Facebook Continues Mobile Focus with New 'Audience' Mobile Ad Network

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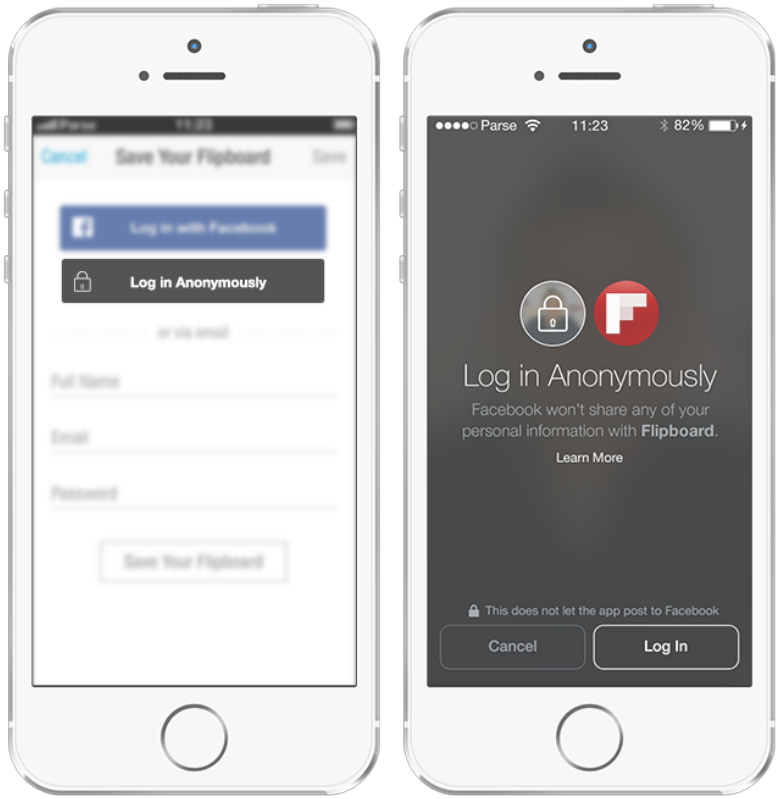

Facebook today unveiled a mobile ad network, as well as a number of other new features that it hopes will appeal to mobile developers.

The ad network, which is called Facebook Audience, was announced Wednesday at the social network's F8 developer conference.

Facebook is pitching its ad network, as well as its massive web of social connections, as a better way to reach a targeted set of customers than traditional search.

Audience will extend the reach of existing Facebook campaigns into third-party mobile apps, which the company says will allow developers to better monetize their apps.

Facebook promises better, more granular targeting of consumer; access to advertisers; and high-quality ads in appropriate formats.

During an opening keynote, Mark Zuckerberg said that by offering a more complete mobile ecosystem for developers, Facebook aims to relieve some of the fragmentation happening across mobile platforms.

"Our goal with Facebook is to build the cross-platform platform," Zuckerberg said.

As part of that goal, Facebook also showed off something called 'App Links' which allows developers to map their web content to mobile content.

"All you need to do is add a few tags to your web content and you're ready to let other developers link directly into your mobile app," a post on Facebook's website explained. "If you're a mobile-only app, we've got you covered. You can publish your tags using Parse Cloud Code, App Links Hosting API, or any other service you prefer."

App Links supports iOS, Android, and Windows Phone and will eventually be extended to support other platforms as well.

Perhaps one of the most immediately accessible mobile features Facebook revealed today was Anonymous Login, which allows people to log into apps without sharing personal information. In addition, the company is giving users more granular control over what information they want to share when they log into an app using their Facebook credentials.

Investors apparently liked what they saw, as shares of Facebook were up 2.4 percent in afternoon trading to $59.57 per share.

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