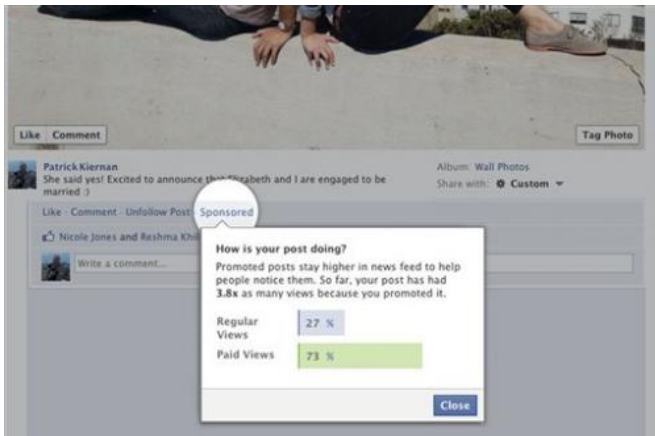


Facebook will charge to 'promote' user posts (Update)

3 October 2012, by Barbara Ortutay



This undated image provided by Facebook shows the new feature Facebook announced Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2012, that lets users pay to promote their posts to friends, just as advertisers do. Facebook has been testing the service in New Zealand, where it tries out a lot of new features, and has gradually introduced it in more than 20 other countries. Facebook says promoting a post will bump it higher in your friends' news feeds. (AP Photo/Facebook)

(AP)—Facebook has long declared that it's "free and always will be." And it still is—unless you want more friends to see what you have to say.

The social media giant is rolling out a feature in the U.S. that lets users pay to promote their posts to friends, just as advertisers do. Facebook has been testing the service in New Zealand, where it tries out a lot of new features, and has gradually introduced it in more than 20 other countries. Facebook said Wednesday that promoting a post—such as announcing a garage sale, charity drive or big news like an engagement—will bump it higher in your friends' news feeds.

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"Every day, news feed delivers your posts to your friends. Sometimes a particular friend might not notice your post, especially if a lot of their friends have been posting recently and your story isn't near the top of their feed," wrote Abhishek Doshi, a software engineer at Facebook, on Facebook's news site.

Facebook didn't say how much it will cost to promote the posts, only that it's considering a range of prices as part of the test. On Wednesday, though, some users could see \$7 as a cost per each update that they want to promote.

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