

Social media roundup: Threads' revamp, X's payment delays, and TikTok's EU algorithm shift

Article

Threads banks on advanced search, web version to sustain interest

The news: Instagram's Threads launched a month ago, and while it enjoyed unparalleled early adoption, usage and engagement on the app-based platform plummeted in succeeding weeks. The company is now adding user-requested features.

- **Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg confirmed the company is working on a web version and an advanced search** feature it plans to launch in the next few weeks.
- Feature rollouts will give Threads parity with rival X (formerly **Twitter**), and open the service beyond **iPhone** and **Android** apps.

Our take: Despite its initial success, the biggest criticism for Threads is that it may have been launched prematurely. Improving search functionality and adding a web version could help retain existing users and attract new ones.

X is unable to send subscribers ad-revenue payouts on time

The news: **Elon Musk's X** is unable to make payments to **X Premium** subscribers in its "Ads Revenue Sharing" program because the company says interest in the program exceeded the company's expectations.

- Revenue sharing was touted as part of the company's "effort to help people earn a living directly on X."
- The program was opened to paid, verified **Twitter Blue** (now called X Premium) account holders with at least 500 followers and 15 million "organic" impressions in the past three months.
- The delay in payouts echoes X's other recent unpaid bills to landlords, former employees, and cloud providers.

Our take: X's decision to withhold revenue sharing seems to be selective. The company paid out tens of thousands of dollars to right-wing misinformers and bad actors, per Media Matters, which could be a reflection of the whims of its owner.

Failure to fulfill its fiduciary duties to paid subscribers could result in more lawsuits for X.

TikTok shifts its European algorithm to comply with EU's Digital Services Act

The news: TikTok is offering its European users the option to opt out of its signature personalized feed in compliance with the European Union's **Digital Services Act (DSA)**,

- Opting out will result in users viewing popular global and local videos irrespective of personal interest or viewer history.
- The DSA, which is pushing for transparency from online platforms and social media, aims to safeguard younger audiences.
- As a result, **TikTok will eliminate targeted ads for users below 18 years of age.**

Will other social media platforms fall in line? Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook will be compelled to comply with the EU's DSA, effectively altering the social media landscape in Europe.

Our take: Marketers targeting Gen Z on social media will need to develop strategies to overcome the void of behavioral targeting. This will create engaging content to capture a larger, but less specific audience.

US Adults Who Are Concerned About the Use of Personal Information for Targeted Digital Ads, by Age, March 2023

% of respondents in each group



Note: who responded "very" or "somewhat" concerned

Source: Out of Home Advertising Association of America (OAAA) and Morning Consult, "OOH Impact: Retail & Influencer Marketing"; Insider Intelligence calculations, April 19, 2023

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