

Facebook to have outside audit of ad data

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Facebook on Friday promised an outside audit of data it provides advertisers in a move apparently aimed at quelling concerns about accuracy.

The news came just months after the leading social network announced it was working to fix flaws in its metrics calculations that led to audiences being overestimated at times.

"We are committing to an audit by the Media Rating Council to verify the accuracy of the information we deliver to our partners," Facebook said in an online post aimed at businesses.

Partners will get more detailed information about ad views at Facebook and Instagram, including milliseconds that marketing messages are on screens, according to the social network.

Facebook also said it would offer advertisers new options, including only paying for [video ads](#) watched from start to finish or those played with sound turned on.

The new moves were to be made this year.

Late last year, Facebook said it had overestimated the average amount of time spent watching videos over the course of the previous two years.

The social network also revealed at the time that a software bug had let repeat visits to online pages of companies or brands be counted as though someone new was taking a look each time.

In addition, the social network said that for a time it had been overestimating by about seven percent the time spent on news stories published using its Instant Articles tool.

On the other hand, Facebook at the time said it had been undercounting the number of videos watched to completion.

The erroneous metrics were not those used to determine ad prices at the social network, according to Facebook.

However, the reach of content at Facebook is important to advertisers or companies when it comes to evaluating the potential impact of marketing campaigns.

The social network has an interest in maintaining advertiser confidence with reliable audience metrics. Facebook makes the bulk of its money from online advertising.

Facebook's profits more than doubled in the final three months of 2016, as the social media platform saw its audience grow and head towards the two billion mark.

Meanwhile, the number of people using Facebook each month increased 17 percent to 1.86 billion.

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