

World Leaders on Facebook 2020



Executive Summary

The coronavirus pandemic of early 2020 has had a profoundly transformative impact on how world leaders use digital channels. As the virus spread around the world, leaders wasted no time to engage on social media, updating their status and changing their profile picture on the platform, as did Zuzana Čaputová, the President of Slovakia, to convey the urgency of fighting the global pandemic.

While governments are trying to reach their constituents on the main social channels, especially Facebook, to warn about the deadly virus and how to mitigate its spread, social media users are looking for guidance and leadership from their leaders online.

Millions are flocking to social media for answers, advice and support. The pages of governments and world leaders have literally exploded. In March 2020



the 721 Facebook pages covered in this study have registered a 3.7 percent growth of their page likes, that is almost half of the overall follower growth of these pages in the past 12 months.

The pages of Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte as well as the pages of the governments of Austria, Estonia and Italy have more than doubled their page likes in March 2020 alone. This social media explosion shows that there is a need to connect with citizens on social media platforms and governments and world leaders are rising to the occasion, stepping up their communications with their followings. The Italian Prime Minister has been addressing his nation late in the evening live on Facebook. New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern has been chatting to her Facebook followers during the lockdown promising to check in more often.

More than 50 pages have promoted posts, placing Facebook ads that specifically ask their citizens to stay inside and to practice social distancing to slow the curve of the infections. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg [announced](#) in early March that he would give the



World Health Organisation (WHO) "as many free ads as they need" and promised "millions more in ad credits to other organisations" during the coronavirus crisis.

Countless governments and foreign ministries have also updated their Facebook cover pictures to share essential advice to protect against the spread of the virus. French President Emmanuel Macron is calling his fans to "Stay Home" to "Save Lives."



The UK Foreign Office is asking people to “*prepare for serious disruption*” and the government of Malta is displaying a picture of the empty streets of the capital Valetta as citizens are confined to their homes. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has set up a dedicated [Facebook page](#), Twitter and Telegram accounts for detailed information about the coronavirus. The Foreign ministries of Belgium and Denmark have opened Facebook groups to connect their citizens stranded around the world.

For many governments, an active Facebook presence is the cornerstone of their digital strategy. “*Facebook is number 1 in our digital diplomacy strategy considering the connection with our citizens living in Lithuania and abroad,*” said the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry via a Direct Message on Facebook, adding “*It is harder and harder to reach people, even if you have good quality content.*”

The South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation explained that *“Facebook is very important as it allows for interaction with the public. We are also able to update our followers timeously and various forms - text, photos, videos, infographics etc. Facebook allows for easy, fast updating.”*

How do World Leaders use Facebook?

According to the 2020 edition of World Leaders on Facebook, part of the acclaimed Twiplomacy series from BCW (Burson Cohn & Wolfe), the governments and leaders of 184 countries – two more than in 2019 - had an official presence on the social network, representing 95 percent of the 193 UN member states. The governments of only nine countries do not have a Facebook presence, including Eritrea, Mauritania, Nicaragua, North Korea, Turkmenistan and a small handful of Pacific island states.

The heads of state and government of 153 countries and 90 foreign ministers maintain personal pages on Facebook and, in general, they are more popular than the pages of their respective institutions. As of March 1, 2020, all 721 personal and institutional Facebook pages of world leaders had a combined total of more than 362 million page likes and registered 1.383 billion interactions from March 1, 2019 to February 29, 2020. The interactions levels seem to be back to normal and are almost twice as much compared to the figures of 2018 which saw a dip in interactions due to Facebook's change of algorithm.

All pages combined have registered an 8.2 percent growth in page likes year on year. U.S. President Donald Trump has added 2.25 million new likes to his Facebook page, representing a growth rate of 9.43% over the past 12 months. On the other side of the spectrum, the Facebook page of Queen Rania of Jordan has lost 86,174 fans which represents a decline of -0.51%.

For some leaders, including U.S. President Donald Trump, the number of followers on social networks is a matter of national and



even personal pride. Donald Trump is one of very few leaders who like to boast about their follower size, as in this Facebook post from February 15, 2020. Contrary to what Donald Trump posted, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most followed world leader on Facebook, with more than 44.7 million likes on his personal page putting Donald Trump in second position with more than 26 million likes.

However, Donald Trump tops the ranking for the most interactions (comments, likes and shares) with 309 million interactions on his Facebook page over the past 12 months, three times as many interactions as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

But the Indian Prime Minister has a slightly better interaction rate, averaging 202,633 interactions per post, which is almost three times as many as the U.S. President who receives 74,521 average interactions per publication. Donald Trump's sky-high interaction rates are easily explained by his activity. The U.S. President is 10 times more active on Facebook than Narendra Modi with an average of 11 posts per day compared to only one per day for the Indian Prime Minister.

The 721 pages analysed in our study have shared 434,046 posts since March 1, 2019. World leaders mainly tend to share posts with photos, accounting for 58 percent of all their Facebook publications. These photo posts generate an average of 2,375 interactions per picture and account for 43 percent of all interactions.

Generally, videos and especially live videos perform best on Facebook. Native Facebook videos represent 15 percent of all the posts but generate 24 percent of all interactions. A Facebook video garners, on average, 5,094 interactions and live videos have the best engagement with an average of 8,013 interactions per broadcast. The 61,807 Facebook videos posted on world leaders' pages have been viewed 3.9 billion times, with an average view count of 64,526 per video. Live videos shared by world leaders have generated 94,333 average views per broadcast.

Five percent of all the publications are text-only status updates without any visuals. However, thanks to Donald Trump, these tweet-like status updates generate, on average, 12,266 interactions totalling 18 percent of all interactions on world leaders' pages. The U.S. President has posted 1,550 such status updates on Facebook, generating 60% of all interactions on these posts.

Posts with links to YouTube and other videos shared on Facebook generate few interactions with only 732 interactions per shared video. Most world leaders now share videos natively on the platform. Only one percent of all posts are links to other videos and they only garner 0.25 percent of all interactions.

Eighteen percent are posts with links to other websites, often including a visual. These link posts have the worst performance, generating only generate 705 interactions per post, or four percent of all interactions.

Almost half of the 721 pages have conducted at least one Facebook Live, either to broadcast a press conference, an election rally or an official ceremony. President Donald Trump averages 1.94 million views on each of his 33 live broadcasts while Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has averaged 1.3 million views on each of his 192 live broadcasts over the past 12 months.

New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is regularly "*checking in*" with her fans via Facebook Live to brief them on her work, be it from the kitchen of Government House in Wellington or walking to the UN building in the streets of New York in September 2019 The 39-year old prime minister goes live on her phone without any help from her communication staff.

During her first Facebook [live video](#) since the coronavirus lock down in New Zealand, she asked viewers to check-in on their neighbours, especially the elderly, and give them a call to see what their needs are. Answering live questions from viewers she warned that "*you will be seeing me lots and lots and lots*" and promised "*to answer as many questions as I can*". No other world leader has created such a direct connection with his or her followers.



The top five Facebook posts with the most interactions of any world leader were all shared by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Facebook post with the most interactions over the past 12 months is a one-minute video showing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi praying to Hindu Goddess Jagdamba during the Navaratri festival. The [video](#) has garnered 1,694,245 comments, likes and shares and is also the most watched video posted by any world leaders with 21,122,252 views. The second most liked video is the [video](#) of the 69-year-old Modi «plogging», i.e. picking up trash on the beach in Mamallapuram on the Bay of Bengal, which received 1,110,106 interactions and 16,571,790 views

The one-hour long [live conversation](#) between Narendra Modi with Canadian-Indian actor Akshay Kumar is the live video with the most interactions, totalling 1,331,021 interactions, including 211,357 love hearts and 19,907,863 views. The fact that Akshay Kumar has over 25 million page likes on his personal Facebook page, and the injunction "Do watch," might have helped a little.

The [picture](#) of Narendra Modi flashing the victory sign and the caption «Humbled by people's blessings» posted on May 23, 2019 after his resounding re-election win has become the photo with the most interactions, with 1,290,965 total interactions.



Pictures and videos tend to generate the most interactions on Facebook. However, simple text updates can also be very effective, especially for the U.S. President Donald Trump. His status updates without any visual, copied from Twitter, make up the bulk of his Facebook output and garner the best interactions on his Facebook page. His two-word "[MERRY CHRISTMAS!](#)" message, all in capital letters, has become the most liked with 1,032,966 interactions, including 205,132 comments.

The posts of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele are the most loved, attracting on average 14,629 and 11,694 love hearts respectively. The Facebook [post](#) which received the most «love»-reactions is the picture of the dog that helped corner the leader of ISIS in a tunnel in Syria before he self-detonated a suicide vest. The picture, posted by Donald Trump, with the caption: «*We have declassified a picture of the wonderful dog (name not declassified) that did such a GREAT JOB in capturing and killing the Leader of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi!*», received 212,811 love hearts.



The Facebook posts which received the most expressions of sadness is the [tribute](#) Narendra Modi posted after the passing of India's Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj. "A glorious chapter in Indian politics comes to an end. India grieves the demise of a remarkable leader who devoted her life to public service and bettering lives of the poor. Sushma Swaraj Ji was one of her kind, who was a source of inspiration for crores of people", he wrote garnering 142,956 sad emojis. Donald Trump's [tribute](#) after the death of basketball legend Kobe Bryant in a helicopter crash has become the post which generated the second most expressions of sadness, with 133,652 sad emojis.



The posts of Nayib Bukele and Narendra Modi also attract the most surprise reactions, attracting on average 1,750 and 1,412 wow-reactions respectively. The Facebook post which created the most surprised «wow»-reactions was the [tsunami warning](#) posted by El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele asking citizens on the coast to move to higher ground after a U.S. military plane had spotted a potential tidal wave off the coast of El Salvador. It later turned out that there had been no earthquake and no tsunami, but in the meantime the post had garnered 34,112 wow-reactions.



Nayib Bukele's posts also generate the most angry reactions, with an average of 843 angry emojis, more than the posts from Donald Trump who generates 670 angry emojis per post. President Donald Trump's [all-caps rant](#) about the Russia investigation, suggesting that former President Barack Obama was wiretapping his campaign, has generated the most angry reactions. His claim that *"THE MUELLER REPORT AND EVERYTHING ELSE FOR THREE YEARS, WAS A FIXED HOAX"* received 86,957 angry expressions from his supporters. Two other posts from Donald Trump [lambasting](#) his [impeachment](#) by the House of Representatives have also received the most angry emojis.

The post which attracted the most comments is a live video rant by Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro which received 221,553 comments. In the 24-minute long live monologue posted while on a state visit to Saudi Arabia, he strongly criticizes the TV channel Globo for having linked his name in the context of an investigation into the assassination of Rio de

Janeiro city councillor, Marielle Franco. In the profane and freewheeling attacks against the “foul, lowlife, immoral media,” he denied any wrongdoing and accused the media of trying to undermine his government, adding: “This will not stick.”

The most shared post is a promotional [video clip](#) proudly claiming that “*Bolsonaro is returning pride to Brazilians*” which incidentally also includes a positive clip from TV Globo news which Bolsonaro despises so much.

The Facebook posts of the U.S. President also attract the most laughter with an average of 2,188 laughing emojis. A [photomontage](#) showing Barack Obama spying on Donald Trump got the most laughs on the U.S. President's Facebook page with 138,670 ‘ha-ha’-emojis.

The [picture](#) showing Donald Trump as Rocky Balboa has become the second funniest post in 2019, generating 131,015 ha-ha-reactions. The [official portrait](#) of El Salvador's President got 44,192 people laughing.



The promotional video for the European Parliamentary elections in May 2019 has become the most watched video with 102,540,185 views. *Choose Your Future* released by the European Parliament was cross posted by the European Commission, the EU European External Action Service, shared by the Czech Government and the foreign ministries of Austria, Belgium, Estonia and Lithuania.

One hundred and fifty-one pages of the 721 pages have set up cross-posting relationships with other pages which makes sharing videos natively seamless and much easier while increasing video views. Emmanuel Macron, the Élysée palace, the French government and Prime Minister Édouard Philippe have all cross-posting relationships which allows



102,545,066 Views

European Parliament

25 April 2019 · 🌐

"Today I'm being born. What will the world I grow up in look like?"
Choose your future. European elections 23-26 May

them to share the same video on their respective pages. The page of Boris Johnson has a similar cross-posting agreement with the institutional 10 Downing Street page. Pakistan's Premier Imran Khan and the institutional page of the Prime Minister's Office of Pakistan share their videos as do the governments of Albania, Colombia, Israel, Mexico, the Philippines and the EU institutions.

Facebook Groups

In early February 2020 Facebook aired its first-ever Super Bowl ad, a 60-second commercial spot promoting Facebook groups. The rocking commercial featuring Sylvester Stallone and Chris Rock was designed to help users discover the happy side



of Facebook to *"connect over things you care about"* and the tag line: *"Whatever you rock, there is a Facebook Group for you!"*

Despite the marketing push, groups are rarely used by world leaders and governments, despite their having obvious advantages over Facebook pages: Group administrators control who is part of a group and can easier connect with its members than on a page.

Groups are particularly useful for politicians during election campaigns, but so far only two world leaders, namely Keith Rowley, the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu maintain fan groups alongside their official pages.

The [support group](#) for the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago was set up in September 2015 and has 78,761 members, more than his Facebook page which boasts 63,277 fans. While both pages have been equally active his Facebook page has garnered 10 times as many reactions as the Facebook group.

Benjamin Netanyahu's private support group has doubled over the past 12 months counting 60,462 members in March 2020 which is only a small fraction of his 2.5 million Facebook fans. Due to its size, the posts on the Facebook page garner more interactions in total but the interaction rate is slightly better in the group than on the page with 0.61 and 0.48 percent, respectively. Facebook groups might not be the biggest crowd puller but are a smart way to interact with one's most dedicated fans.

The coronavirus outbreak prompted the Belgian and Danish foreign ministries to create Facebook fan groups to connect with their citizens worldwide and create a space to help themselves.



“Our citizens service in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a lot of calls and messages from Danish citizens living abroad, who wanted to help. So, in order to connect the people who, want to help and those who need help, we created the Facebook group,” explained Tom Nielsen, social media lead in Copenhagen. Within 48 hours the group, whose membership is open, attracted more than 10,000 members, which is half of the total Facebook fans that page has garnered since inception.

In order to help its citizens stuck abroad, the Belgian Foreign Ministry decided to open an online coronavirus crisis centre on Facebook, the most popular social media channel for Belgians. The diplomats in Brussels opted for a Facebook group with controlled access; potential members must answer several questions including whether they are Belgian citizens before being admitted into the group.

Within the first two days, the group had reached 1,744 members and the group has clear guidelines on how to post requests for help or how to offer help without divulging any private information such as personal addresses or telephone number. Over 100 posts from 50 countries have been shared and tagged accordingly which makes it easier to find help.

In Copenhagen the Foreign Ministry has been overwhelmed by the responses in the Facebook group: *“Our biggest challenge is that there is an overload of information. (...) There are more than 1,200 posts and more than 5,000 comments,”* reported Tom Nielsen, adding that *“Our policy is to only participate in the group if we see any misinformation. But of course, it becomes increasingly challenging to monitor the group due to the many posts and comments.”*

While it is difficult to monitor or moderate open Facebook groups, experience has shown that groups often self-moderate, and content which is off-topic or contravenes the group rules is quickly flagged by group members.

Judging from the messages posted in the groups there is a need for people to connect and help each other out or simply to encourage each other during these trying times of confinement.

Facebook groups also have several features such as unlimited poll options and the possibility to upload files and documents which pages lack.

A Facebook group seems to be the best way to connect and communicate in a two-way exchange with constituents, and foreign ministries and governments would be well advised to take the lead and create these secure spaces for their communities.



Facebook Events

Another underrated and under-used Facebook feature is events. In early March 2020, only five of the 721 pages surveyed were advertising upcoming events. Obviously, the coronavirus pandemic has rendered most physical gathering obsolete.

The German Foreign Ministry is planning a career day in May, the Belgium foreign ministry is inviting for a symposium about Belgian and Dutch Embassy buildings in October, while the French foreign ministry is hoping to hold the Franco-African summit in Bordeaux in June. The summit even on Facebook is also co-hosted by the French embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Co-hosting events on multiple pages is a smart idea since it will help drive more eyeballs and clicks to the event.

Fewer than half of the 721 pages surveyed have organized Facebook events in the past. The government of Cape Verde has set up a record 1,345 events on Facebook since August 2016, attracting the interest of 11,504 Facebook users.

The Russian Foreign Ministry schedules its weekly press briefing with its spokeswoman Maria

Zakharova on Facebook. The 334 Facebook events have so far piqued the interest of 31,917 users. The 248 events on the page of the Indian Foreign Ministry have attracted 96,777 users including 71,153 who attended the livestream of the 66th Republic Day Parade in 2015. World Leaders tend to use Facebook events mainly during election campaigns. The 212 campaign rallies on Donald Trump's page in 2016 have interested 156,076 Facebook users but the page has not set up any other events since.



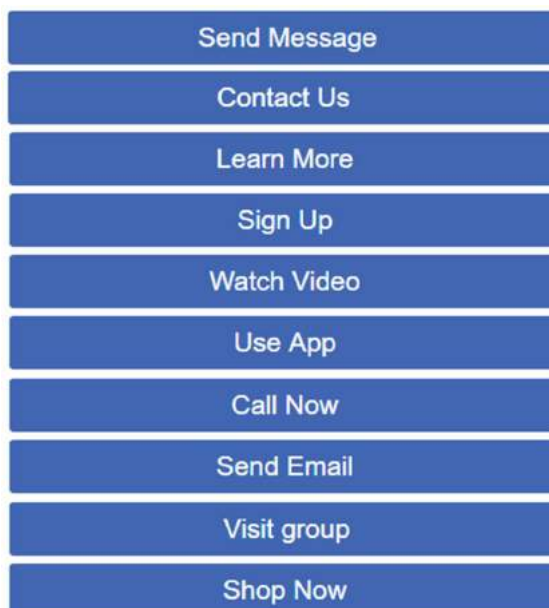
Most governments and foreign ministries have stopped creating Facebook events except for special occasions, which is a pity since events will automatically generate alerts and reminders for those who are interested. The last and only event on the page of the British Royal Family is the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton on April 29, 2011 in Westminster Abbey, which attracted 28,050 guests on Facebook.

The event for the EU Open Day in Brussels on May 4, 2019 attracted 17,498 guests since it was co-hosted by the Facebook pages of seven EU institutions in Brussels including the pages of the European Commission and the Council of the European Union. Given the current coronavirus restrictions, it is unlikely that any physical events will see the light of day in the upcoming months.

Connecting with World Leaders on Facebook

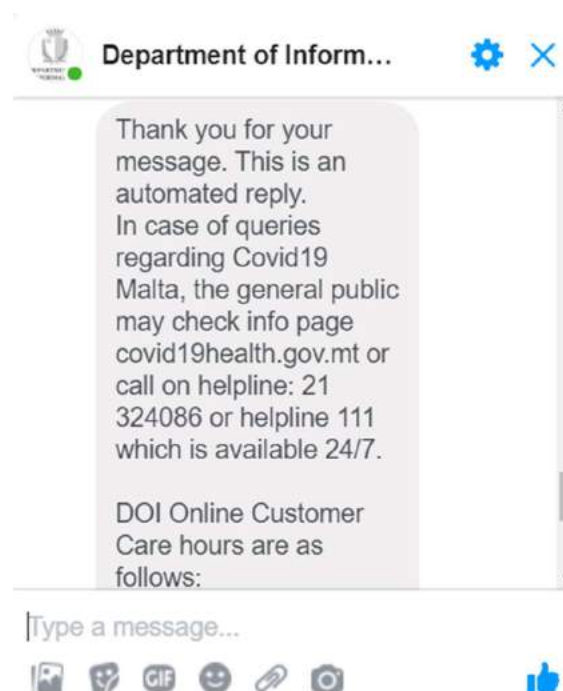
Facebook is one of the best platforms to contact and start conversations with world leaders and their social media teams. More than two-thirds of the 721 pages prominently feature a Facebook page button.

A third of these pages with call-to-action buttons invite users to 'Contact Us' or to 'Learn More' by sending them to their respective websites. Twenty-six pages invite users to watch a promotional video on Facebook or YouTube, 26 pages suggest to 'Sign Up' to a newsletter, 17 pages promote a separate app and 14 pages encourage users to 'Call Now.'



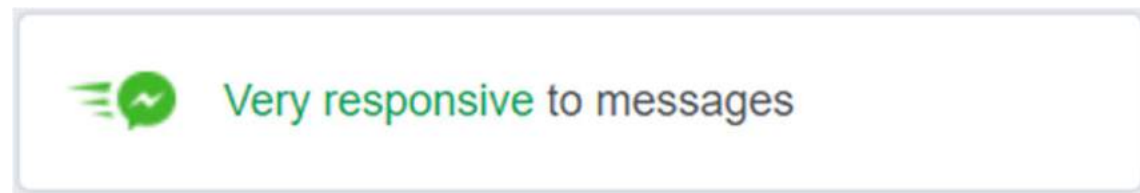
President Donald Trump's page is the only one that encourages fans to 'Shop Now,' directing users to the [Shop.DonaldJTrump.com](https://shop.donaldtrump.com) website where they can buy *Make America Great Again* paraphernalia, from MAGA pet leashes to MAGA hats and t-shirts.

Two thirds of all world leaders' Facebook pages allow fans to contact the page privately using Facebook Messenger, and 262 pages display a large 'Send Message' button on the top of their pages. Four pages have been marked as "very responsive to messages" - the pages of Morocco's King Mohammed VI, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the Department of Information of the government of Malta and the Colombian Foreign Ministry all run bots which answer within seconds.



Since the coronavirus pandemic outbreak the government of Malta has adapted the chat bot to direct users to the relevant COVID-19 website and helpline.

The German government doesn't accept direct messages on its Facebook page; however, the page of the [Bundesregierung](#) is unusual in terms of the open and direct interaction with its users. The page was created on January 20, 2015 with the aim of starting a [dialogue](#) between the government and its citizens. Today,



the page has more than half a million likes and the social media team does read all the comments under each post and interacts directly with its fans. The 16-person strong team likes positive feedback, provides more in-depth information or sets the record straight.

How big are the Social Media Teams?

World leaders rarely manage their pages themselves and most have a social media team to manage their accounts. In the page transparency tab, Facebook publishes the number of people who have access to the page either as an administrator, editor, moderator, advertiser or analyst as well as their geographic locations.

We have counted a total 4,712 people who have access to the 673 pages where the information was available. The median average number of people who have access to the pages is five which is probably the ideal size of a social media team.

One hundred people have access to the Facebook page of the [Korean government](#)

with most of them based in South Korea and one in the U.S. The government of Singapore has given 67 people access to its [page](#), some of them based in India, Malaysia, Philippines, the USA and Vietnam. More than 61 people also have access to the pages of the Japanese government and the Dutch Foreign Ministry.



The size of social media teams varies widely from country to country. Fifty-four pages only have a single page manager which is extremely dangerous since that person could walk off with the page and it would be almost impossible to recover it.

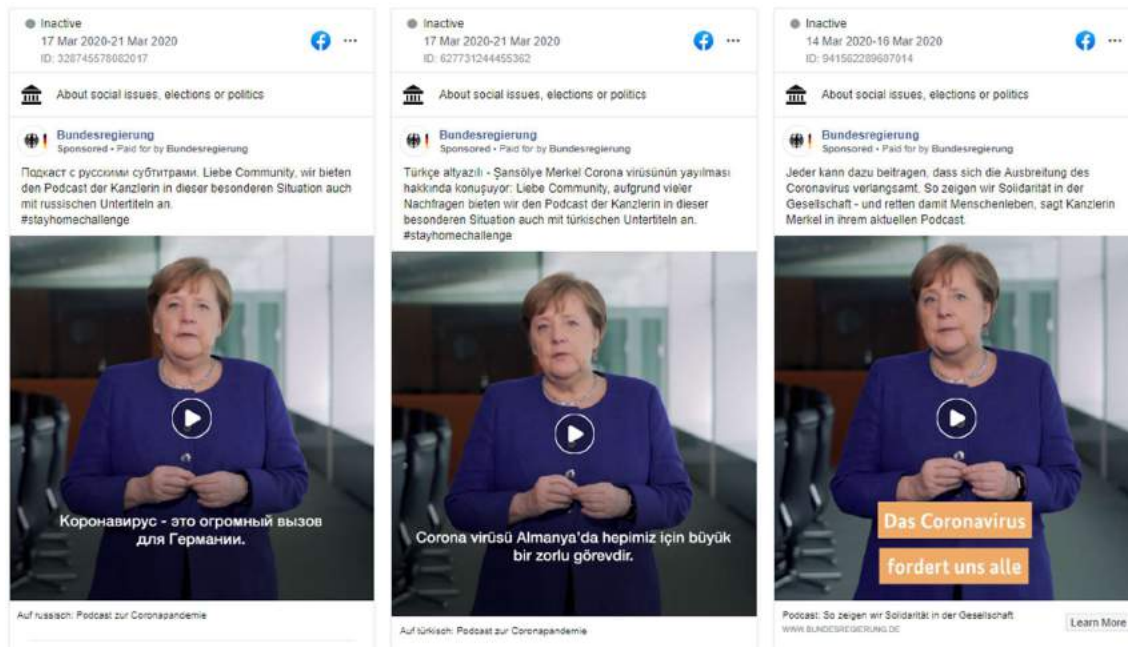
Facebook Advertisements

To make sure their messages get heard, even governments will accept to “pay to play” and promote their most important posts with Facebook ads. In our last study in March 2019, only 50 pages had placed ads on Facebook. In March 2020 129 pages have promoted posts according to Facebook’s ad library which is available on each page. In late March 2020, more than 50 pages were actively promoting posts in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

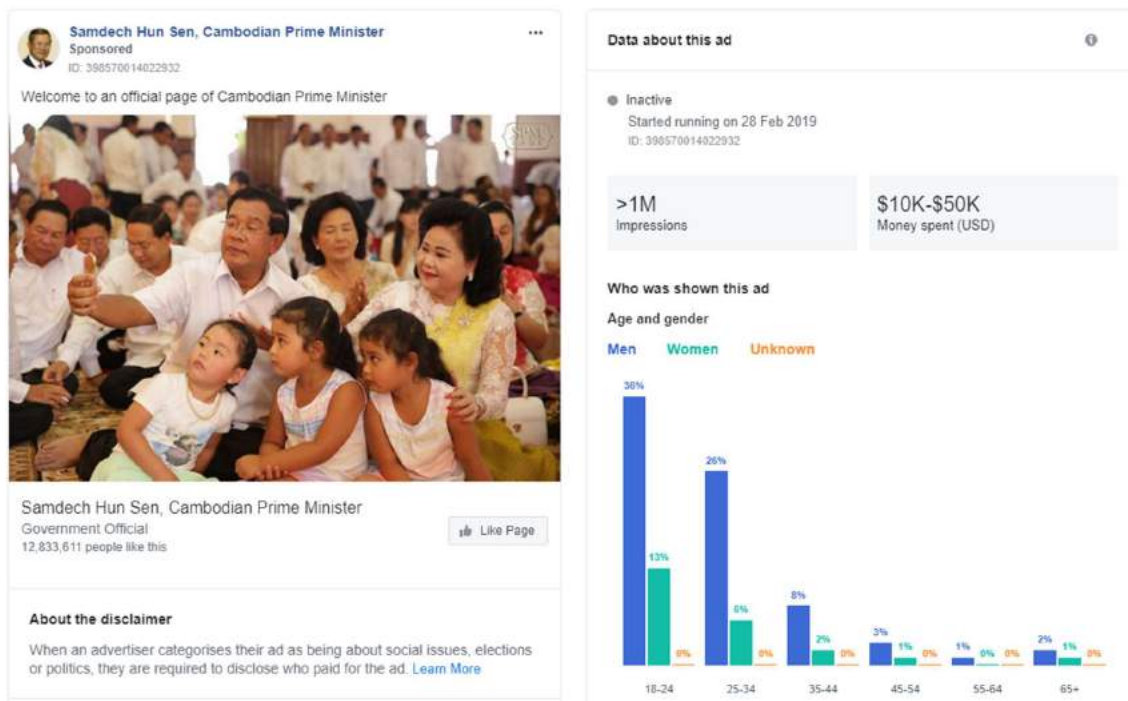
Often world leaders will use promoted posts during election campaigns to promote their pages or to push specific topics. UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's address to the nation after leaving the European Union has been pushed to Facebook users in the United Kingdom in the week after Brexit with a budget of more than USD \$17,000.

The German government paid approximately USD \$10,000 to push Chancellor Angela Merkel's appeal for solidarity in the fight against the coronavirus to Facebook users in Germany in German, Russian, Turkish and Arabic. Generally, leaders pay less than USD 100 for each ad placement. The European Commission has been placing issue ads across the European Union, paying more than USD \$500 for each ad reaching between 500,000 -1 million impressions. The page of Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen is being heavily promoted in India and Indonesia with a budget of more than USD \$10,000 and has garnered more than 1 million impressions.





The page of Donald Trump has posted more than 50,000 ads since inception and is a cornerstone of his digital re-election campaign. Most of the advertisements found in his Facebook [ad library](#) are paid for by the *Trump Make America Great Again Committee* and designed to help him win the 2020 presidential election. The most recent advertisement inviting users to “Become a Trump Text Member” had 171 different versions with varying texts and target audiences.



Most Liked World Leaders

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is still the most popular world leader on Facebook, with more than 44.7 million likes on his personal page and 13.7 million likes on his institutional Prime Minister of India page, which is in fourth position.



U.S. President Donald Trump is the second most popular world leader on Facebook, with more than 26 million likes on his personal Facebook page, which has grown by more than nine percent over the past 12 months.

Jordan's Queen Rania has seen a slight decline of the likes on her Facebook page over the past 12 months but is still in third position with 16.8 million likes,

reaching an Arabic and English audience well beyond the 5.48 million Facebook users in Jordan.

The Facebook page of Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen is still growing in the double-digits. The page has 12.7 million likes, which is almost twice as much as the country has Facebook users (7.7 million) but still less than the 29 million people interested in the Khmer language on Facebook.

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro is in sixth position, with 10 million page likes and a 7.7 percent growth rate over the past year.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the White House complete the Top 10 of the most popular world leaders on Facebook, each with more than 9 million likes.

Fifty-six world leaders can boast more than 1 million likes on their respective Facebook pages. However, not everyone has such large communities and the median average of the 721 pages analysed stands at 45,852 likes.

True Reach of World Leaders on Facebook

Large follower numbers are impressive but should never been taken at face value. For the first time, we have incorporated the true reach per post for each of the Facebook pages of world leaders as calculated by Klear.com. According to the calculations, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has 44.7 million page likes only reaches on average of 1.7 million of his fans which represents only 3.8 percent of his Facebook community.

Brazil's President reaches on average 956,000 of his 10 million fans, which is almost 10 percent. U.S. President Donald Trump, who has 26 million likes, reaches 877,000 fans, i.e. only 3.3 percent of his impressive community.

King Mohammed VI of Morocco and El Salvador's President seem to really gel with their respective Facebook communities, reaching 12 and 18 percent of their audiences, respectively.

True Reach of World Leaders 2020

True Reach per Post /
% of Followers



Jair Bolsonaro
@Jairmessias,Bolsonaro
President, Brazil

956K True Reach
9.5% of total Followers



PMO India
@PMOIndia
Prime Minister, India

692K True Reach
5% of total Followers



Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
@RTErdogan
President, Turkey

526K True Reach
5.7% of total Followers



Narendra Modi
@NarendraModi
Prime Minister, India

1.7M True Reach
3.8% of total Followers



Donald J. Trump
@DonaldTrump
President, USA

877K True Reach
3.3% of total Followers



Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador
@LopezObrador.org.mx
President, Mexico

588K True Reach
9.1% of total Followers



King Mohammed VI
@ROI.DU.MAROC.MOHAMED.6
King, Morocco

451K True Reach
12.9% of total Followers



Joko Widodo
@Jokowi
President, Indonesia

747K True Reach
7.7% of total Followers



Rania Al Abdullah
@QueenRania
Queen Consort, Jordan

542K True Reach
3.2% of total Followers



Nayib Bukele
@NayibBukele
President, El Salvador

406K True Reach
18.2% of total Followers

Data collected on March 1, 2020, using Klear.com

bcw

Obviously the larger the audience the less engaged it becomes while those leaders literally becoming broadcasters.

Most Liked Regional Leaders & True Reach

Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo is the most popular leader in Sub-Saharan Africa with 1.6 million likes, ahead of Rwanda's Paul Kagame who has surpassed the 1 million like mark and a growth rate of 16 percent. Cameroon's President Paul Biya, Nigeria's Muhammadu Buhari and Guinea's Alpha Condé complete the top five list with more than 785,000 each.



Ethiopia Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali has made it into the Top 10 list with 735,000 page likes. He created his page on October 16, 2019, merely five days after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize 2019, and his page has been growing at double-digits ever since. Zambia's Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the Presidency of Ivory Coast, Uganda's Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and Madagascar's Andry Rajoelina complete the Top 10 list of Africa's most liked leaders on Facebook.

The analysis of the true reach per post of Sub-Saharan African leaders shows that the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali is reaching almost 300,000 fans which is 35 percent of his Facebook community. Félix Tshisekedi, the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, is reaching more than half of his 150,000 total followers.

Jordan's Queen Rania, who has been on Facebook since April 23, 2009, has been topping the list of the most popular leaders in the Middle East and North Africa for several years. With 16.8 million likes, she has twice as many page likes as Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi with 7.6 million likes and is ahead of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, with 3.8 million likes. The pages of King Mohammed VI of Morocco and Jordan's Royal Hashemite Court complete the Top 5 with 3.5 and 3.2 million likes respectively.



The institutional pages of the Syrian and Tunisian Presidencies, the governments of Iraq and Egypt as well as the Foreign Ministry of Egypt complete the Top 10 list of the Arab leaders most liked on Facebook.

Queen Rania also tops the ranking of the true reach per post among Arab leaders, reaching an average of 542,000 fans representing 3.3 percent of her Facebook community. The page of King Mohammed VI of Morocco is in second position reaching on average 450,000 of the 3.5 million fans. Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok of Sudan reaches on average almost a third of his 350,000 fans.

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro is by far the most popular leader on Facebook in Latin America with more than 10 million page likes ahead of Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador with 6.4 million likes. However, the



page of the Mexican President is growing twice as fast as the page of the Brazilian President.

Nayib Bukele, the new President of El Salvador who assumed office on June 1, 2019 has shot into third position with 2,229,506 page likes and a growth rate of 46 percent.

The institutional pages of the government of Brazil and the Argentinian Presidency complete the list of the five most liked leaders in Latin America, with 1.9 and 1.4 million likes respectively. The page of the Argentinian Presidency has lost 184,842 page likes as the fans of former Argentinian President Mauricio Macri have unfollowed the page, now managed by his political opponent.

In terms of true reach per post Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro and Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador reach almost 10 percent of their respective Facebook followers.

El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele is in third position reaching 18 percent of his 2.2 million followers. Argentina's new President Alberto Fernández who took office on December 10, 2019 registers the best reach with 21 percent of his 450,000 Facebook fans.

With 2.5 million likes French President Emmanuel Macron is the most liked EU leader ahead of Italy's Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio and Romanian President Klaus Iohannis with 2.2 and 1.8 million Facebook likes, respectively.

Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has enjoyed a healthy growth of 26 percent over the past 12 months and has overtaken the page of the EU Commission with more than 1 million Facebook likes, respectively.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis tops the list of the best true reach, engaging almost 12 percent of his Facebook community. Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is in second position engaging 16 percent of his 1 million followers. Finnish President Sauli Niinistö reaches on average more than a third of his followers.



The governments of only nine countries have not yet set up a presence on Facebook, including Nicaragua, North Korea and Turkmenistan, where the social network is banned, as well as a handful of small island states in the Pacific Ocean.

In late January 2019 the Chinese Foreign Ministry stepped up its outreach on Western social media channels opening a Facebook page for its Spokesperson's Office @MFA.CHN which has been verified. A Facebook page for the Chinese State Council Information Office @ChinaSCIO has existed since September 1, 2015 but has not been verified yet.

World Leaders with the Most Interactions

Large Facebook pages should generally translate into large interactions (defined as the total sum of likes, comments and shares), however this is not always the case.

U.S. President Donald Trump tops the ranking for the most interactions with 309 million interactions on his Facebook page over the past 12 months, which is more than three times as many interactions as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has far more likes.



Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro was able to clock up 205 million interactions over the past 12 months on his posts while having a mere 10 million page likes. The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has more than four times as

many page likes, is only in third place with a total of 84 million interactions over the past 12 months.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo is in fourth position, ahead of Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan who is fifth in terms of interactions over the past 12 months with 74 and 71 million, respectively.

Nayib Bukele, the new President of El Salvador, made it into the top 10 list of the leaders with the most interactions and an impressive interaction rate of 3.63 percent.

Overall, interactions have markedly increased across the board compared to our 2019 study which registered significant drops in interaction rates of world leaders on Facebook.

Most Active World Leaders

The Russian Foreign Ministry tops the list of the most active world leaders with a total of 10,171 posts over the past 12 months which is an average of more than 27 posts per day. The Russian Foreign Ministry is consistently resharing publications from its embassies abroad.

“All these years we've been building our network of Embassies and Consulates on Facebook. We persuade them to present their work in the most interesting manner. Now, almost all our colleagues are making posts which are informative and good enough to be shared with others. That's why we frequently promote our Embassies' posts on the Russian MFA Facebook main page”, wrote Max Goncharov, the head of the Russian digital diplomacy team in an email.

The 10,171 posts have garnered 836,438 interactions which is respectable but the same cannot be said for the interaction rate (interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of page likes) which is one of the lowest interaction rates of only 0.02 percent.

The governments of Uzbekistan and Botswana also use Facebook as their governmental wire service with more than 20 posts per day. The Facebook page of the government of Botswana is the most prolific, with an average of 37 posts per day over the past 12 months. The presidential administrations of the Dominican Republic and of Ghana both average more than 20 posts per day. The foreign ministry of Colombia and the government of Ethiopia complete the list of the five most active governments with 18 posts per day, respectively.



The average posting rate for all the pages stands at 1.65 posts per day. All 721 world leaders combined have published 435,256 posts over the past 12 months, which is a median average of 397 posts per page.

While an active social media presence is vital to keeping an audience engaged, pages that are overly active generally don't enjoy high interaction rates. All 721 pages combined have an average interaction rate of 1.04 percent, which is the sum of all interactions divided by the number of posts and the average page likes over the past 12 months.

Less than a third of the pages analysed enjoy a better than average interaction rate. Three pages have double-digit interaction rates; the pages of the prime ministers of Gabon, Moldova and Yemen are exceptions insofar as these pages have published few posts and only have several hundred page likes.

About this Study

World Leaders on Facebook is BCW's latest research into how world leaders, governments and international organizations communicate via social media. The research is part of BCW's highly acclaimed annual *Twiplomacy* study. Initially focused solely on Twitter, the study has been expanded to other social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram

For the fifth edition of the World Leaders on Facebook study, BCW has identified a total of 721 Facebook pages and 20 personal profiles, 448 of which have been verified by Facebook and carry a blue verification mark. The remaining 293 pages are not verified, but we believe that they can be considered as official pages. We also discovered 20 personal profiles of world leaders which we could not include in this analysis since they are not verified profiles. And finally, we have not included inactive pages as it was virtually impossible to determine their authenticity.

Data was collected on March 1, 2020, using BCW's proprietary tools, Crowdtangle.com and Klear.com to capture the historic data for all 721 pages including the total interactions (comments, likes, shares), interaction rates as well as all video views and posts from March 1, 2019 to February 29, 2020.

A PDF of the entire study is available [here](#) and the full Twiplomacy data set can be downloaded [here](#). Feel free to contact us for more detailed explanations and analysis.

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