Create a Facebook page for your business

By Michael Conner



So now that you understand how a Facebook Business Page can help your business grow (see "Making social media work for you," page 1 of the June issue), I am guessing that you are ready to take the next step. Let's create a Facebook page so that you can begin mingling in the world of social media connections, make friends, have fun, and watch your business bloom!

This will walk you through the steps of creating a Facebook page so that if any questions come up, you will feel confident about what decisions to make.

Step one: Create a page

Follow this link: http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php to start your page and Facebook will give you six initial options. You will need to "categorize" your business according to their breakdown: local business or place; company, organization or institution; brand or product; artist, band or public figure; entertainment; cause or community.

As you can guess, a few of these categories have some crossover and it might be hard to choose at first which of the six categories you should be a part of. The good news is that Facebook now leaves room for you to change your mind. Once you choose a category and create your page, you can later go into your page and edit your settings. So don't feel like you are signing away your life on this first decision. (But you will not be able to change your business name so be sure you spell it right!)

Once you choose your category, Facebook will ask you to specify a bit more about your business by choosing a more detailed category. Depending on which of the six main categories you chose, they will also ask you for your business or product name, and if you are a local business, your physical address.

Step two: Add to your page

Congratulations! You have a page. The next step is to flesh it out, add some meat to the bones, and make it welcoming for all of your new guests.

Upload an image

Do you have a logo for your business, or a photo of your product? Add a photo so that you can personalize your page, and brand your business on Facebook.

Edit your profile

You will notice that Facebook has a 1, 2, 3 process of how to Get Started which is great, but I suggest that you don't follow it exactly. Before you invite friends to follow you, it would be best to have some content on your page. So the next thing to do is click on the Edit Page button in the upper right of the Get Started page and then go to the left sidebar and choose Basic Information. Now you can start telling your viewers all about your business. Since you are just starting your page, you will need to come back later to create a username, but once you hit 25 followers be sure to claim your name. Also, be sure to share links to your Web site, blog, Twitter account and more so that your Facebook followers can connect with you in their favorite ways. Once you have added to your profile, be sure to "Save Changes" at the bottom of the page.

Manage Admins

You will notice many other options on the left sidebar. Many of the default settings that Facebook has will be great to get you going, but definitely familiarize yourself with these while you are moving about so that if you ever want to change something you will know where to go.

If you have employees or colleagues who will also be adding to your Facebook page, be sure to add them as an admin as well. They will need to have a Facebook profile themselves, and you can invite them by e-mail or by their Facebook name if you are already friends with them. This will give them the ability to add posts, photos, and communicate with your followers, so do no give this out to just anyone!

Step three: Post, write, link, show

Great! So your visitors will now be able to find out more about your business. The next thing that they are going to want to see is your Wall. Right now it probably looks pretty bare.

So start sharing a little more. Create an album of images from a business-related event. Share a link to a blog article that you wrote about one of your products. Attach an instructional video about a skill that you have mastered. I would suggest having a least three items on your wall that will draw in your fans before you start inviting people to follow your business on Facebook. Make it fun, informative, and offer something attractive. If viewers are not interested in what you are sharing on your business page, they are not going to become a fan.

Step four: Call out to your fans

If you already have friends on Facebook on your personal profile, you can invite each of them, or a selected group, to become a fan of your business. On the Get Started page you will have an option to Invite Friends. Once you click on this, it will pull up all of your friends and you can choose from this list which ones you would like to invite.

Facebook also gives you the option to Tell Your Fans which is a little different. This is an opportunity to send an e-mail to any of your clients who are not friends with you on Facebook, but might be interested in becoming a fan of your business. Depending on which mail agent you use, you will be able to import your contacts and select which of those you would like to connect with. Note that there is a limit of 5,000 contacts you are allowed to import, and don't spam! It is just not cool!

Step five: Promote your page on your Web site

You can promote your Facebook page in a number of ways by referencing your page within the text of an article, having Facebook buttons on your site and more. Facebook has a great Like Box feature that is pretty easy to set up and install, and is a great way to start gathering more followers. You can adjust the features including the width, whether the background is dark or light, would you like to show the content of your wall and more. Just be sure to insert your Facebook URL into the parameters so that it actually pulls your statistics, and not the default.

Step six: Follow other pages

You have done a great job! You have completed everything you need to get your business page running, and as long

as you stick with it on a regular basis you will continue to learn and grow. My last bit of advice on the basics of building your Facebook Business Page is to follow other pages. Associate yourself with other business that either collaborate directly with you, work in a similar field, market in a manner that you would like to learn more about, or are a business you want to support. By following other pages you will learn from them, and will be able to share ideas. It will help you grow, and that is the goal, right?

Have fun with Facebook. If you don't look at it as work, you will enjoy it a lot more. If your clients see you having fun, they will have fun with you too!

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Create your own Facebook profile

More than 500 million people are now on Facebook. If you're not one of them but are ready to take the plunge into social networking, why not sign up today? It couldn't be easier:

- Type in facebook.com in your Internet browser address bar.
- On the right-hand side under "Sign Up" type in your name, e-mail address, password and birthday. Then click on the green sign up button.
- Type in the security check word verification on this screen and click sign up again. It is also a good time to check out the terms of service and privacy policy.
- In this step you can enter your e-mail address and password to see if some of your friends are already on Facebook. You may skip this step if you would like to.
- The next step is to fill out your profile. You can enter your high school, college, and company on this screen. When you're done, click save and continue. You can also skip this step if you do not want to put in this information.
- You can upload a photo in this step. Click "Upload a Photo" then click on browse and select a picture that you want to use. Click save and continue. You may also skip this step and do it later if you wish.
- You now have a new Facebook account! Now you can find people or edit your profile further.
- The final step is to check your e-mail. Facebook will send you an account confirmation e-mail which contains a link that you must click on to complete your registration.