

Facebook connects creatives

By Leigh Andrews

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With the Cannes Festival of Creativity well and truly underway, we can expect a number of new product announcements and features. Rob Newlan, head of Facebook Creative Shop in the EMEA region, took the time to exclusively share some of these exciting announcements and explained their impact on advertisers, marketers and consumers alike.

Now in his sixth year at Facebook, Newlan explained that his role as head of Facebook's Creative Shop for the EMEA region sees the blending together of a group of strategists and techies that partner with creatives specifically to push Facebook, Messenger and Instagram in creating a value exchange for people doing business across these platforms in the EMEA region, particularly on mobile.

There's no doubt that mobile is having an enormous impact on business, and advertising in particular. The biggest challenge is for creative individuals to embrace mobile in a new way. Up to now we've seen digital as technology – now's the time to focus on what's new or novel, not on the fundamentals, says Newlan. The stand-out factor with Facebook is the people that are living their lives on the platform. There are 13 million doing so in South Africa alone, the bulk of those through mobile. It's about connecting people and things. This creativity unleashes enormous opportunities for creatives to embrace.

Marketing in the mobile-first world



Rob Newlan

Newlan is fortunate in that he gets to travel across the EMEA region and partner with creative individuals in close collaboration with agencies. The opportunity is in the diversity of the region, from the UK to the Middle East and Africa, where some of the most profound creative work for mobile is being developed.

It's all about the connections and possibilities. "Creatives need to craft different stories in order to better resonate with different members of the target audience in different ways, which is just what we need to bring stories to life in the mobile-first world," says Newlan.

There's never been a better time to connect people with businesses, particularly as people's behaviours have changed because of mobile, dubbed "the most profound disruption ever seen in business". It's changed the way we all discover, experience and share, and has also changed the advertising industry, and Facebook wants to help businesses get there by helping them evolve and create for a new, connected world. Here's how...

New: Share and create video for mobile

With the challenge for the creativity community to be more connected in mind, Facebook's mission is to accelerate this shift to mobile in advertising by creating meaningful mobile experiences between people and businesses. Through use of the right tools and insights, advertisers will create better campaigns and people will see better ads, so it's a win-win.

The first development in this regard is the new 'Creative Hub' interface for creative agencies, making it easier to inspire, educate, and enable businesses to design ad creative with the ability to create and preview mocks on mobile in order to better design ads for Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook also wants to enable advertisers to find the insights that inspire great ideas to help inform their campaign planning and creative. Look out for the new Insights API,



The Creative Hub landing page

which incorporates a hypothesis and the data to validate it.

You can't talk mobile without talking video. Newlan explains that since its launch in February, people have spent more than 100 years of time with [Facebook Canvas](#), in more than 180 countries. Canvas loads ten times faster than mobile web, with the average dwell time on a Canvas ad at 31 seconds. New enhancements to the offering will take this a step further by making it easier for agencies and brands to create a Canvas and share it with agency/clients from their phones for reviews, feedback and collaboration.

Lastly, an update to [Slideshow](#) – the format that lets you stitch together still images into a lightweight video ad – incorporates an easy “video-to-slideshow” creation tool that effectively extends the power of Facebook video to everyone, from small businesses without existing creative to users on low-bandwidth connections, as Slideshows use five times less data than the average video and more than 50% of advertisers using the Slideshow feature are new to video.

Seems Facebook's really got its finger on the pulse of the region's needs, which is why Newlan is looking so forward to seeing how the EMEA region's work does in Cannes. He calls it “a really exciting time for the region, especially in terms of using connections and humanity to bring creative ideas to life”.

Another way Facebook is making itself more relevant to the local market is by including South Africa's Matt Ross of King James on their [jury for the 2016 Facebook Awards](#), which celebrate the best creative work on Facebook.

Newlan met Ross when judging the Loeries Awards in Cape Town a few years back and they kept in touch. As a fan of King James' work, Newlan knew Ross would be the right addition to the Facebook Awards jury. [Click here](#) for more on the Facebook Awards, which celebrate the best creative work on Facebook.

The best mobile creative work is definitely yet to come!

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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