Twitter Thread by Zach Weinersmith



Zach Weinersmith
@ZachWeiner

Hey, for people interested in this stuff, here's a thread about a change we made to running our facebook account:

So, about 5 years ago, we got on facebook. Why? Well, facebook has a big audience and they like to consume on facebook. So, we started posting comics there, even though we got paid nothing and facebook made money off the free content.

Why? Because back then, once in a while, you would say "also hey, I sell books" or "hey, I'm going to be signing at this event" and your facebook followers would actually see it.

Effectively, the implicit old arrangement was "facebook lets me reach readers efficiently, and I supply facebook with free content they run ads on."

Over time, like a bad business partner, facebook basically made it impossible to reach your audience without *paying them*. Thus, you supply them free content on which they run ads, and you get nothing in exchange.

In fact, you get less than nothing, because readers who started reading you only on facebook sometimes don't even know you have a website or book.

So, as of last week, we've started posting much more frequently, linking back to the main site. Why? (1) It gets around the algorithms a little. (2) It encourages people to go to the main site. (3) It encourages people to stop consuming on facebook.

I hate having to annoy readers this way, but it's more or less our only means to fight back. The comics remain free every day on https://t.co/9yAXIFCDdW, patreon, smbc's rss, or indeed in books.

Historically, our policy has been "we will put the content where the readers want it." But, facebook has made that environment so thoroughly bad for artistic careers, that we have no choice.

As an important sidenote-- I have a developed career, so even with facebook's BS, I'm fine. A lot of younger artists have made their living on facebook and are now screwed.

In short-- sorry if you're having a bad experience on our facebook site. We felt there was no other option, and this is our way of fighting back. You are, as always, free to consume the comics anywhere else.

And, if facebook would either go back to its old ways or would cut artists in on ad revenue from their own content, we'd happily go back to just posting regular content there.

Lastly, I encourage young artists to stick to other social media than facebook. They aren't your friend.