

Facebook Introduces Private Messages between Business Pages and Fans, Signalling Further Opportunities for Brand Engagement, says Punch Communications

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Business pages will now be able to connect with fans through private messaging, Facebook has announced, an introduction set to create further opportunities for brand engagement, says integrated PR, search and social media agency (<http://www.punchcomms.com/social-media-agency.html>), Punch Communications.

Although currently, the change is only available for admins in Asia, it is an important feature which as it is rolled out will allow businesses greater possibilities for interaction with consumers than before. Despite its positives, debates have surfaced as to whether allowing private messages between brands and consumers is beneficial or will cause engagement levels to fall.

Philip Keightley, account director at PR Company (<http://www.punchcomms.com/pr-company.html>) Punch Communications, explains: "Enabling brand pages to receive private messages from their fans on Facebook is a positive change but with it comes a remote chance of negative implementations. These new private messaging settings will increase personal correspondence as well as allow companies to cut down on irrelevant posts and comments. As wall posts are traditionally used for mass communication, direct messaging will result in more one on one interaction with consumers, and will complement existing features on the social platform."

Facebook hopes the move will encourage further interaction between brands and consumers in a more effective way but privately, as opposed to wall posting where information is visible to all followers. Customer service issues and negative comments can be addressed thoroughly, benefiting both business and fans. Brands and customers will be able to interact closer than ever before on Facebook, although key factors including page visibility from reduced likes and comments could have a negative effect.

The change comes soon after Google+ announced its increase in customer service engagement through 'hangouts' and 'grading' followers. Twitter also allows followers to communicate directly with brands but with a restricted word count; which Facebook private messages do not.

Punch Communications is an integrated PR, search and social media company based in the East Midlands and in London. If you are exploring digital PR (<http://www.punchcomms.com/Digital-Public-Relations.html>), SEO and social media opportunities for your brand or business, visit Punch at www.punchcomms.com or call 01858 411600.