

Facebook testing on-screen button for buying (Update)

July 17 2014



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The test was limited to a few small- or medium-sized businesses in the

United States.

"People on desktop or mobile can click the 'Buy' call-to-action button on ads and page posts to purchase a product directly from a business, without leaving Facebook," the California-based Internet titan said in an online post.

The intent was to gauge the potential to drive retail sales through the Facebook news feed or on pages at the online social network, the post indicated.

Credit or debit card information will be safeguarded by Facebook, which will provide the option of storing personal financial information to make future purchases speedier, according to the social network.

Gartner analyst Brian Blau viewed the experiment as an effort by Facebook to find out how easy and desirable it can make shopping on the social network.

"I think it is foreshadowing a time in the future when Facebook is going to be more serious about commerce," Blau said.

"They have repeatedly tried to figure out the best angle for them."

Facebook in the past has dabbled with ways its members could send real-world gifts to friends or make donations to causes.

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Citation: Facebook testing on-screen button for buying (Update) (2014, July 17) retrieved 12 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-07-facebook-button.html>

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