

The Great Facebook Crash | Slate

By Will Oremus

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The first months of Donald Trump’s presidency were a fraught and chaotic time in American politics. But in an age of shrinking newsrooms, early 2017 was a bright spot for online news publishers, especially those with some Facebook savvy. People were hungry for political news, commentary, and analysis, and Facebook fed them a steady diet of it. It was where conservatives gathered to crow and liberals went to commiserate and organize.

Slate—yes, the publication you’re reading right now—got more than 85 million clicks that originated from external sites and apps in January 2017 alone. Almost a third of them—28 million—came from Facebook. That was more than any other single outside traffic source. Other online publications with a political focus, such as Vox and Politico, posted similarly blockbuster numbers.

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When I asked Facebook about Slate’s decline, a representative told me that its data showed Slate in particular suffered a dip in news feed reach in early 2018 after Facebook made a policy change that prohibited pages from accepting money to share content they didn’t create. Slate was one of several publications that had been paying one such company, the Social Edge, to share its stories via a network of popular celebrity Facebook pages, including George Takei’s.

Source: [The Great Facebook Crash | Slate](#)