


FU Facebook Why small businesses are quitting the social network

“One of the Facebook policy changes decreased my income from Fac

 Image: A Facebook user logs into account

The Facebook Inc. logo is seen on the landing page of the company's Apple Inc. iPad application.

Jason Alden / Bloomberg via Getty file

After nearly two years under fire for false news and Russian election meddling, Facebook has felt the pressure from users and government regulators to address these issues. Earlier this year, CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced changes to the platform's news feed product with content from "more posts from friends and family" and "less public content, including videos and other posts from publishers or businesses."

The goal was to make Facebook more social with fewer commercial and product posts. Publishers ranging from big businesses to mommy bloggers are forced to post more content that they create personally, rather than sharing products or affiliate links.

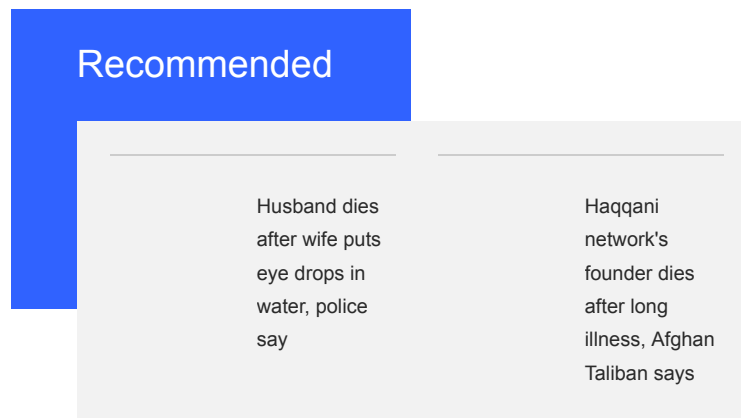
With these changes, small publishers claim to see a



**Small companies say
Facebook's new policies hurt
business**

SEP.03.201802:20

“One of the Facebook policy changes that kind of went under the radar and it went into effect in February was the branded content policy. And it decreased my income from Facebook by 60 percent, overnight. No explanation.” said Holly Homer, an entrepreneur from Texas who owns the Facebook pages for “Quirky Mama” and “Kids Activities.”



With over 3 million followers, Homer’s Facebook page had become so popular she hired five employees and her husband quit his full-time medical job to help with the business. Homer showed NBC News a chart of interactions with her Facebook page that shows a decrease in February when Facebook implemented changes to News Feed.

Several other brands that have Facebook pages also claim to have seen a decrease on Facebook, including the popular feel-good Facebook page “Little Things”, which shut down after clicks dropped by 75 percent. The brand LittleThings has since been acquired by RockYouMedia and actively produces content.

But as other small independent publishers struggle to reach their previous success, some are ditching Facebook completely. Twitter is taking advantage of the situation, putting out a call to publishers to sign up for “Twitter Timeline Ads,” which it says will “generate revenue for your site.”

A new platform has even been launched to combat Facebook: Maven debuted in 2016 and has already attracted more than

300 publishers to its site, getting about 90 million unique clicks a month. Homer moved her KidsActivities page to Maven, and now directs her Facebook followers to the competitor platform.

NBC News reached out to Facebook about the decreases in traffic experienced by Homer and other small businesses, and a spokesperson told NBC News, "In response to feedback, we've recently made some changes to prioritize conversations among friends and family. Although this means some public pages may see a decline in reach, the goal is to make sure that people can connect around authentic and engaging posts."

“This is real money for these influencers... it is all based on traffic. If suddenly your traffic goes away, so does your income.”

Facebook
faced
a new
PR
challenge
last
month
after a
top
executive

reportedly told a group of digital publishers that founder Mark Zuckerberg “doesn’t care” about news publishers and that the company would let them die if they didn’t cooperate with the company.

“I’ll be holding your hands with your dying business like in a hospice,” Campbell Brown, global head of news partnerships at Facebook, [reportedly told a group of publishers](#).

A Facebook spokesperson said in a statement that the comments were out of context and do not reflect its corporate stance.

“This is real money for these influencers,” Melissa Parrish, vice president at Forrester, who analyzes social media trends, told NBC News.

“It is all based on traffic. That's why it can change overnight - because if suddenly your traffic goes away, so does your income.”