Facebook's Little Red Book

As the company of Facebook grew, we faced a lot of challenges. One of them was explaining our company's mission, history, and culture to new employees. Over the years, a lot of formative company discussions and debates had happened in Facebook Groups, over email, or in person. Those who had been present at the time had context, but for new employees that information was difficult to find, even if you knew what you were looking for. We wanted to try to package a lot of those stories and ideas in one place to give to all employees.
It was built to accomplish a social mission to reach...
mission—to make the world more open and connected.
CHANGING HOW PEOPLE COMMUNICATE

WILL ALWAYS CHANGE THE WORLD

Changing how ideas spread changes how society functions, changes how people speak, changes how people live, changes how people tell stories, changes how people fall in love, changes who people consider friends, changes who people consider strangers, changes what being alone means.
That means each Facebook engineer is responsible for approximately 1,000,000 people using Facebook.
6 months or 30 years

There is no point in having a 5-year plan in this industry. With each step forward, the landscape you're walking on changes. So we have a pretty good idea of where we want to be in six months, and where we want to be in 30 years. And every six months, we take another look at where we want to be in 30 years to plan out the next six months.

It's a little bit shortsighted and a little bit not. But any other approach guarantees everything you release is already obsolete.
Hacking can be playful—as long as it works.

Yeah Ok, So Facebook Punk’d Us
Michael Arrington
Thursday, September 10th, 2009

So we’ve had our fun with Facebook over the years. Why We’re Suing Facebook For $20 Million In Statutory Damages, Republican PR Director Calls Facebook a Rand; Zuckering “totally full of shit”, Randi Threatens a Bar Bouncer. But in general these things are supposed to be one way—we mess with them, they take it gracefully.

Today that changed. They punk’d us, and we fell for it. Hard.

Earlier today TechCrunch writer Jason Kincaid noticed something new on Facebook. When viewing any photo, it showed a “View This Photo” link on the bottom-right of the screen. Photoshopped? Yes. But everyone in the TechCrunch network saw it. He fired off an email to Facebook at 5:05 pm. When they didn’t respond, he posted at 5:09: Facebook Now Lets You Fax Your Photos. I Have No Idea Why Anyone Would Want To Do This.

Things went downhill from there.
At 5:47 Facebook fired an email and said “We already fixed your statement on that? Don’t you get it?”
Then they emailed again at 5:51, saying:
Hey Jason,
We’ve been testing this product since 1992, and we are thinking that we will be launching this “innovative” feature at TechCrunch 09.
What do you think?!

Ugh. Our hairs started to itch.
Then we asked a bunch of people outside of our network. Not a single other person said their saw the fax-a-photo feature.

Definitely not a good sign.

Jason then called Facebook PR, Jamie Schoplin took the call and, apparently, couldn’t stop laughing for five minutes. Between laughs while catching her breath, she mentioned something about this being a joke, that nobody but us could see it, and that they were placing bants around the office on how long before we noticed it and posted. And something else about adding us to contact them before posting. So, bottom line, don’t expect to see this feature actually launch. Unless you come to work for TechCrunch, I guess. We will see it.
You won this round, Facebook. Enjoy your victory.

Oh, by the way, the feature works.

Oh
Greatness and comfort rarely coexist.
NEITHER SNOW, NOR RAIN, NOR HEAT, NOR GLOOM OF NIGHT STAYS THESE FROM THE SWIFT COMPLETION OF THEIR CODE.
THE QUICK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

Fast is better than slow.

While slow is adding unnecessary embellishments, fast is out in the world. And that means fast can learn from experience while slow can only theorize.

Those who ship quickly can improve quickly.

So fast doesn't just win the race. It gets a head start for the next one.
When you don’t realize what you can’t do, you can do some pretty cool stuff.
REMEMBER, PEOPLE DON’T USE FACEBOOK BECAUSE THEY LIKE US.

THEY USE IT BECAUSE THEY LIKE THEIR FRIENDS.
WE DON’T BUILD SERVICES TO MAKE MONEY;

WE MAKE MONEY TO BUILD BETTER SERVICES.
If we don’t create the thing that kills Facebook, someone else will.

“Embracing change” isn’t enough. It has to be so hardwired into who we are that even talking about it seems redundant. The internet is not a friendly place. Things that don’t stay relevant don’t even get the luxury of leaving ruins. They disappear.
The only way to see the complete book is to work at Facebook.

Visit facebook.com/careers for opportunities.
Credits

Ben Barry       Editor, Creative Director, Project Manager, Designer
Tim Belonax    Primary Designer
J Smith         Copywriter, Sketchbook Maker
Employment

Work done while employed by Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/design).

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