



# Business Insider These Publishers Say Facebook Has Destroyed Their Livelihoods

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 by **FacebookZoo**

*Business Insider's coverage of Maven's Coalition Conference and how publishers have been hurt by Facebook*

**Holly Homer** used to dread Thursdays. For some reason, that's when Facebook seemed to mess with its algorithm.

Still, she and her small team at **Kidsactivities**.com got used to it - as did many publishers that built huge followings on the social

network and saw their audiences and their ability to make money ebb and flow wildly over the past few years. They learned to make adjustments along the way.

"When you are in the trenches of building your Facebook audience, you feel everything," Homer said. "The set it and forget it mentality won't work."

Things were working ok for a while. In fact, she says her site enjoyed back to back annual revenue of \$1 million. Then a recent policy change regarding the use of paid product listings in Facebook posts eviscerated Homer's business - dropping its revenue by 60%.

"I'm still trying not to cry about it," Homer told Business Insider.

KidsActivities.com isn't the only Facebook publisher that has been fighting back tears. Especially following **the recent highly publicized algorithm change**, when Facebook decided to move away from media content to favor posts from people's friends and family.

A lot has been written about how this has hit the **BuzzFeeds and Vices and Voxes of the world**. But there's a much longer list of small independent publishers who feel betrayed, and they're no longer shy about letting Facebook have it.

These are exactly the kind of publishers **the startup Maven is trying to court**. The company, led by digital veterans James Heckman and Josh Jacobs, is promising a new platform for small to mid-sized publishers that will provide them with uniform publishing and ad tech and centralized ad sales - aimed at helping them compete with Facebook and Google.

Execs from Maven gathered hundreds of these aggrieved publishers last week at **a lavish conference in Whistler, Canada** - an event that became an impromptu 'we've been hurt by Facebook' group therapy session.

There may have been a time when digital publishers were afraid of speaking out about Facebook, fearing the company might somehow retaliate. That time has passed.

Consider some of these comments:

- **Alicé Anil, who runs the progressive blog** Know Bullshit: "The thing is, we're all slaves at the end of the day to Facebook, to YouTube," she said. "The moment they decide to change their algorithm, we are fucked...our business model has been completely jeopardized."
- Dr. Boyce Watkins, who founded **Black Business School**, called Facebook "unethical" and "greedy"
- Drew Kelly, who runs the outdoor-focused digital publication **The Hunting Page**, said his ability to drive traffic from Facebook in last six months "has really collapsed."
- Chuck Creekmur, the founder of **All Hip Hop**, said he saw this coming, since there was never in his mind a clear path for a publisher to make money on Facebook. "It wasn't like it was your audience," he said. "I've always said to artists and other brands, 'I can't believe you're giving all this content to Facebook.'"
- Homer said eventually she expects her 3 million plus Facebook publishers to become "completely worthless."

These are just the kind of publishers that the Maven believes it can help.