Facebook Timeline Presents Brands with New Engagement Hurdles, Says Punch Communications

March 15, 2012

Punch is a boutique PR agency with the skill set and client base of a global agency.

Market Harborough, Leicestershire (RPRN) 03/15/12 — Facebook's timeline for pages, which will be fully rolled-out across the platform on 30th March, has had a mixed reception from many a brand and social media agency with only one in four switching voluntarily to date but, one problem that arises as a consequence of the introduction concerns fan acquisition and engagement, the very foundations of why brands market themselves on Facebook, says Punch Communications.

Currently, brands can create landing tabs to incentivize users to become fans of the page, such as entry to competitions and money-off discount codes. In some cases, these landing tabs act as gateways to the richer page content, meaning that users are forced to become a fan before being able to access any of the richer content behind the landing tab. However, with the introduction of Timeline, the landing tab gateway is removed to be replaced with a permanent landing destination for all visitors, irrespective of whether

they have “liked” the page or not.

One of the most defining characteristics of Timeline is the increased aesthetics and in particular, the implementation of an enlarged cover photo. From a brand perspective, whilst this does provide the opportunity to be creative and inspiring, there are a number of stipulations from Facebook designed to prevent overt marketing messages. Specific guidelines stipulate that brands must not use the cover photo to display:

- Price or purchase information, such as “40% off” or “Download it at our website”
- Contact information, such as web address, email, mailing address or other information intended for the brand page’s *About* section
- References to user interface elements, such as requests to Like or Share, or any other Facebook site features
- Calls to action, such as "Get it now" or "Tell your friends"

Pete Goold, managing director of PR, social and SEO agency, Punch Communications, said: “Clearly, if approached correctly, the introduction of Timeline for brand pages offers a number of opportunities and new functionality for brands to improve fan engagement and interaction. However, by becoming less of a walled garden, brands will have to be wiser and work smarter to convince users to become page fans. If users can view all updates and content just by visiting the page, there is less incentive to click the like button. The message being sent is that content remains king; brands need to engage and encourage users to become fans through the inherent quality of content and site appeal, rather than through landing tabs or overt “Like” gateways”.

The requirement to drive user engagement (in terms of interactions, likes and comments) remains absolutely crucial to a successful brand page. It is understood that the introduction of Timeline will not replace the Edgerank algorithm and therefore, if brand pages are to ensure that key messages are delivered to as many of the fan base as possible, then interactions and relevancy should remain as key strategic pillars.

“The introduction of Timeline is just another stage in the evolution of Facebook and its relationship with brands and businesses. Equally, the online PR sector continued to evolve as just as the sector has had to respond to numerous technological and cultural challenges over the last decade, we’re confident that it will adapt to lead communications consultancy around the introduction of Facebook Timeline”.

For more information about Punch Communications and its integrated PR, SEO and social media services, please visit www.punchcomms.com.

Media Contact Name: Ben Leuty
Media Phone: 01858 411600
Media Web Address: www.punchcomms.com
Company Contact Name: Punch Communications
Company Phone: 01858 411600
Company Web Address: www.punchcomms.com

Main image credits: www.punchcomms.com

Filed Under: Technology, New Media - WEB 2.0, Social Media, PRESS RELEASE

RUSH PR NEWS newswire and press release services at rushprnews.com / Anne Howard annehowardpublicist.com

Content- Legal Responsibility - All material is copyrighted - You may repost but you MUST link back to the original post on your page and acknowledge Rush PR News as the news source. Rush PR News is not legally and/or morally responsible for content of press releases, opinions expressed or fact-checking.

Rush PR News cannot be held legally responsible for material published and distributed through its newswire service or published in its press-room and therefore cannot be sued for published material. Third-party must be contacted directly to dispute content.

Rush PR News is not the contact for material published.