

## Marketers are embracing Instagram's self-serve ads

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**One ad buyer says spend on Instagram has increased 'something like 11,000%' between Q3 and Q4**

Chances are **Facebook** is going to talk a lot about its photo-sharing app **Instagram** in its fourth-quarter earnings call in January.

Ad spend on the app is going through the roof.

Speaking on Nomura's fourth quarter internet **advertising** trends conference call on Monday (for which Nomura kindly provided Business Insider the transcript,) ad agency MEC Global's head of **social** media for North America Noah **Mallin** said client spend on **Instagram** between the third and fourth quarter has been "off the chart in terms of percentage rate."

"We're talking something like 11,000%," he said.

There's a simple reason why this is the case. [Instagram opened up its API \(application programming interface\) on September 30](#), meaning marketers of all sizes could begin buying **Instagram** ads in a self-serve fashion.

Before, buying **Instagram** ads was more of an exceptional case that required contacting an **Instagram** sales representative directly. That meant **Instagram advertising** was largely reserved for big advertisers, with big budgets, who were willing to put in the time investment involved.

Mallin said **Instagram** spend amongst his clients will probably be equal to about 2% of their spend on **Facebook** in the fourth quarter — which is huge considering how much advertisers spend on **Facebook**, and that **advertising** options are far more limited so far on **Instagram** compared to the range of formats **Facebook** offers.

What's also interesting is that the growth of spend on **Instagram** isn't actually eating into the amount they spend on **Facebook** ads. It's helping clients actually spend more on **Facebook**, according to **Mallin**.

He said: "We're not seeing cannibalization. What's interesting is one of the things that **Facebook** is allowing us to do is to kind of cross-target from platform to platform. So we're not seeing **Instagram** necessarily cannibalizing from **Facebook** and I expect them to both kind of growth together, even as **Instagram**'s growth starts to outpace **Facebook**."

On **Facebook**'s third-quarter earnings call, **Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg** said ["we're really pleased with the marketer demand for Instagram ads."](#) She also responded to a question from one analyst who mentioned that the quality of some **Instagram** ads had decreased since the platform opened up its API.

In part to address quality issues, the company [announced The Instagram Partner Program](#) that has seen it form partnerships with 40 companies that have expertise in ad tech, community management, and content **marketing**. Those accredited partners work with advertisers of all sizes to help with their organic and paid-for **Instagram** strategies.

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