Facebook to require games to accept its 'credits'

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(AP) -- Facebook will require all games on its site to accept payments through its own virtual currency system beginning July 1.

Although game developers won't have to use Facebook Credits as their only in-game currency, those who do will get special incentives, such as early access to new product features and more desirable targeting for ads, the company said.

Facebook gets a 30 percent cut when developers use Credits to sell virtual goods and other items. Although Facebook relies mostly on advertisements to make money, the payments system lets Facebook broaden its revenue sources.

Deborah Liu, a platform marketing manager at Facebook, said in the blog post Monday that more than 350 applications from 150 game developers already use Credits. That accounts for more than 70 percent of all virtual goods transactions on the site.

Facebook users can use virtual currency to buy items such as special crops in "FarmVille" and virtual deep fryers in "Cafe World," both from Zynga. Credits can be purchased through Facebook using PayPal, credit cards or a mobile phone account.

Facebook, which is based in Palo Alto, Calif., said it plans to work with developers who don't use Credits yet to get feedback and make improvements to the system.

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