

Facebook launches PR campaign to defend targeted ads in spat with Apple

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Facebook and Apple are still at war over an expected update to Apple's iOS operating software related to targeted ads that the social network fears could result in lost revenue

Facebook is not backing down in its fight with Apple over a new privacy

feature that could curb tracking needed for the social network's targeted ads, launching a major media campaign to defend a practice that is a big revenue generator.

The "Good Ideas Deserve To Be Found" initiative unveiled on Thursday includes television, radio and digital spots.

"Every business starts with an idea, and being able to share that idea through personalized ads is a game changer for small businesses," Facebook said in a statement, citing examples like a farm that offers goat yoga classes.

Facebook insists the initiative is designed to help [small businesses](#) weather the economic storm churned up by the coronavirus pandemic, but it also wants to keep pressure on Apple about an upcoming change to its operating software.

The iOS change, expected to come later this year, will include a tracking transparency feature that Facebook claims could cripple its ability to serve up targeted ads and hurt many businesses—and cost it a ton of revenue.

The new feature will include a displayed prompt telling people what tracking data is gathered by [mobile apps](#) and asking for permission to allow it.

Platforms like Facebook and Google, as well as the apps they carry, fear that most consumers, when given a choice, will say no to tracking.

"Limiting the use of personalized ads would take away a vital growth engine for businesses," Facebook said, insisting its users preferred targeted ads to generic ones.

Earlier this month, Facebook said it would put in place its own pop-up messages explaining the change and touting the benefits of targeted ads, alongside Apple's messages.

"Apple has every incentive to use their dominant platform position to interfere with how our apps and other apps work, which they regularly do to preference their own," Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg said last month on an earnings call.

"Apple may say that they're doing this to help people but the moves clearly track their competitive interests."

One day later, Apple boss Tim Cook did not mention Facebook by name but slammed [business models](#) built on targeted advertising, which accounts for most of Facebook's revenue.

"If a business is built on misleading users, on data exploitation, on choices that are no choices at all, it does not deserve our praise. It deserves reform," Cook was quoted as saying by CNBC at a conference in Brussels.

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