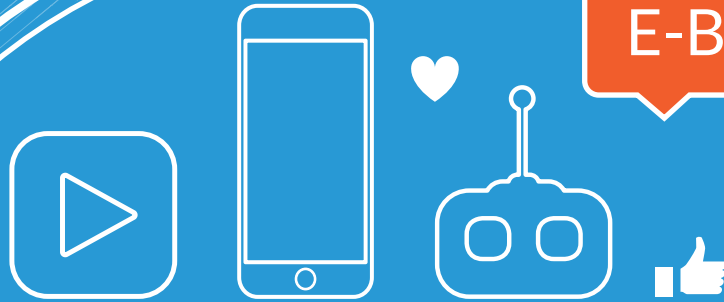


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# 5 Facebook Trends

You Won't Want to Miss in 2017



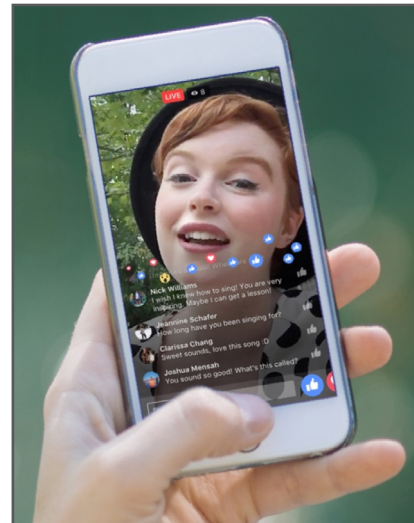
  Remember when Facebook was called, “The Facebook?” We do! As the world’s most popular social media platform, Facebook has consistently been on the forefront of change and innovation in order to better serve its users. With 2016 behind us, what kind of features can we look forward to in the new year?

From artificial intelligence and talking chat robots, to business exclusive Facebook accounts and virtual reality, this marketing guide is filled with the latest and greatest changes coming to Facebook that you’ll want to know. If your business is on Facebook, you won’t want to miss these new and exciting changes! If your business isn’t on Facebook yet, then you’re missing out on a serious marketing must-have!

# Video is starting to dominate Facebook

Facebook does not like large blocks of text. Over the past few months, you've probably noticed an increase in the amount of videos showing up in your newsfeed compared to status updates and pictures. This is all part of Facebook's new "video first" content strategy. Facebook founder and CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, believes that video is the next wave of content that people want to see, and his team is determined to make the most of it.

Enter Facebook Live and 360° Video. Emerging on Facebook in late 2016, both forms of video content aim to bring interactivity to users, letting them actively participate with the people and pages they want to hear from. With video content steadily taking priority over static content, both Facebook Live and 360° Video will be a trend your business will want to pay attention to. But what makes them so special?



## Facebook Live

Keeping up with their goal of a more video-based newsfeed, Facebook now lets users stream - you guessed it - live videos to their

followers. With the push of a button, your business can stream live video from virtually anywhere, to all your fans. Any Facebook user who has liked your business profile can tune in to your live stream and interact in real time.

When it comes to engaging current and prospective customers, Facebook Live can be a game changer. With the ability to include your audience in real-time, the practicality of Facebook Live is limited only by your imagination. Give it a try! Do a live Q&A, host a webinar, teach your customers something new, take fans on the job with you, or invite them "behind the scenes" of your business. In 2017, Facebook Live is something your business will definitely want in it's marketing toolbox.

# Video is starting to dominate Facebook



## 360° Video

One of the most interesting innovations Facebook users will see more of in 2017 is interactive 360° video. With 360° video, Facebook users can actively participate in a video by looking around with their mobile devices. As a person rotates their mobile device, the user's video changes to mimic the way a person would be able to look around in real life. To give you an idea, here is a great [example from Facebook](#).

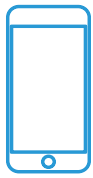
In order to leverage 360° on your business' Facebook page, you'll need a special camera that can shoot 360° video. While that might seem like a serious drawback, the ability to include and entice your audience to participate with your content can be a great way to help establish your brand and invite people to check your business out.

With new and emerging technology like 360° video and live video streaming, 2017 will no doubt be the year of video content. Currently, Facebook ranks video posts higher than that of static content like status updates, articles, photos, etc., meaning videos will be seen more often by users than other content types. Now that Facebook has made it clear that video is the future of the social media powerhouse, Facebook Live and 360° video are two great new features your business can take advantage of.

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*Facebook ranks video posts higher than that of static content like status updates, articles, photos, etc., meaning videos will be seen more often by users than other content types.*

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# Facebook is stepping up its mobile advertising game in the new year

With [989 million mobile users](#) on Facebook every day (*VentureBeat 2016*), the social media site continues to improve its advertising capability for mobile users. Following the purchases of web services like Instagram and WhatsApp, the demand for mobile friendly advertising will be huge in 2017.

As we enter 2017, here are some new improvements Facebook is making to their mobile advertising that you can take advantage of:



**Multi-product newsfeed ads:** If your business is product-oriented, then this update is perfect. This new ad takes the main image or video you're using in your ad, and combines it with related product images pulled from your business. When a user clicks on the images, they are automatically redirected to your website.



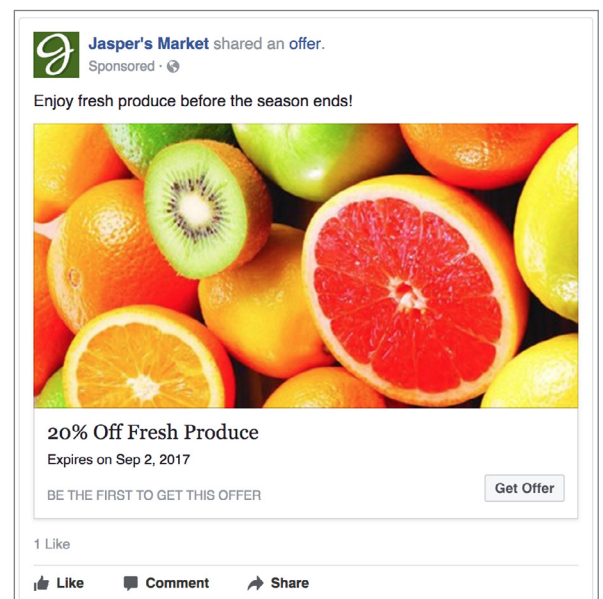
**Facebook Live advertising:** Facebook is currently testing live advertising to go along with their Facebook Live feature. While it's not quite SMB friendly yet, they are experimenting with scheduled, pre-recorded ads so you can let your audience know when you are hosting a live video stream.  
*Source: (Digiday, 2016)*



## Facebook promotional offers:

Dubbed Facebook Offers, this feature has been recently updated, and allows businesses to post promotional offers directly to their Facebook page. While the service has been around for awhile, businesses looking to utilize Facebook Offers will now have to pay for the service.

*Source: (Lifewire, 2016)*





# Expect more businesses to adopt Marketplace & Workplace

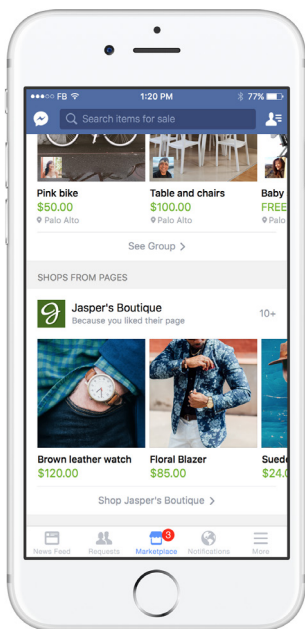
## Facebook Marketplace

One of the biggest changes to Facebook has been the introduction of Facebook Marketplace. Unveiled in October 2016, Marketplace aims to take on a similar role to Craigslist and eBay. People can now buy and sell items within their local communities directly from Facebook.



After Facebook noticed that over 450 million people were using Facebook Groups to buy, sell, and trade goods, the social media site built this app to streamline the process for Facebook users. While the app does not let you buy directly like traditional e-commerce sites, it does allow users to make offers to potential buyers and sellers, and is currently available on mobile devices in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, and United Kingdom.

With Marketplace, Facebook users can create a listing for virtually anything they want. From buying essentials for your business, to selling furniture, Facebook Marketplace gives you the ability to quickly buy and sell, while letting you make offers directly from the app or message the seller.



*To access Marketplace, go to the Facebook app on your mobile device and tap the Marketplace icon.*



# Expect more businesses to adopt Marketplace & Workplace

## Facebook Workplace

For several years now, Facebook employees have used a version of the social media site to help run and manage their business. Since October of 2016, Facebook has officially opened this business-specific version of Facebook to the public. Dubbed *Facebook Workplace*, this version of Facebook is optimized to be used by businesses to increase productivity and communication in the workplace, and offers features that are exclusively available for Facebook Workplace users, including:

- An analytics report dashboard
- Multi-company groups
- A personalized newsfeed for you and your employees
- Work chat
- Live video
- Real-time communication across the globe



Facebook has used a similar platform for its own employees, and is now letting businesses everywhere take advantage of Workplace. Their goal is to help make ideas and communication happen fast within a business, with easy real-time communication that is meant to connect your workplace. While Facebook Workplace is a paid service, it does come with a free 3 month trial. If your business is interested in trying Facebook's new Workplace version, you can enter your business' information here.



# Facebook aims to turn Virtual Reality into the future of content

One of the most exciting innovations Facebook will continue to make in 2017 is in the field of virtual reality. When Facebook bought Oculus VR, a company specializing in virtual reality in 2014, it was clear that Facebook was committed to making virtual reality part of the social game. As we mentioned earlier in this guide, the future of content on Facebook will focus on interactivity, and virtual reality is the perfect technology for that.

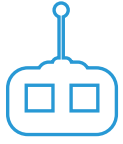


By putting on a virtual reality headset, people can completely immerse themselves in a computer-generated environment. Imagine yourself looking down from the top of Mount Everest from the comfort of your own home. With virtual reality headsets like the Oculus Rift, this is now possible. But this is just the start - Facebook has had big plans for virtual reality on the social media site for a while now.

When announcing the purchase of Oculus VR in 2014, CEO and founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg noted, "We're going to make Oculus a platform for many other experiences. Imagine enjoying a courtside seat at a game, studying in a classroom of students and teachers all over the world or consulting with a doctor face-to-face -- just by putting on goggles in your home." *Source: (Facebook, 2014)*

While virtual reality technology has yet to become a major feature on Facebook, the introduction of 360° content hints that it's not far off in the future. In 2017, expect to see virtual reality increase in popularity as Facebook continues to advance the way users experience the social media site.





# Artificial Intelligence continues to evolve

In 2017, the use of artificial intelligence will continue to grow. Two of the biggest forms of artificial intelligence on Facebook you'll want to keep an eye on are the use of virtual assistants and chatbots.

## Virtual Assistants

Think about your own smartphone usage... How many times have you asked Siri (Apple) or Cortana (Microsoft) for directions, or to help find the solution to one of your problems? In recent years, one of the most exciting and useful innovations has come with the introduction of virtual assistants into our technology. People have become used to talking to their phones instead of typing, and the technology has become very helpful in our day-to-day lives.

With virtual assistants like Siri, Cortana, and Alexa (Amazon), finding the answers to our questions have never been simpler. Not looking to fall behind with its competition, Facebook has introduced, "Facebook M," the site's own version of a virtual assistant available in the messenger app.

## Chat Bots

Facebook is taking great strides in 2017 to improve its user experience through the use of chatbots. Chatbots are computer programs aimed at simulating real human discussions. When the technology first emerged, chatbots were simple, question-answer experiences. Today, however, chatbots can be used to book flights, make restaurant reservations, and answer a multitude of questions using an extensive database.

Facebook now gives businesses the opportunity to create their own chatbots for their page, and can even receive payments directly on Facebook Messenger. Source: (Engadget, 2016) Businesses can use these chatbots to help improve their customer service, making it easy for customers to find the answers to their questions, and simultaneously saving the time of employees.

Since its founding in 2004, Facebook has steadily evolved to become the most popular social media site. Facebook consistently looks for ways to better improve its user experiences. With 2017 well underway, these five new innovations are surely something you and your business will want to keep your eye on!

**THANK  
YOU!**

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