

7 (Mostly Free) Ways to Maximize Facebook for your Business

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

So you have a company Facebook page. You do two to three status updates a week, sometimes post a photo. But you're left wondering, "Is there anything else I can do?"

We've rounded up 7 easy ways to help make your Facebook page work harder for your business. (Of course, before trying any of these ideas, we recommend reviewing your overall social media strategy to be sure you are meeting your goals.) Read on for details about how you can:

- 1. Showcase your brand via the Facebook Timeline*
- 2. Participate on Facebook as your brand*
- 3. Run contests for your followers*
- 4. Set up special apps to engage your followers*
- 5. Open up the Subscribe button for your personal page*
- 6. Set up networking, social and niche "groups" for targeted messages*
- 7. Advertise your Facebook Page to promote your business*

For many businesses, Facebook *is* social media. They dutifully set up a company Page, post periodic status updates, and ask people to "Like" them when they can. But if you're like many businesses, you've probably wondered, "Should I be doing something more?"

Facebook reports that on average, companies reach about 16% of their fans in a typical week through status updates. This suggests that you should indeed consider taking some extra steps to interact with your followers. We've rounded up seven simple, mostly free ways to take that extra step.

1. Showcase your brand via the Facebook Timeline

First and foremost, be sure your Facebook Page reflects your brand – include your company name and logo at a minimum, and use an eye-catching photo for your Timeline. If you have photos, events, and special offers, you can include these, too.

2. Participate on Facebook as your brand

Comment on other Pages as your Facebook Page increases your company's visibility. Your company will show up in other people's feeds, which can encourage people to click to your Page to see what you have to offer. Of course, you should try to comment on Facebook Pages that have some relevance to your business and when you do comment, try to say something that showcases your expertise and knowledge – don't "spam" or only sell your products or services!

3. Use Facebook's Special Offers feature – it's free!

Facebook Offers - only available through Facebook Pages - are free and easy to set up. You'll need an offer, an image, and a strong headline that draws attention to the offer. You will be asked parameters such as how many times someone can use the offer and the option to pick an expiration date along with terms and conditions. Answer these questions, publish it and it's visible on your Facebook page. And did we say it's free?

4. Set up special apps to engage your followers

You can set up special Apps on your Facebook Page, giving you additional opportunities to interact with your fans (these Apps appear as Tabs on your Company page). Apps are available for photos, maps, videos, your Twitter posts, blog posts, RSS feed, a customized contact us section, and many more. You'll find the Apps in the [Facebook Application Directory](#).

5. Open up the Subscribe Button on your personal page

If you are the face of your company or you want to brand your name, consider opening up the Subscribe button on your personal profile, which lets people follow updates you mark as public, regardless of whether you're Facebook friends or not. It's a great tip for a singer, comedian, photographer, writer - any business owner who is active on Facebook via his or her personal profile with posts and comments that are relevant to the business.

To use this opt-in feature, go to the Subscribe Page and click Allow Subscribers. Posts you set as "Public" will show up in the News Feeds of not only your Friends, but your subscribers. If you are hesitant because you don't want your personal statuses going out to the masses, don't worry, each time you post a status update, you have the option to select who can see it, so distinguishing between who you want to reach can be decided on a post-by-post basis.

6. Manage "Groups" for your Business

The Groups feature works for businesses that target different types of customers and also ones that interact with customers on a personal basis, since Groups are created from your personal list of friends. To make a group, go through your Friends list and allocate what Group you want to add them to by using the drop down arrow to the right of the person's name. You can then use your Groups to communicate, schedule events, share documents, and more.

Some examples of groups in action:

- 1) Setting up a **group of local business owners** could be a great way to stay connected and promote business news within a community. (Quick Tip #1: When you set up a Group, consider also setting up some promotional rules of the Group so that group members know how often and what to post.
- 2) Use Groups to help sort out **frequently asked questions and information**. This gives your clients/customers an inner circle where they can connect to one another, ask questions, and network together.
- 3) Use Groups to **send targeted messages**. For example, if your business has a club membership, you can write an "exclusive club message" for club members only, and a special incentive to join the club to non-members.

A word of caution: Although Groups can be a great addition to your marketing strategy, they have the potential to irritate your clients. Some reasons?

- You are adding people to a Group who might not want to be added. Since anyone can add other people to the Group once they are in it, this might be irritating for those who don't want to be in it in the first place.
- Notification spam. Many people don't know how to turn off the notifications in a Group so they may get irritated and choose to stop getting all the updates. If you do decide to run a Group, make sure people know where their settings can be changed.

7. Advertise your Facebook Page on Facebook

When advertising on Facebook, it can be more effective to send visitors to your Facebook Page versus a company website, as Facebook is a platform your target audience is comfortable with. When they land on your Page from an ad, be sure your brand, your brand personality, and what you have to offer is optimized (see #1).

We hope these tips will spark some new and fresh ideas for how to use Facebook for your business, allowing you to take your social media marketing to a new level. Please [let us know](#) if you have other tips that have worked for you. Short on time? [Sales Renewal](#) can help you get Facebook – and other Social Media platforms – working for your business.