

Facebook launches war on clickbait headlines

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Facebook on Thursday launched an assault designed to crack down on clickbait headlines, in a push to banish "fake news" from its news feeds.

"People tell us they don't like stories that are misleading, sensational or

spammy," Facebook stated in a blog post on its site. "That includes clickbait headlines that are designed to get attention and lure visitors into clicking on a link."

Examples of headlines that are linked to a clickbait page: How much is YOUR home worth today? My foolproof way to end snoring. The world wasn't ready for her Emmys after party dress. You won't believe what (insert name of famous child or teenage actress here) looks like today. Man hugs a wild lion, you won't believe what happens next. This little-known money trick can save you \$10,000 a year. Pay off your mortgage with this amazing strategy.

Menlo Park-based Facebook noted that in 2016, the social network updated its news feed to reduce stories from sources that consistently post clickbait headlines that withhold and exaggerate information," Facebook said.

"Today, we are making three updates that build on this work so that people will see even fewer clickbait stories in their feeds, and more of the stories they find authentic," the social media company stated.

The company now scrutinizes clickbait at the individual post level in addition to overall monitoring of the domain and web page. It also will check, through separate analytics efforts, whether a headline withholds information, or if it exaggerates information. Third, the company has begun testing this work in additional languages.

"Publishers that rely on clickbait headlines should expect their distribution to decrease," Facebook stated in the blog post. "Pages should avoid headlines that withhold [information](#) required to understand the content of the article and headlines that exaggerate the article to create misleading expectations."

Facebook recently cracked down on overall websites that tended to be infested with spam.

"If a (web) page stops posting clickbait and sensational headlines, their posts will stop being impacted by this change," Facebook said in the post.

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