



50 GREAT FACEBOOK IDEAS

 **DIGITAL**
iSherpa

50 Ways to Better Engage With Fans on Facebook

Marketers know it's their job to find the crowds, and there's a BIG crowd on Facebook. With over 845 million monthly active users, Facebook has become a social media juggernaut that is ignored at the peril of those companies that still do not understand the paradigm shift caused by the social media marketing phenomenon. But it isn't enough for businesses to treat Facebook as just another static website to showcase their wares.

Interactive engagement is the key to social media marketing success. People want to be able to find, discuss, and share information that is relevant to their particular interests and needs. They will return as long as there is new and compelling content, a comfortable place to share information and ask questions, and fun activities that are quick and easy to participate in. This is an area social media excels in when approached the right way.

Facebook Business Pages give companies the ability to become more than just a window full of products and services with one way communication. Through social media marketing a business can engage with current and potential customers, gain advocates, and expose its brand and products to an ever larger audience. But creating and administering a Facebook page is not a one-and-done activity. Like today's website, it should be a lively place where there is always new stuff to do yet where basic information is easily found at each visit.

How do you begin to optimize your Facebook page?

Interact

Communication has never been a one-way street, but past marketing methods have not been conducive to back and forth discussions. Social media marketing, on the other hand, thrives on interaction and engagement between a company and its customers.

The appropriate interaction makes people feel valued. It means their needs and desires have been acknowledged and that the company is actively working to fulfill them. Getting the conversational ball rolling, however, can be a challenge. How can a business get fans and visitors to engage with a social media marketing effort?

1. Ask a question about products or services.

2. Ask fans about their business.

3. Ask for help or crowd-source new product ideas.

4. Ask an easy non-product related question.



Answer a question from a customer.

Respond quickly to comments from visitors and fans.

Create a connection from Facebook to the outside world

Say “Thank You” publicly to active fans.

Join Facebook groups/networks

Facebook

1F. “Like” other businesses on Facebook

Fans return to where they feel welcome and where they are rewarded for being there. Engagement is increased by making it easy to engage in return. While there are people who feel comfortable writing a long response or carrying on a discussion, most prefer to keep things simple. So the business should as well. To see how well the social media marketing effort is working, determining the ratio of visitors that clicked “Like” or “Recommend” out of total visitors shows how effective the Facebook page has been.

Ease and convenience rule modern life, especially in social media marketing. To get answers, questions should be easy to respond to. If all it takes is a word or two, most people will take the time to participate. Rather than make the questions all about the product, though, the best social media marketing response will come from questions about a fan’s own business, about industry practices, and about improving a product or service to better fit a fan’s needs.

For all social media marketing, when a fan or visitor asks a question, the response should be as quick as possible, most effectively the same day. Using the email notification feature can ensure this. This means businesses will need staff dedicated to social media marketing efforts. Publicly telling fans “Thank you” means just as much as a quick answer. Showing appreciation goes a long way to



A spirit of generosity is also a very attractive part of social media marketing. When a business can “like” another business, not only does that increase awareness of that other business, but reciprocity levels the same advantage back. This type of mutual admiration society also shows that the company is confident and comfortable with sharing attention.

As engagement grows, advocates will be found for the company through social media marketing as well as increased engagement between fans, helping to grow awareness

across their networks. Joining networks and groups is another way of doing this. Plus, this level of engagement yields a trove of information about fans and visitors that can be mined to determine prominent industries using a particular product or service, what features are popular and which

could be jettisoned, where improvements can be made and what new product or service could be successfully offered. This is one of the biggest strengths of social media marketing.

Share

Another strength of social media marketing is providing content. Doing so makes a company a good resource. Allowing that content to be easily shared makes them a great resource. By leveraging the networking effect of fans and their friends, content sharing spreads the business message even farther through the graces of social media marketing. For greater participation, each piece of content should include a summary of why it is of interest. The fact that the content will be subjected to the editorial filter of the company's industry will help keep the message consistent while showing thought leadership and value.

In more than social media marketing, content is more than pieces of text. In addition to web pages, articles, and other text based articles, content includes a multimedia approach. Videos, podcasts, audio, photos, and more all add to the variety that can be offered. And it isn't limited to company content. It can and should include pieces about industry happenings and other information of interest to the target audience. If a company is involved in charity activities, that can be included. This creates another resource for fans and makes a company's Facebook page the place to go for information.

By placing the share button close to each piece of content, a business can make sharing that content as easy as possible. Again, convenience is the watchword. Networks in social media marketing are again leveraged since each time a fan shares a piece of content; it appears on his newsfeed for his friends to see and forward to their friends.

Social media marketing is at its most effective when all social media marketing and other marketing platforms carry the same message. This means that integrating these platforms that all send the same message will increase visibility for that message as well as reducing noise.

12. Upload photos from the business.

13. Share videos

14. Be a curator of interesting and focused content.

15. Make all content on website and other places "share-able" with a Like or Recommend button.

16. Use news feeds and

17. Guest post on other business pages.

18. Integrate social content from other social media.

19. Give away a checklist.

20. Create a list of resource links.



Personalize

This is the “social” in social media marketing. It shows the people behind the bricks and mortar or website, adding a more personal touch to the company. Transparency and authenticity are musts. Any hint of selling or speaking less than the truth will rapidly sink a social media marketing effort. This doesn’t mean a company can’t sound like one. The point is to speak like the fans instead of using corporate speak...professional but not like a sales brochure.

Another way of showing the human side of the corporation is publicly showing appreciation for staff and introducing them to fans of the page. Or giving a look at how the company looks on the inside and how it functions. The company seems more accessible.

21. Be a person, not a building.
22. Highlight a staff member.
23. Personalize greetings.
24. Enable faces on the like/recommend button.
25. Offer a “behind the scenes” look at the business.

Note: Enabling faces on like and recommend buttons can boost click-through rates by as much as 2 to 3 times in comparison to plain buttons.



Promote

The Facebook Events application is a great place to offer webinar invitations, registration for new white papers, or even to publish the details of a user conference. Promotions make a Facebook page THE place to find out about new merchandise or services before anyone else.

26. Use the events application to promote webinars, white papers, other media content, or physical gatherings.
27. Cross promote the business page to a personal Facebook page to make the business page visible to a personal network.
28. Introduce new products on Facebook first.
29. Take advantage of the “vanity” URL.
30. Ask the fan if their purchase can be posted to their wall.
31. Convince website visitors, blog subscribers, and e-mail subscribers to like the business on Facebook.
32. Use an effective CTA (call to action) to guide fans and visitors to take the desired action.

Privacy concerns are much in the news. Before using a fan's account to promote business always ask permission in advance. If permission is given, using a fan's newsfeed to announce purchases provides added visibility to the fan's followers and friends while riding the network outward. And, as with sharing, the easier it is to do something, the more likely it will be done. Increasing conversions by showing fans where to go every step of the way during a transaction or engagement is a big part of social media marketing.

Claiming the company name in a vanity URL makes it easier to find on Facebook and prevents someone else from using the name but there is a caveat: once the Facebook company name is chosen and claimed it cannot be changed.



Reward

Rewards make fans feel like part of a special club with perks nobody else gets. It neatly answers the WIIFM question, "What's in it for me?" Rewards can come in many forms.

33. Reserve exclusive content for new likes or new friends/fans.
34. Invite user content posting.
35. Showcase fans.
36. Reward fans for tagging the Facebook business page.
37. Reward fans for sharing content.
38. Set engagement goals and ask fans to help reach them in exchange for a goody.

Businesses can pump up social media marketing by recognizing expertise by way of publishing a piece of fan content on the Facebook page. This is an excellent reward, giving their work visibility. Or create a "Fan of the Week" and put the spotlight on a loyal user. It doesn't have to be much: a downloadable widget or badge. Just let them know they are appreciated.

Make It Fun

Who doesn't want to have fun? Making the Facebook page a great place for a break can increase the fan-base exponentially and is a smart social media marketing tactic.

39. Have a contest.
40. Rally fans around a cause.
41. Post a quiz.
42. Celebrate milestones.

An organization's social media monitoring campaign can include contest for best photo, most creative content, or for wearing the company T-shirt. Then they can post the results on company Facebook page and on the company website. If a business makes it a practice to be active in a particular charity or to assist people after a disaster, it can use Facebook social media marketing to let the fans know where and how to help. By asking fans a multiple choice quiz about an industry practice, a company invites participation as well as thought leadership. Another fun activity is to have a big party as the page reaches a predetermined number of fans, on anniversary dates, and for obscure holidays. Make social media marketing fun.

Optimize

Each social media marketing platform has its own quirks when it comes to search and maintenance. A company Facebook page must be adapted to these quirks plus additional steps are needed to make the Facebook page integrate with other social media marketing campaigns.

43. Be active with social media marketing efforts.
44. Use friend lists for personalizing offers.
45. Integrate traditional advertising.
46. Use the fan base to grow an email list.
47. Enable Open Graph Protocol.
48. Optimize for Facebook search.
49. Make page publicly searchable.
50. Claim business on Facebook Places.



It is called social media marketing for a reason. It is social and society craves novelty. A Facebook page can get stale. With no posts, there are no comments. No comments means no engagement. As with all social media marketing, a business must post great content on a regular basis so fans have something to expect and look forward to. Consistency is the key.

For further integration into social media marketing campaigns, friend lists can be used to segment prospects and customers according to a fan's behavior online. Traditional print, television, and radio advertising can include invitations to the company Facebook page. (A local NBC station draws for a prize out of a group of fan likes received on a certain day.) Including subscription requests for email newsletters or for email promotions can grow the email list using all opt-in requests as part of a social media marketing campaign.

Optimization isn't just for search engines. To optimize web pages for Facebook, companies can enable OGP (Open Graph Protocol) to transform the pages into rich objects in the Facebook social graph. For search,
For brick and mortar locations, business should take full advantage of location based marketing by claiming their company on Facebook Places so people can use mobile technology to find them.

Hashtag

Facebook has recently integrated the use of hashtags into the hugely popular social network. Chances are, thanks to Twitter, you may be somewhat familiar with the use of hashtags by now. Hashtags are a great way to expand the reach of your post and join in on relevant conversations! We promised 50 Facebook ideas, but we're going to go over and above and give you five more:

51. Create a custom hashtag for your brand that you use consistently.
 52. Incorporate communal holidays and popular event hashtags in your post, such as #Superbowl.
 53. Find relevant hashtags for your industry by checking out what your industry leaders are using.
 54. Use tracking websites like Tagboat.com to search for popular hashtags.
 55. Reward those fans that use your branded hashtags!
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In order to make the investment in a Facebook page or other social media marketing campaign pay off, companies must be diligent in learning the most effective ways to use the Facebook page, the best way to engage with fans to grow a fan base, and in optimizing all media for Facebook's singular challenges. A Facebook page should be an integral part of an overall Internet marketing plan.

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