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## **WEALTH MANAGER; MANSMITH MENTORS: On Facebook : organic reach and engagement**

**BYLINE:** Donald Lim

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I HAVE BEEN reading a lot of articles online about Facebook killing organic reach and there is uproar against Facebook regarding it. What is organic reach and how will that affect my brand? I handle three brands and I have made all of them reach more than one hundred thousand likes each after working on them last 2014. What will happen now? Is Facebook still relevant as a digital marketing platform? Any advice moving forward? - Concerned marketer

Facebook has advised marketers late last 2014 that brands will have a harder time getting exposure for their posts within their circle of fans or "likers". You are right in saying that a lot of groups, from the brand to agency sides, have been complaining to Facebook regarding this move. Organic reach means that if you have a brand on Facebook, and you post on Facebook, the number of your "likers" that see your posts constitute organic reach. When Facebook started, the race to getting a high number of fans made sense; you get a free platform to communicate to people who are interested with you. But as Facebook gained traction and more and more users got more "friends", the content populating the personal newsfeed becomes all the more complex. How does Facebook determine what comes out of your newsfeed if you have more than 1,000 friends and have liked 100 brand pages?

Facebook operates on the principle of relevance, and one of the most important factors is the so-called engagement rate. Facebook determines relevance not only because of affinity circles (family or recent events where you are together), but also on how much you are liking and commenting on each other's posts. Thus, by nature, you will be liking and commenting on posts of your friends rather than posts done by brands. That is why I always tell brand and community managers that "likes" are not important on Facebook, as the battlefield is getting the engagement with the people who liked them. Content strategy, or the nature of the content posts, would have only one goal - to get people to engage (through liking, commenting or sharing). This is nothing new. Therefore, the announcement of Facebook is just an announcement. I did not hear them saying they have tweaked the Edgerank, or their "secret formula" on how they decide what comes out of the newsfeed of people. By the same natural law that Facebook created, brands have just managed themselves to become irrelevant to people who have initially "liked" them.

How many of you have liked a brand or page before, but did not appreciate the content you are seeing on your newsfeed? How many press releases and ribbon cutting, sale and promo announcements, or just plain irritating messages have you seen? You may not have "un-liked" them, but definitely, you just swiped up and did not mind it. Those occasions are actually telling Facebook you did not appreciate the content the brand is giving you. So the next time the brand would post something on their page, Facebook remembers that you did not like the message from the brand, and would rather provide your newsfeed with post from your friends who you appreciate more.

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What does this mean moving forward? You have to pay Facebook so they show your post to your community. That is why you are seeing a lot of people getting pissed with Facebook as they are now being charged to communicate to their base. I, on the other hand, think it is only fair. Paying puts everything in a balance. Because you will be paying for the content, you will be more prudent on the kind of content you post. At the same time, I always tell people not to make Facebook the center of all their digital campaigns. Facebook is just like any other media platform, and you have to look at Facebook within the brand's entire digital ecosystem. Use and pay Facebook if needed, but in the long run, it is always best to acquire data about the customer through one's own digital platform or own Web site.

Learn about Digital Marketing live from Donald Lim on April 16-17, 2015. E-mail [info@mansmith.net](mailto:info@mansmith.net) or call 584-5858/0917-627-1888 for details

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