

Facebook's Reach (on Reach)

Miscalculations In The Age Of Precision

Summary

In what's seemingly become a regular occurrence as of late, Facebook was recently forced again to publicly defend some of their key metrics to the advertising community. This time it involved the estimated reach numbers that Facebook reflects in their Ads Manager product after global reports surfaced that the potential reach for younger demos in several countries was higher than current Census population data.

This discrepancy was brought to the forefront in the United States when a respected Wall Street analyst did the same analysis at the country level for the investor community. This “potential reach” inflation should be important to advertisers since the metric lives in the Facebook Ads Manager product; a self-serve tool that allows anyone to plan, budget, buy and optimize their own campaigns across Facebook platforms.

In this report, we set out to confirm the numbers that were being reported in the press and then we drilled down further into several geographies - states, cities, zip codes - to see if this reach inflation is a nationwide issue or if it's just isolated to a few areas throughout the country.

Finally, we set forth an example of executing an advertising schedule through Facebook Ads Manager to show the potential impact that reach inflation could have on an advertiser's campaign.

In August, AdNews In Australia Revealed That Facebook Claims It Can Reach More Young People Than What The Census Reports

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RECOGNITION IS THE GREATEST MOTIVATOR

AMA 2017 AUSTRALIAN MAGAZINE AWARDS

Facebook says platform can reach 1.7m more young adult users than Aussie population

By [Arvind Hickman](#) | 30 August 2017 | 4 Comments

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Update: AdNews has updated the original article with the latest rebased estimates from the ABS as well as adding new figures from Nielsen. The headline figure changes from 2 million to 1.7 million and all subsequent calculations have been adjusted.

Facebook claims its platform allows advertisers to reach 1.7 million more 15- to 40-year-old users in Australia than the country's official population.

The gap between Facebook users and population data has been revised from the original article AdNews ran last week to incorporate the latest rebased estimates of 2016 census data. This includes adjusting undercounts and overcounts of younger and older demographics as well as adding 600,000 residents who were overseas on census day and not included in the ABS's original estimate.

It provides a more accurate picture of the difference between Australia's official population and the number of users Facebook says advertisers can reach in this market.

The gap is significant when compared to the size of Australia's largest cities. The additional 1.7 million users on Facebook in the millennial and Gen X age groups are nearly enough to populate Australia's fourth-largest city, Perth.





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FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

In Fact, This Facebook Reach Inflation Occurs Globally



United Kingdom



Germany



France



Canada



Italy



Australia



Mexico



Brazil



Argentina

P18-24

		FB	
	Census	Potential Reach	Diff
United Kingdom	5.6MM	7.6MM	<u>+2.0MM</u>
Germany	5.8MM	7.8MM	<u>+2.0MM</u>
France	5.5MM	7.3MM	<u>+1.8MM</u>
Canada	3.1MM	4.1MM	<u>+1.0MM</u>
Italy	4.3MM	5.6MM	<u>+1.3MM</u>
Australia	2.1MM	3.0MM	<u>+0.9MM</u>
Mexico	15.2MM	23.0MM	<u>+7.8MM</u>
Brazil	23.5MM	33.0MM	<u>+9.5MM</u>
Argentina	4.7MM	7.9MM	<u>+3.2MM</u>

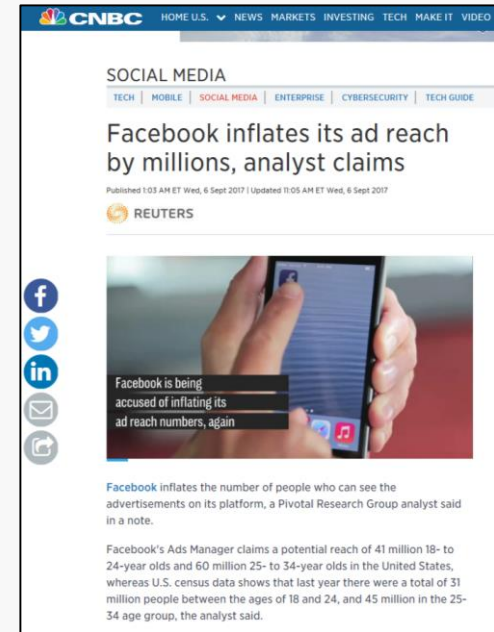
P25-34

		FB	
	Census	Potential Reach	Diff
United Kingdom	8.9MM	11.0MM	<u>+2.1MM</u>
Germany	9.9MM	10.0MM	<u>+97K</u>
France	8.0MM	9.3MM	<u>+1.3MM</u>
Canada	4.8MM	6.0MM	<u>+1.2MM</u>
Italy	7.0MM	7.6MM	<u>+0.6MM</u>
Australia	3.3MM	4.3MM	<u>+1.0MM</u>
Mexico	19.9MM	22.0MM	<u>+2.1MM</u>
Brazil	34.0MM	34.0MM	-----
Argentina	6.6MM	8.8MM	<u>+2.2MM</u>

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2017 estimated Global Census; Facebook Ads Manager. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms and reflects "everyone in this location" data pulled on September 22nd, 2017 (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

This Became A Big Topic In The United States When A Respected Analyst Brought It To The Industry's Attention



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Using The Publicly Accessible Ads Manager, Anyone With A Facebook Account Can Review The Platform's Estimated Reach

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

The screenshot displays the Facebook Ads Manager interface. The left sidebar contains navigation options: Campaign, Ad Account, Ad Set, and Ad. The main content area is titled 'Audience' and includes a 'Create New' button. Below this, there are fields for 'Locations' (set to 'United States'), 'Age' (18-24), and 'Gender' (All). A 'Potential Reach' of 40,000,000 people is displayed. The 'Estimated Daily Results' section shows a reach of 11,000 - 67,000 (of 38,000,000). A red box highlights the 'Audience Size' section, which includes a gauge showing 'Specific' vs 'Broad' and a note: 'Your audience selection is fairly broad.'

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

So We Were Able To Confirm The Numbers That Were Reported In The Press



Facebook's potential reach against Adults 18-34 in the United States is almost 22 Million higher than the U.S. Census A18-34 population

Facebook Platforms - Potential Reach

(FB + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger)

"Everyone In This Location"

<u>Demo</u>	<u>2016 Census</u>
P18-24	31,020,241
P25-34	44,268,470

39,000,000 +8.0MM

58,000,000 +13.7MM

P18-34 Diff: +21.7MM

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager. Based on "everyone in this location" United States data pulled on September 22nd, 2017. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

**One Of The More Common Explanations For
Why There Is This Reach Overage Is Due To
Visits From Travelers Outside The Geography...**

But Is This True?

From An Audience Perspective, The Ads Manager Tool Allows You To Select Just Those People Who Live In A Specific Location

Ad Set Name: US - 25-34

Campaign Objective: [v]

Ad Account: Create New [v]

Ad Set: Page [v], Audience [v], Placements [v], Budget & Schedule [v]

Ad: Identity [v], Format [v], Fullscreen Experience [v], Text [v]

Audience Size: Your audience selection is fairly broad. Potential Reach: 58,000,000 people

Estimated Daily Results: Reach 7,800 - 49,000 (of 43,000,000)

Target Ads to People Who Know Your Business: You can create a Custom Audience to show ads to your contacts, website visitors or app users. Create a Custom Audience.

Locations: ☒ People who live in this location, ☐ People whose home is within the selected area, ☐ People recently in this location, ☐ People traveling in this location, United States

Include [v] | Type to add more locations | Browse

Add Bulk Locations...

Age: 25 - 34

Gender: All, Men, Women

Languages: Enter a language...

Detailed Targeting: INCLUDE people who match at least ONE of the following

Add demographics, interests or behaviors | Suggestions | Browse

Exclude People

Naturally by selecting "people who live in this location," travelers should be excluded from the target audience

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Interestingly, There's No Difference In The Potential Reach Between "Everyone" In The U.S. & Those That "Live" Here

Although it'd be expected that "everyone in this location" would include non-resident travelers, this universe within Facebook Ads Manager reflects the same size as "people who live in this location"



Facebook Platforms - Potential Reach

(FB + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger)

Demo

P18-24

P25-34

"Everyone In This Location"

39,000,000

58,000,000

*In theory, "everyone" should include travelers
as well even though the country-wide
numbers are the same as the resident totals
(i.e., "people who live in this location")*

"People Who Live In This Location"

39,000,000

58,000,000

Note: there are only 670K and 940K identified within the potential reach as those who are "traveling in this location" among P18-24 & P25-34, respectively

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager. Based on "everyone in this location" and "people who live in this location" data pulled on September 22nd, 2017. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

Is This Reach Inflation Issue Nationwide Or Just Isolated To A Few Areas?

To Answer This We Conducted The Below P18-34 Analysis
On Several Geographical Levels:



2016 U.S. Census Data

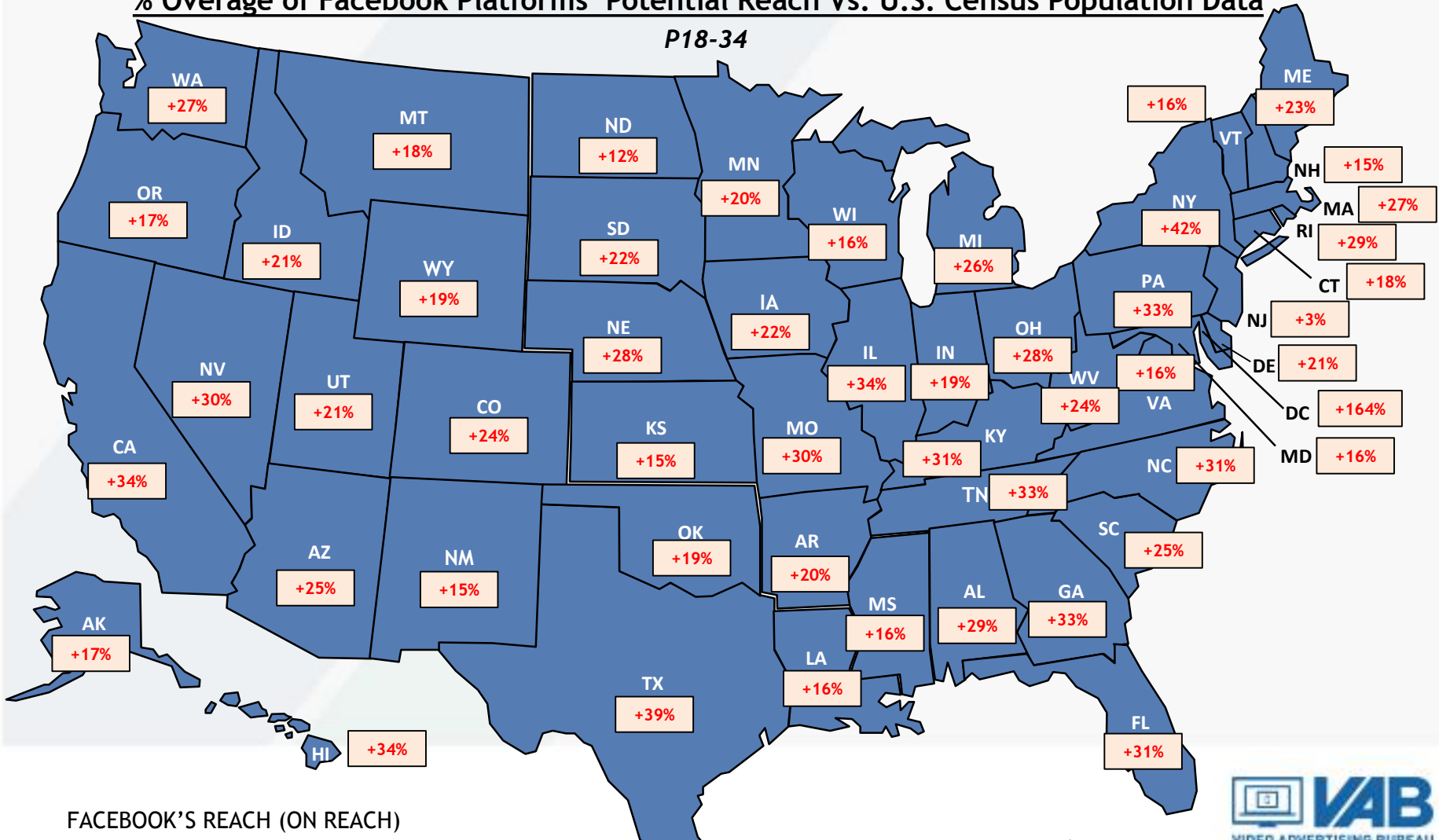
Vs.



“People Who *Live* In This Location” Data
From Facebook Ads Manager

In *Every* State, Facebook Claims They Can Reach More P18-34 Residents Than What Is Reported By The U.S. Census Bureau

% Overage of Facebook Platforms' Potential Reach Vs. U.S. Census Population Data



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on "People who live in this location."

Facebook Platforms' Reach Inflation Stretches Anywhere Between 3% - 42% By State Vs. The U.S. Census

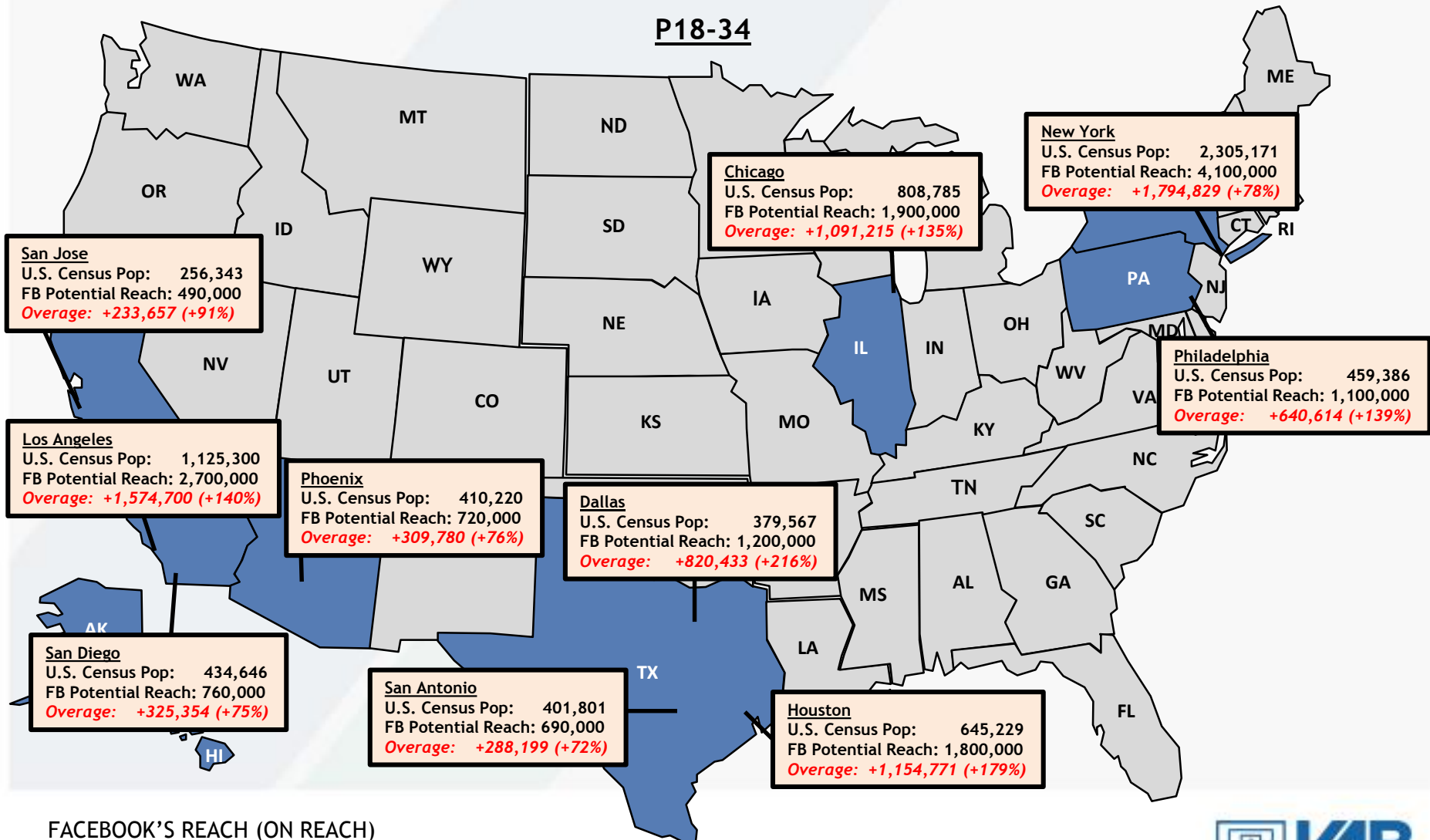
P18-34 Population By State: 2016 U.S. Census vs. Facebook Platforms' Potential Reach

		Facebook Ads Manager (Potential Reach)					Facebook Ads Manager (Potential Reach)		
		"People Who Live In This Location"					"People Who Live In This Location"		
		FB Platforms*					FB Platforms*		
		P18-34					P18-34		
	2016 U.S. Census	Potential Reach	# Difference	% Difference		2016 U.S. Census	Potential Reach	# Difference	% Difference
State	P18-34				State	P18-34			
Alabama	1,089,379	1,400,000	310,621	29%	Montana	228,312	270,000	41,688	18%
Alaska	197,344	230,000	32,656	17%	Nebraska	444,358	570,000	125,642	28%
Arizona	1,601,077	2,000,000	398,923	25%	Nevada	676,213	880,000	203,787	30%
Arkansas	672,356	810,000	137,644	20%	New Hampshire	286,981	330,000	43,019	15%
California	9,734,004	13,000,000	3,265,996	34%	New Jersey	1,940,950	2,000,000	59,050	3%
Colorado	1,374,055	1,700,000	325,945	24%	New Mexico	476,552	550,000	73,448	15%
Connecticut	793,972	940,000	146,028	18%	New York	4,798,105	6,800,000	2,001,895	42%
Delaware	214,215	260,000	45,785	21%	North Carolina	2,293,174	3,000,000	706,826	31%
District of Columbia	235,004	620,000	384,996	164%	North Dakota	204,647	230,000	25,353	12%
Florida	4,431,674	5,800,000	1,368,326	31%	Ohio	2,578,391	3,300,000	721,609	28%
Georgia	2,412,627	3,200,000	787,373	33%	Oklahoma	925,960	1,100,000	174,040	19%
Hawaii	335,711	450,000	114,289	34%	Oregon	941,497	1,100,000	158,503	17%
Idaho	380,390	460,000	79,610	21%	Pennsylvania	2,863,667	3,800,000	936,333	33%
Illinois	2,982,759	4,000,000	1,017,241	34%	Rhode Island	256,712	330,000	73,288	29%
Indiana	1,518,969	1,800,000	281,031	19%	South Carolina	1,116,252	1,400,000	283,748	25%
Iowa	714,710	870,000	155,290	22%	South Dakota	197,324	240,000	42,676	22%
Kansas	677,398	780,000	102,602	15%	Tennessee	1,503,170	2,000,000	496,830	33%
Kentucky	993,882	1,300,000	306,118	31%	Texas	6,826,336	9,500,000	2,673,664	39%
Louisiana	1,118,918	1,300,000	181,082	16%	Utah	793,316	960,000	166,684	21%
Maine	267,627	330,000	62,373	23%	Vermont	138,035	160,000	21,965	16%
Maryland	1,383,783	1,600,000	216,217	16%	Virginia	1,976,775	2,300,000	323,225	16%
Massachusetts	1,655,262	2,100,000	444,738	27%	Washington	1,734,544	2,200,000	465,456	27%
Michigan	2,223,939	2,800,000	576,061	26%	West Virginia	379,038	470,000	90,962	24%
Minnesota	1,253,029	1,500,000	246,971	20%	Wisconsin	1,288,652	1,500,000	211,348	16%
Mississippi	687,407	800,000	112,593	16%	Wyoming	134,665	160,000	25,335	19%
Missouri	1,383,111	1,800,000	416,889	30%	Grand Total	75,336,230	97,000,000	21,663,770	29%

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on "People who live in this location." (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

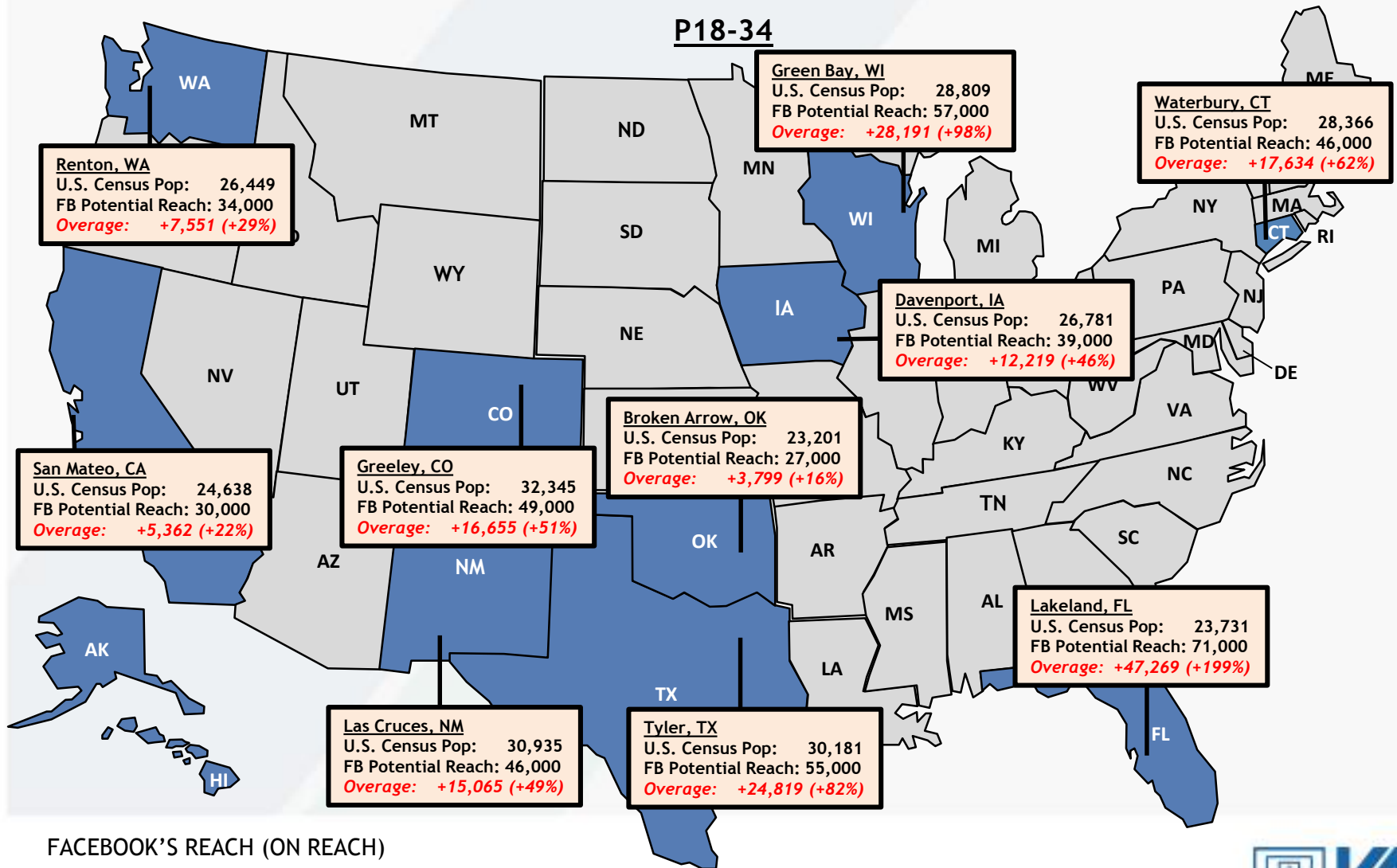
The Facebook P18-34 Reach Inflation Is Much More Pronounced Within The Ten Most Populous Cities



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on "People who live in this location" and reflects the city with no radius added. The 10 most populous cities are based on total population. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

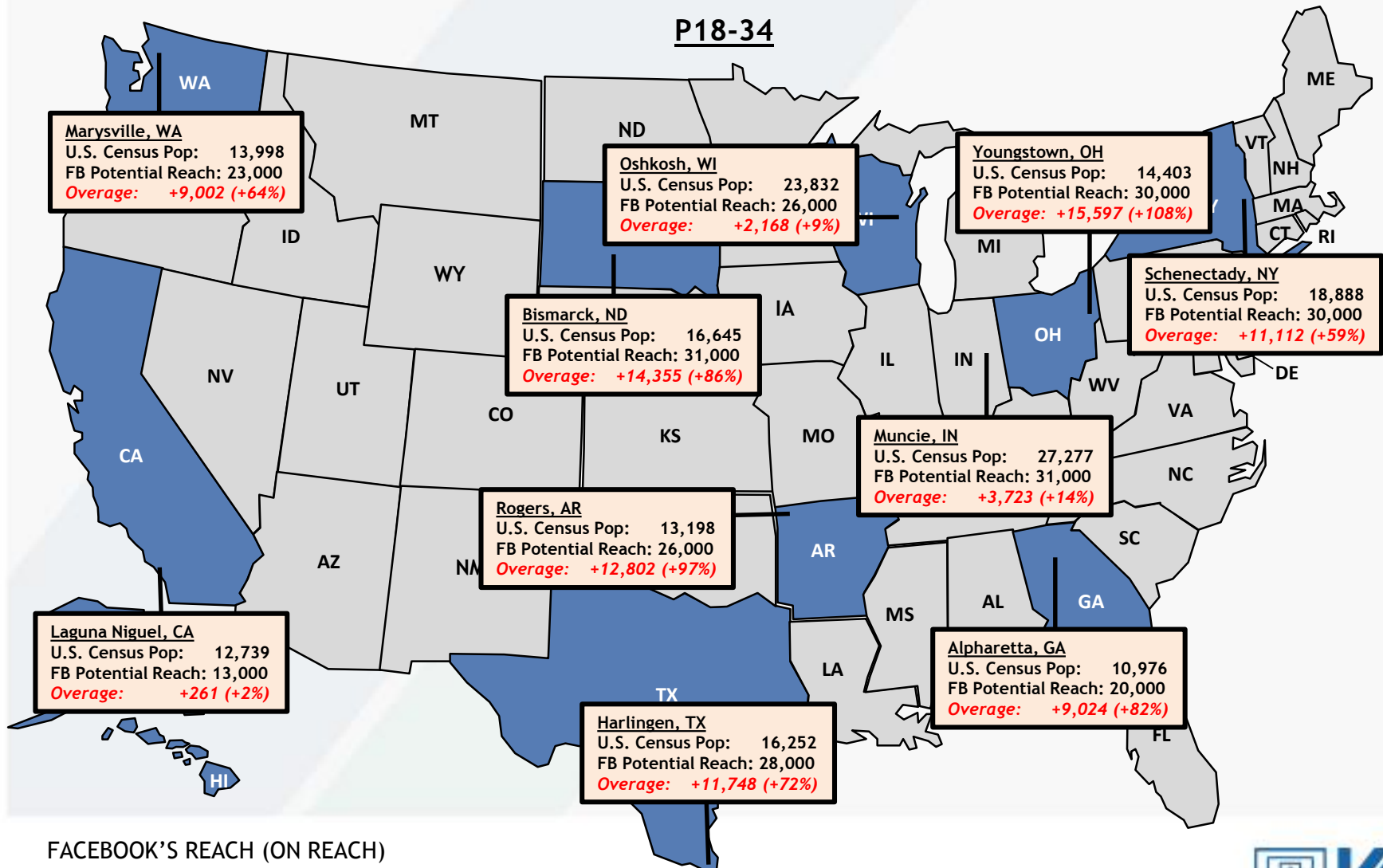
Similar P18-34 Reach Inflation Is Seen Among “Mid-Sized” Cities As Well



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on "People who live in this location" and reflects the city with no radius added. "Mid-Sized" cities are based on a diverse cross-section of 10 cities with a total population between 100K - 110K with no more than one city reflected per state. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

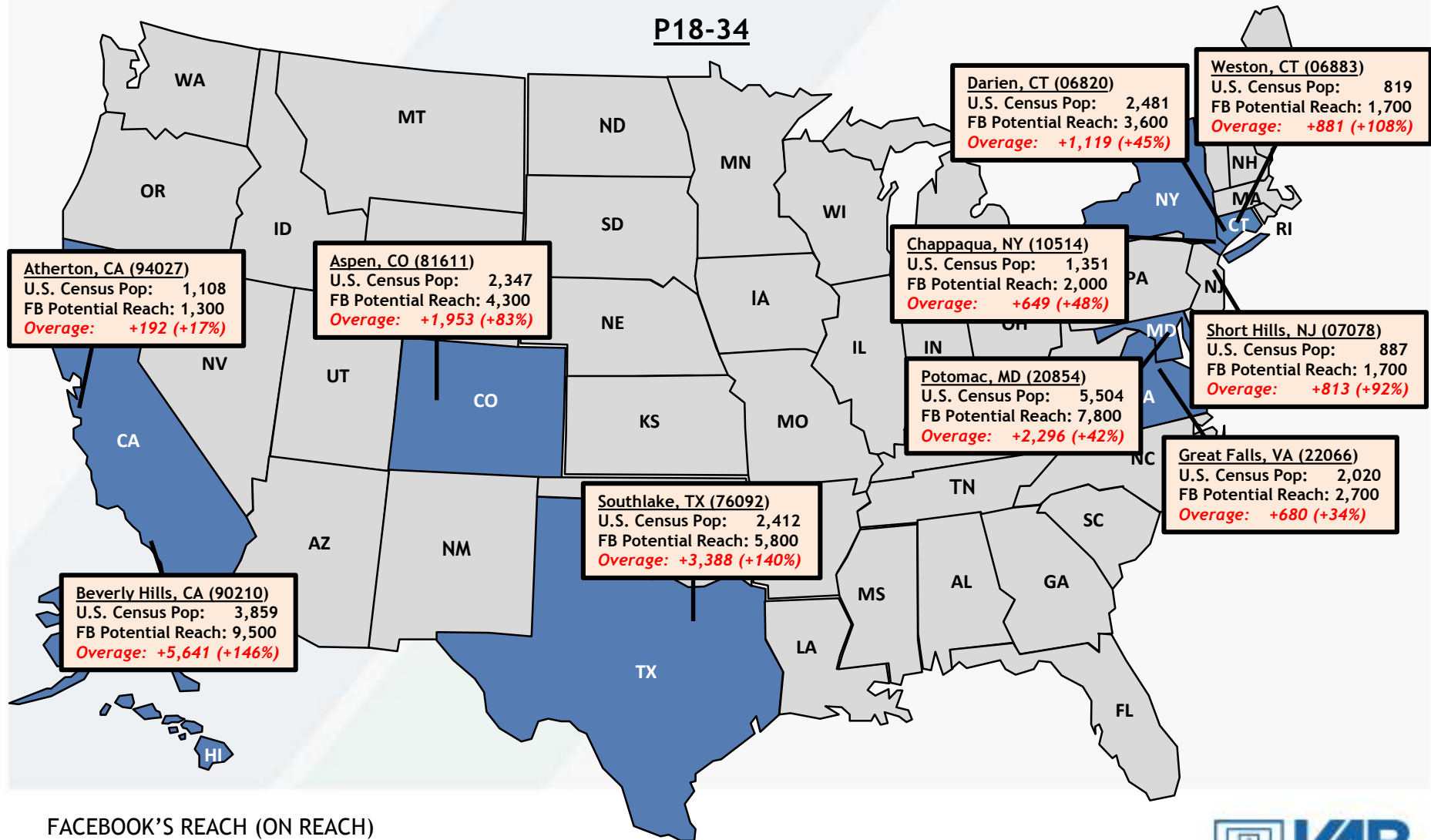
These P18-34 Reach Inflation Trends Are Also Seen Among “Smaller” Cities Throughout The Country



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2016 U.S. Census (American Community Survey, 1-year estimate); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. “FB Potential Reach” includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on “People who live in this location” and reflects the city with no radius added. “Smaller” cities are based on a diverse cross-section of ten cities with a total population between 60K - 70K, with no more than one city reflected per state. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

Facebook Also Overestimates Their Potential Reach Among The Young & Affluent Within Targeted Zip Codes



FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: 2015 U.S. Census (2016 data at the zip code level had not been released as of September 2017); Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 22nd, 2017; P18-34. "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. Facebook data based on "People who live in this location." "Affluent" zip codes were selected based on metrics like median home values as reported by sources such as Forbes. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

OK, So Reach Is Overstated...

So What?

There's A Potential For Facebook Reach Inflation To Have Real Consequences For An Advertiser's Overall Communications Plan

In addition to providing audience and targeting data, more importantly Facebook Ads Manager functions as a tool for an advertiser to plan, budget, buy and optimize their own campaigns across Facebook platforms.

Facebook Ads Manager interface showing the 'Budget & Schedule' setup for an ad set.

Ad Set Name: US - 18-34

Budget & Schedule
Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear. [Learn more.](#)

Budget ☒ **Daily Budget**
\$5000.00 USD
Actual amount spent daily may vary.

Schedule ☐ Run my ad set continuously starting today
☒ Set a start and end date

Start: Sep 22, 2017 12:00 AM
End: Sep 23, 2017 12:00 AM
(Eastern Time)

Your ads will run for **1 day**. You'll spend no more than **\$5,000.00**.

Optimization for Ad Delivery ☒ **Reach**

Frequency Cap impression every day

Bid Amount ☐ Automatic - Let Facebook set the bid that helps you get the most reach at the best price.
☒ Manual - Enter a bid based on what 1,000 impressions are worth to you.
 per 1,000 impressions
Suggested bid: \$6.59 USD (\$5.13-\$8.97)

When You Get Charged ☒ Impression

Ad Scheduling ☒ Run ads all the time
☐ Run ads on a schedule

Delivery Type ☒ Standard - Show your ads throughout your selected schedule (recommended)

Audience Size
Your audience selection is fairly broad.
Potential Reach: 97,000,000 people

Estimated Daily Results
Reach
1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000)
The accuracy of estimates is based on factors like past campaign data, the budget you entered and market data. Numbers are provided to give you an idea of performance for your budget, but are only estimates and don't guarantee results.
Were these estimates helpful?

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

To Make A Buy, It's As "Simple" As Selecting Your Target Then Setting The Budget, Campaign Dates And Entering A Bid Amount

Once all buy parameters are set, Facebook will calculate the estimated daily reach of your campaign based on "past campaign data, the budget entered and market data"

The screenshot shows the Facebook Ads Manager 'Create New' interface. Red annotations and arrows highlight the following steps:

- Select target in the "Audience" section:** An arrow points to the 'Ad Set Name' field, which contains 'US - 18-34'.
- Set Your Budget:** An arrow points to the 'Daily Budget' field, which is set to '\$5000.00'.
- Set Your Desired Campaign Dates:** An arrow points to the 'Start' and 'End' date fields, which are set to 'Sep 22, 2017' and 'Sep 23, 2017' respectively.
- Decide how often people see your ad:** An arrow points to the 'Frequency Cap' field, which is set to '1 impression every 1 day'.
- Select an automatic bid or enter a bid amount yourself based on 1,000 impressions, i.e. CPM (cost-per-thousand):** An arrow points to the 'Bid Amount' field, which is set to '\$6.59 per 1,000 impressions'.

The interface also displays the 'Estimated Daily Results' section, which shows a 'Reach' of 1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000) and a 'Potential Reach' of 97,000,000 people.

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

To Verify The Accuracy Of The Estimated Daily Reach Metric, We Built A One-Day Campaign Designed To Maximize Reach

While a one-day schedule is not a “typical” campaign length, we were limited to this time period for comparison purposes since Facebook only reports estimated reach results at the daily level

The screenshot shows the Facebook Ads Manager campaign creation interface. Red boxes and arrows highlight specific settings and annotations:

- Ad Set Name:** US - 18-34
- Campaign Objective:** P18-34
- Budget & Schedule:**
 - Budget:** \$5,000 Daily Budget
 - Schedule:** One-Day schedule (Sep 22, 2017 to Sep 23, 2017)
 - Frequency Cap:** 1x Frequency cap to maximize reach (1 impression every 1 day)
 - Bid Amount:** \$6.59 per 1,000 impressions (Suggested bid: \$6.59 USD (\$5.13-\$8.97))
- Audience Size:** Potential Reach: 97,000,000 people
- Estimated Daily Results:** Reach: 1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000)

Annotations include:

- One-Day schedule** (pointing to the schedule section)
- 1x Frequency cap to maximize reach** (pointing to the frequency cap section)
- The manual bid option includes both a Facebook suggested bid / CPM and range** (pointing to the bid amount section)
- “Low Range” Bid / CPM = \$5.13**
- “Suggested” Bid / CPM = \$6.59**
- “High Range” Bid / CPM = \$8.97**

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

FACEBOOK’S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, “people who live in this location.” “FB Potential Reach” includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

Based On The Budget & Bid, An Advertiser Can Use Media Math To Figure Out Their Expected Campaign Impressions

$$\text{Budget} / \text{CPM} \times 1,000 = \text{Impressions}$$

The screenshot shows the Facebook Ads Manager interface for a campaign named "US - 18-34". The "Budget & Schedule" section is active, showing a daily budget of \$5,000.00. The "Audience Size" section indicates a potential reach of 97,000,000 people. The "Estimated Daily Results" section shows a reach of 1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000). The "Optimization for Ad Delivery" section shows "Reach" as the optimization goal. The "Frequency Cap" is set to 1 impression every 1 day. The "Bid Amount" is set to Manual, with a suggested bid of \$6.59 USD (\$5.13-\$8.97). The "When You Get Charged" is set to Impression. The "Ad Scheduling" is set to Run ads all the time. The "Delivery Type" is set to Standard - Show your ads throughout your selected schedule (recommended).

\$5,000 Daily Budget

"Low Range" Bid / CPM = \$5.13
"Suggested" Bid / CPM = \$6.59
"High Range" Bid / CPM = \$8.97

At a \$5K budget, below reflects the Impressions* to be delivered based on the CPMs:

Low Range	974,659 IMPs
Suggested	758,725 IMPs
High Range	557,414 IMPs

**in theory, impressions should be interchangeable with unique reach with a 1x frequency cap.*

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

From The Math, An Advertiser Would See That The Impressions Are Much Lower Than Facebook's Estimated Reach Results

It's important to note that in a one-day campaign with a 1x frequency cap (as reflected below), the term "impressions" can be used interchangeably with "reach"

Budget & Schedule
Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear. [Learn more.](#)

Budget ☒ **Daily Budget**
\$5000.00 USD
Actual amount spent daily may vary.

Schedule ☐ Run my ad set continuously starting today
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Start
End
(Eastern Time)

Your ads will run for **1 day**. You'll spend no more than **\$5,000.00**.

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[Were these estimates helpful?](#)

At a \$5K budget, below reflects the **Impressions*** to be delivered based on the CPMs:

"Low Range" Bid / CPM = \$5.13	=	974,659 IMPs
"Suggested" Bid / CPM = \$6.59	=	758,725 IMPs
"High Range" Bid / CPM = \$8.97	=	557,414 IMPs

**in theory, impressions should be interchangeable with unique reach with a 1x frequency cap.*

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Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

Notably, There Is Also A Very Wide Gap Within The Estimated Daily Reach Range For A Platform That Often Touts Its' Precision Targeting

There is a gap of over 10 million A18-34's (1.9MM - 12.0MM) between the low & high range for a demo-targeted, one-day \$5K buy

Budget & Schedule
Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear. [Learn more.](#)

Budget ☐ Daily Budget
\$5000.00 USD
Actual amount spent daily may vary.

Schedule ☐ Run my ad set continuously starting today
☒ Set a start and end date

Start
End
(Eastern Time)

Your ads will run for **1 day**. You'll spend no more than **\$5,000.00**.

Optimization for Ad Delivery

Frequency Cap impression every day

Bid Amount ☐ Automatic - Let Facebook set the bid that helps you get the most reach at the best price.
☒ Manual - Enter a bid based on what 1,000 impressions are worth to you

per 1,000 impressions
Suggested bid: \$6.59 USD (\$5.13-\$8.97)

When You Get Charged

Ad Scheduling ☒ Run ads all the time
☐ Run ads on a schedule

Delivery Type ☒ Standard - Show your ads throughout your selected schedule (recommended)

Audience Size
Your audience selection is fairly broad.
Potential Reach: 97,000,000 people

Estimated Daily Results
Reach
1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000)

The accuracy of estimates is based on factors like past campaign data, the budget you entered and market data. Numbers are provided to give you an idea of performance for your budget, but are only estimates and don't guarantee results.
[Were these estimates helpful?](#)

At a \$5K budget, below reflects the **Impressions*** to be delivered based on the CPMs:

"Low Range" Bid / CPM = \$5.13	=	974,659 IMPs
"Suggested" Bid / CPM = \$6.59	=	758,725 IMPs
"High Range" Bid / CPM = \$8.97	=	557,414 IMPs

**in theory, impressions should be interchangeable with unique reach with a 1x frequency cap.*

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

<https://www.facebook.com/ads/manager/creation>

Key Question: How Can Facebook's Estimated Daily Reach Be 2x - 12x Times Larger Than What It Should Be Based On Basic Media Math?

Impressions Based On Budget & Bid/CPM:
557.4K - 974.7K

Facebook's Estimated Daily Reach:
1.9MM - 12.0MM

Question:
How can FB's estimated daily reach be between **1.9MM – 12.0MM** for a one-day \$5K schedule with a 1x freq cap when media math ($\frac{\$5K}{\text{CPM}} = \text{IMPs}$) says the impressions range for the campaign based on the suggested bid range would be between **557.4K – 974.7K**?

Estimated Daily Results
Reach
1,900,000 - 12,000,000 (of 73,000,000)

The accuracy of estimates is based on factors like past campaign data, the budget you entered and market data. Numbers are provided to give you an idea of performance for your budget, but are only estimates and don't guarantee results.

Were these estimates helpful?

At a \$5K budget, below reflects the **Impressions*** to be delivered based on the CPMs:

Bid / CPM	Impressions
"Low Range" Bid / CPM = \$5.13	974,659 IMPs
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According To The Math, It Would Take A Lot More Than The \$5K Budget To Achieve The Campaign Reach Facebook Estimates

Based on Facebook's suggested bid (CPM) range, it would actually cost anywhere between \$9.7K - \$107.6K to deliver against their own P18-34 estimated daily reach for a one-day campaign schedule

	Original Budget	Bid / CPM	"Low End" Reach Range		"High End" Reach Range	
			Facebook Est. Daily Reach	Revised Budget	Facebook Est. Daily Reach	Revised Budget
"Low Range" Bid / CPM	\$5,000	\$5.13	1,900,000	\$9,747	12,000,000	\$61,560
"Suggested" Bid / CPM	\$5,000	\$6.59	1,900,000	\$12,521	12,000,000	\$79,080
"High Range" Bid / CPM	\$5,000	\$8.97	1,900,000	\$17,043	12,000,000	\$107,640

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Source: Facebook Ads Manager based on data pulled on September 20th, 2017; P18-34, United States, "people who live in this location." "FB Potential Reach" includes Facebook + Instagram + Audience Network + Messenger platforms. (Facebook numbers are fluid and are subject to change based on the date when numbers are pulled).

Apparently Other People Have Noticed This Reach Discrepancy As Well

The screenshot shows the Facebook Business Advertiser Help Center. The header includes the Facebook Business logo, a search bar, and links to Resources and Support. Below the header are navigation tabs for Ads, Pages, Inspiration, Success Stories, and News, along with buttons to 'Create an Ad' and 'Create a Page'. The main section is titled 'Advertiser Help Center' and features a search bar. Below this, there's a breadcrumb trail: 'Ads Help - Desktop > Help Community'. The main content area displays a question titled 'Facebook estimated reach is really off...' with a sub-header 'Ad Reporting & Insights Ads'. The question text reads: 'Hi! I am running an ad to promote my page on Facebook and it says the estimated daily reach would be from 1,300 to 3,200. I have ran it for approx. 4 days and so far the total reach has only been 210 people total. Is there a reason for this that could be corrected?'. It was asked about 2 years ago by Jason Melman, has 2 votes, 2 followers, and has been seen by 346 people. A 'Good Question' badge is visible. Below the question is a 'Featured Answer' from John Facebook Help Team, who says 'Hi Jason,'. The answer text explains that the estimated daily reach calculator is only an estimate based on the defined audience and ad set budget, and that the numbers are only an approximate estimate to help decide on ad spend. It also mentions that if the actual reach is much lower than estimated, the ad's creative might need tweaking. A red box highlights the answer text, and a red arrow points from a yellow callout box to it. The callout box contains the text: 'What does the ad's creative have to do with Reach?'.

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Ads Help - Desktop > Help Community

English (US)

Facebook estimated reach is really off...

Ad Reporting & Insights Ads

Hi! I am running an ad to promote my page on Facebook and it says the estimated daily reach would be from 1,300 to 3,200. I have ran it for approx. 4 days and so far the total reach has only been 210 people total. Is there a reason for this that could be corrected?

Asked about 2 years ago by Jason Melman

2 Votes · 2 Followers · Seen by 346

Good Question

Follow this Question · Share

Featured Answer

John Facebook Help Team

Hi Jason,

The estimated daily reach calculator is only an estimate. The estimation is based on your defined audience and ad set budget, and not how people will respond to your creative. The numbers are only an approximate estimate to help you decide on how much you want to spend on ads, and not as a prediction of how many people will actually see your ad once it's running. If your ads are receiving a much lower reach than estimated, it's possible that your ad's creative might need some tweaking to resonate more positively with your audience.

What does the ad's creative have to do with Reach?

FACEBOOK'S REACH (ON REACH)

Closing Thoughts

Whether this is truly another metrics glitch remains to be seen. However, with questions of trust regarding ad-tech platforms at an all-time high among many marketers, our analysis provides another instance where first-party data should at least be questioned, or even challenged, particularly when the numbers don't align with universally accepted metrics such as U.S. Census Bureau population data and basic media math.

Advertisers and their agencies must remain vigilant with all their media partners when it comes to their campaign executions and deliveries. We believe in complete transparency as an industry and for advertisers to verify their campaign metrics and results through independent, third party data sources.

And for everyone, both advertisers and agencies, as you plan your campaigns, execute your schedules and evaluate your post-buy analyses across your multiplatform media partners, our advice continues to remain the same:

Assume Nothing, Investigate Everything

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TheVAB.com



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