



# Meta Ads Intelligence Report

**Date:** Monday, March 16, 2026



## SECTION 1 — DAILY META ADS BRIEFING

### Algorithm & Delivery Updates

- **Andromeda AI System Intensifying Its Grip — Impact: HIGH** — Meta's Andromeda algorithm, first introduced in late 2024, has significantly deepened its influence over ad delivery in March 2026. Unlike traditional targeting, Andromeda uses your ad creative to determine audience matching in real time. It's 100x faster at matching people to ads and can handle 10,000x more ad variants in parallel. Advertisers reporting performance volatility this month should expect this as the new baseline — not a bug.
- **March 3rd Platform Disruption Aftermath — Impact: HIGH** — On March 3, 2026, Meta experienced a global platform disruption affecting Facebook, Instagram, Ads Manager, and Business Manager across multiple regions. In the weeks following, many advertisers have reported elevated CPAs, inconsistent reach, and volatile campaign results. The disruption coincided with Andromeda's expanded role in the auction, compounding the performance instability.
- **Engaged-View Attribution Threshold Cut from 10s → 5s — Impact: MEDIUM** — Meta updated its engaged-view definition for video ads. A view now counts as "engaged" at the 5-second mark (down from 10 seconds), and the metric has been renamed "engage-through attribution." Meta reports 46% of online purchase conversions with Reels happen within the first 2 seconds of video attention — so this change reflects real behaviour data.
- **Ad Format System Overhaul — Impact: MEDIUM** — Meta is moving away from fixed formats (Single Image, Carousel, Collection, Flexible) toward a new multi-format system where AI dynamically selects the best creative variant and format per user. This is live now for many accounts. Manual format control is being phased out.
- **Instagram Explore Placement Removed — Impact: MEDIUM** — The Instagram Explore ad placement was retired in January 2026. Ads targeting "Instagram Reels" now appear in the former Explore feed area. Update any placement-specific strategies accordingly.

### Policy & FAQ Changes

- **Location Fees (Digital Service Taxes) Launching April 2026** — Starting next month, Meta will apply "Location Fees" to advertisers running campaigns that show in: Austria (+5%), France (+3%), Italy (+3%), Spain (+3%), Turkey (+5%), and the UK (+2%). Fees are based on *where ads are shown*, not where the advertiser is located. This will directly increase effective CPMs for any campaign with European/Turkish audiences. Review your geo-targeting and budget allocations now.

- **AI-Generated Content Disclosure Now Enforced** — Advertisers must declare when ad creative (especially images of real people or events) was created or significantly edited by AI. If Meta's system detects AI-manipulated content without the appropriate label, the ad will be disapproved. This is particularly critical for advertisers in health, finance, and news-adjacent verticals.
- **Click-Through Attribution Narrowed** — Meta updated click attribution so that only link clicks count as click-through conversions. Non-link interactions (post reactions, profile clicks, etc.) are now classified as engage-through attribution only. This will reduce reported click numbers for some campaigns — this is a reporting correction, not a performance drop.
- **Meta Advertising Standards (Formerly Facebook Advertising Policies)** — Meta has officially rebranded its policy framework to "Meta Advertising Standards," now applying uniformly across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and Audience Network. The standards are described as more transparent and detailed, with stricter enforcement heading into 2026.
- **Graph API v25 / Marketing API v25 Now Live** — The new API versions are live. Note: ASC and AAC campaigns will be phased out via the Marketing API by September 2026. Developers and agencies using API-based campaign management should begin migration planning.

## New Features & Tools

- **Ad Sequencing for Awareness & Engagement Campaigns** — Meta has launched Ad Sequencing, allowing advertisers to show ads in a defined order across the Awareness and Engagement objectives. This is a significant storytelling tool — advertisers can now build funnel narratives within Meta without relying on off-platform sequencing logic.
- **Threads Ads Now Rolling Out Globally** — Threads ad placements are expanding globally. Meta has extended its ad certification partnerships with Integral Ad Science, DoubleVerify, and Scope3 to cover Threads placements. Add your Threads account to Meta Business Suite to activate.
- **Unified 9:16 Safe Zones for Stories & Reels** — Meta has consolidated safe zones across Facebook Stories, Facebook Reels, Instagram Stories, and Instagram Reels into a single unified 9:16 safe zone. One correctly-designed vertical asset now works across all four placements without risk of UI obstruction. Update your creative templates now.
- **Lead Verification Tools Added** — Meta added "SMS by phone number" and "Work email" verification options to lead gen forms. This improves lead quality significantly for B2B and high-ticket advertisers.
- **"Chat with Your Leads on Messenger" Feature** — Meta is testing an automated lead engagement feature that prompts Messenger conversation directly after a lead is submitted. Useful for follow-up speed in service-based businesses.
- **New Breakdown: Conversion Count in Ads Manager** — Meta added a "Conversion Count" breakdown in Ads Manager to give clearer attribution visibility. Also: "Apply Website Highlights" feature is now available for campaigns.
- **Advantage+ Leads Campaigns Now Global** — After regional rollouts, Advantage+ Leads Campaigns are now available to all advertisers worldwide.

## Performance Insights & Best Practices

- **Creative is the new targeting.** Under Andromeda, your ad creative literally tells Meta who to show it to. Diversity of creative signals matters more than audience settings. Run at least 3–5 meaningfully different creative variants per ad set — different hooks, formats, and visual styles.
- **Go vertical or go home.** By March 2026, 90% of Meta's ad inventory is vertical. Campaigns running 4:5 or 1:1 assets are leaving CPM efficiency on the table. 9:16 is the non-negotiable standard for Reels, Stories, and now unified placements.
- **Simplify your campaign structure.** Advantage+ is delivering 10–20% efficiency gains over manual setups according to March 2026 adoption data. Consolidate ad sets, broaden audiences, and let Meta's AI handle distribution. Over-segmentation works against the algorithm.
- **Run Conversions API (CAPI) or risk poor delivery.** Advertisers without a properly configured CAPI are feeding incomplete signals to the AI, leading to inefficient delivery. CAPI is now considered table-stakes, not optional.
- **Refresh creative regularly to avoid Creative Fatigue penalties.** Andromeda actively penalises high Creative Similarity scores by raising CPMs. Treat creative refresh as a core part of your weekly workflow, not a monthly task.

## Platform News Affecting Advertisers

- **Meta Experiencing Post-Disruption Volatility (Ongoing)** — The March 3 platform outage triggered algorithm re-learning across many accounts. Campaigns that were previously stable are showing inconsistent results. This is expected to stabilise as Andromeda re-learns performance baselines, but advertisers should avoid making major structural campaign changes during this re-learning period.
- **Generative Ad Model (GEM) in Development** — Meta is publicly building toward a Generative Ad Model that will eventually let advertisers submit a product URL, budget, and a basic prompt — and the AI generates the full campaign (images, copy, headlines, animations). No launch date confirmed, but this signals where the platform is heading.
- **Threads Engagement Growing** — Threads is scaling up its advertiser ecosystem rapidly, with global ad rollouts and third-party brand safety measurement now in place. For brands targeting younger, text-first audiences, Threads is becoming a viable paid channel.



## SECTION 2 — URGENT ACTION ITEMS

- **⚠️ Audit European geo-targeting before April 2026** — Location Fees (DST surcharges of 2–5%) go live next month for Austria, France, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and the UK. Review any campaigns targeting these regions and adjust budgets or CPM targets accordingly before April 1.

- **⚠️ Check AI content declarations on all active ads** — Meta is now auto-detecting and disapproving ads that show signs of AI manipulation without the required disclosure label. Review your active creative for AI-edited images, especially in sensitive categories (health, finance, real estate), and apply the label where needed.
- **⚠️ Do not make major campaign changes right now** — The post-disruption learning phase is still active for many accounts. Making structural edits (new ad sets, budget resets, audience changes) will restart the learning phase and compound instability. Hold steady on what's working and test only in isolated new campaigns.

*Sources used:*

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