Facebook's new reply and comment ranking features will provide valuable engagement opportunities for brands, says Punch

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

London, UK (rushPRnews) 03/22/13 — The announcement of a Facebook update to allow replies to individual comments provides a sound opportunity for businesses to improve consumer engagement, says integrated PR, social media and SEO agency, Punch Communications.

Whilst until now brands have been required to tag user names in comments which are replies, they will soon be able to directly respond to individual comments, making dialogue more streamlined and conversations easier to track within the platform.

The update will also introduce an algorithm ordering the most active and most relevant threads to the top, based on factors such as contributions from a user's own social network and number of likes.

For brands, this means their replies will be easier for fans to find and view, promising a positive impact on consumer engagement and the quality of interactions.

Facebook is reported to roll out the new feature from 25 March to opt-in Page owners, with full availability expected in July 2013. However, it has warned that the new features will only be applied to Page posts and Profiles with more than 10,000 followers, and will not be accessible on mobile initially.

Pete Goold, managing director of Punch Communications, comments: “This update is significant because of the value placed upon fan engagement within Facebook. The ability to directly reply to fans will enable brands to have meaningful interactions which are instantly traceable. This is a much more effective proposition than tagging a user in a thread that could be many posts divorced from the initial comment.

“The algorithm to order content should also positively impact on brand’s Pages, because fans will see the most active feeds – and crucially the most relevant threads - rather than viewing static and dated conversations.”

The update brings Facebook Pages in line with the in-reply and ranking functionality that has been available on third-party sites since 2011.

Punch Communications is unique in its approach, combining expertise of PR, SEO and social media agencies. Sectors it services include technology, financial, retail and automotive PR. For more information about the services Punch offers and to find out how it could benefit your business, please visit www.punchcomms.com or call 01858 411 600.

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