

## FACEBOOK CONFERENCE 2017



Once a year, Facebook holds the F8 Developers Conference. This is meeting between Facebook officials / developers and business leaders.

The Brass Armadillo recognizes Facebook for its marketing significance.

The value we receive from Facebook for daily activity along with our paid advertisements is very central to our social efforts at keeping in touch with our customers (and dealers).

So, I applied to attend the conference. Facebook allows about 4,000 into the conference - worldwide. I was excited to receive my invitation to attend.

The conference was held in San Jose California.

A portion of the information certainly didn't apply to our business practices, however some of the new things they talked about certainly sparked some ideas.

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The first thing that caught my interest was the discussion about Messenger "Codes". This is available for both personal accounts and business accounts. It is very similar to QR codes.

A business can print their "Code" to a sign, and a Facebook user can open the camera in their Messenger app and scan this code, which immediately starts a CHAT session with the business.



Just for discussion's sake: Imagine, if a dealer were to print their "Code" and put it in their booth to allow customers to contact them directly for more information?

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Facebook owns Instagram. Instagram should be an important part of our marketing effort, just as Facebook is. The demographics of users is different, however, the potential draw is huge.

Instagram has improved on various business-related fronts. Instagram accounts now have business profiles, and they have improved on statistics for posts.

80% of Instagram users will follow a business. 120M people reached out to business to learn more.

Instagram also has a “stories” feature that we may explore sometime. Stories can also include videos. Stories live only a short time. 200M Instagramers use Stories every day.



Instagram said they are working to make it easier to discover products on their platform.

I want to spend more time with Instagram. It should help us attract new customers. I also need to review the tools available in stories: boomerang, questions, links to see more and stickers.

1/3 of most viewed stories are from businesses.

70% of Stories video are played with sound-on

1 in 5 stories in Instagram gets a direct message.

Shopping on Instagram will be a primary focus .

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Facebook talked a lot about the improvements to their **Messenger camera**. They appear to have very big plans for it.

They envision the camera to playing a big part to their augmented reality and virtual reality offerings.

Trying to port ideas over to our industry isn't a far stretch.

Imagine taking a picture of a booth and making certain items in that picture for sale, so when a user clicks on the item, they are taken to a page to purchase the item or are given more information.

They are also working on camera improvements that will take a photo(s) of an item and create it into a 3D object that can be rotated. We saw demos of this technology that is now in development.

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They also had demos of their new offering called “SPACES”, this is a virtual reality idea that lets you interact with up to three of your friends using VR goggles.

This is brand new and holds a lot of promise for the future. Imagine you hosting “virtual” visitors to your mall and having a tour / discussion or sales pitch with others. Don’t get excited about this yet, it’s still pretty new and usefulness for us is a ways away.

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I attended a session on the future of video (on Facebook). This discussion was primarily about **LIVE video**.

If you haven’t yet tried using LIVE video on Facebook, I encourage you to try it (and use it). It is a powerful marketing tool that is free.



Facebook reported that 40% of all Facebook watched video is due to a **SHARED** video.

One in five videos on Facebook now is LIVE.

Facebook has added a new feature to LIVE, where you can place GIFs (image type characters) directly on your LIVE video. This makes the video a little more entertaining.

Facebook Live video can be used in a wide range of ideas.

I cannot emphasize enough about how beneficial LIVE video on Facebook is.

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**Messenger Bots** are an emerging technology where you preprogram a "BOT" in the Messenger app to be able to answer questions from Facebook messenger users for you. So, if a customer asks "what are your hours", the Bot responds with a preprogramed message.

The uses are vast. It does require some thought and pre-planning.

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**DISCOVERY** tab in Messenger - It is a new section in the Messenger app where people can discover and find bots, nearby places, and businesses to message.

I'm exploring how we may best use the Discovery area. It is still being rolled out to users.

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### **Facebook Groups** (started by Business Pages)

Business Pages can now start Groups. This is something new and may potentially have some great benefits for businesses that operate their own groups.

For us, it could mean any collector groups can have a presence on a mall's page.

We'll have to plan how this can be used to our benefit.

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### **Summary**

Facebook is moving into tomorrow's technology very quickly. And this means a lot for businesses that use Facebook and its associated services.

From the conference, it appeared Facebook has a genuine interest in providing tools for businesses to use to connect to their customers.

We should continue to evaluate which of their services might easily work in our environment.

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