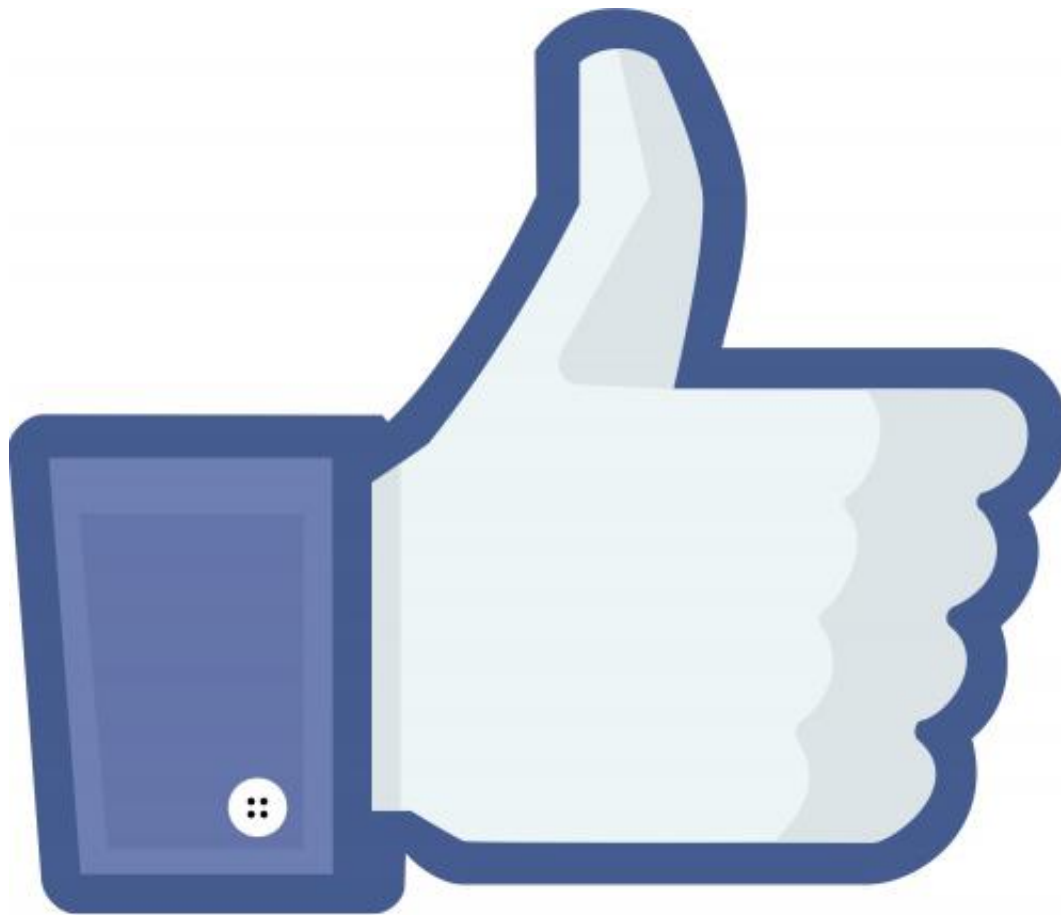


# Can Facebook get people to tune into shows on the social network?

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Watching video online is getting more social.

Facebook introduced a platform Wednesday called Watch that will allow users to discover new shows that their friends are also viewing.

"Watching a show doesn't have to be passive. It can be a chance to share an experience and bring people together who care about the same things," wrote Facebook CEO and co-founder Mark Zuckerberg in a post.

Taking on Google-owned YouTube and Twitter, it's Facebook's latest effort to get more [video content](#) on the social network. The move also allows the company, which has more than 2 billion monthly users, to go after more lucrative [video](#) ad dollars.

Other tech firms such as Amazon, Netflix, Apple have also tried to entice more users to spend more time on their sites by releasing video content. But if Facebook wants to become like Netflix, some analysts say it will be a taller order for the tech firm because people don't associate the website with long-form television shows.

Videos on YouTube, on the other hand, are shorter in length and also include comments from viewers.

"When you say a YouTube video that conjures a set of qualities that are very different from a Netflix show. I think there's a big gap between those type of experiences and it depends where Facebook wants to sit on that spectrum," said Paul Verna, an analyst with eMarketer.

Verna said he thinks Facebook is trying to sit somewhere in the middle.

"They want to be more than a one-minute viral cat video or a Tasty recipe video, but they don't necessarily want to be the place to go where people watch 'Game of Thrones' or 'Orange Is the New Black,'" he said.

Longer video content also gives companies "more of a runway for more advertising," he said.

Facebook's director of product Daniel Danker wrote in a blog post that the company believes that Watch will "be home to a wide range of shows, from reality to comedy to live sports."

Danker pointed to baseball games, a cooking show for kids by Tastemade and a reality show called "Nas Daily" as some of its offerings. Some of these shows like a series called "Returning the Favor" hosted by Mike Rowe have episodes that run for about 20 minutes, screenshots of Watch show.

The tech firm said Watch will be available to a limited group of people in the United States, but did not say how many and when.

Facebook also said that it's funding shows that are community-oriented and have a series of episodes, but did not specify the amount.

Other social media sites including Twitter have also been striking partnerships to bring more original content to its website. Like Twitter, Facebook has also been emphasizing the social conversations that happen while watching video.

Facebook users will be able to see through different sections what are the most talked about shows, what is making people use the "Haha" reaction emoji and what their friends are viewing.

Meanwhile, the company has been making a push to become "video first" by rolling out a live video tool and Snapchat-like Stories features that allow videos and photos to disappear after 24 hours.

But with Watch only available to a limited number of people, analysts

say questions remain about whether people will be tuning into these shows on Facebook.

"There's a lot that's up in the air about how this is going to play out," Verna said. "But they have succeeded so far in becoming a video-centric platform if nothing else."

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