

USERS CANNOT OPT-OUT OF FACEBOOK'S NEW ADVERTISING INITIATIVE



Facebook's newest advertising initiative may be treading the murky waters of what's acceptable as far as privacy is concerned. "Sponsored Stories," a feature revealed yesterday by the social networking giant, will use stories in Facebook's Newsfeed (i.e. Joe Smith "Likes" Starbucks) as paid advertisements. Facebook will offer the feature only to what it designates as "premium" advertisers, which seems to denote corporate sponsors. The "Sponsored Stories" will only be viewable by the users direct network of friends (i.e. only Joe Smith's Facebook friends will see that he "Likes" Starbucks). In what may cross the line for Facebook users, especially those who expressed concern previously regarding the website's privacy policies, a user cannot opt out of the program. According to Facebook, the new feature is basically "your friend saying, 'look, I did this and I want to tell you about it.'" It also called the new advertising initiative a "brand lift." "We wanted to give a way for application developers, page owners, place owners to be able to promote their content that's as core to the user experience as the news feed, and I think with Sponsored Stories we've created that," the social networking site said. However, it is unknown when the new feature will be fully implemented across Facebook.

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