Chromecast.