



the business owner's guide to

facebook

our expert panelists

CHUCK gose

Chuck Gose is the business development and social media director for a major digital signage company and consults global brands on their online and digital presence. Connect with Chuck on Facebook or follow him on Twitter @chuckgose.



PETER dunn

Peter Dunn, AKA Pete The Planner, is a social media and real media vanity wizard. He works it all, from social media, radio shows and TV shows, to podcasts and video. Connect with him on Facebook or @petetheplanner on Twitter.



CLAY mabbitt

Clay Mabbitt is the resident geek at Silver Square, a marketing firm that prides itself on vetting the latest trends and research to get big results for its clients. Follow him on Facebook or like Silver Square. Follow Clay on Twitter @claymabbitt.



SIMON andrews

Simon Andrews works for a major sales training outfit, Lushin & Associates. He has taken his company into the social media playground with big steps called video. Watch his work on Facebook or on Twitter @simon_andrews.



CHIP maxwell

Chip Maxwell loves to giggle, er, Giggil, that is. As the VP at Giggil, he is responsible for the marketing and movement of the Giggil needle. Learn more about Giggil on Facebook or follow Chip on Twitter @chipmaxwell.



ERICA dobson

Erica Dobson helps make up the superstar marketing team at Formstack, an online company that knows a thing or two about marketing via the Internet. Check her out in action on Facebook or @ericadobson on Twitter.



1

What are some of the
best uses of
BUSINESS
PAGES
you have seen?

CHUCK gose

Ohio Health is a hospital group out of Columbus and a client of mine. I noticed on their Facebook fan page that they were able to collect some amazing stories from their customers, who were essentially patients, about the birth of a child or someone who survived a heart attack. This was a great way to collect those stories. I don't know of any other way they would have been able to passively collect this information. They just added a post asking people for their amazing stories and people commented, submitting what I would describe as private information. I don't know how else they would have collected such information or stories. Facebook is like the comment form that people used to fill out. People can just go on the Facebook page and leave a comment — positive or negative. Facebook is also better for small businesses because with big brands, your message is so vast and you are addressing hundreds of thousands of fans. But with small businesses, the message and audience can be much more pointed.



CLAY mabbitt

The larger brands you know — the Cokes, the McDonalds of the world — they are at the point in their business lifecycle where they're not trying to educate you that they exist and tell you what they can do. It's just getting the brand in your mind enough times, just that reminder so Coke is the first thing that comes to your mind when you are thirsty. But I think an advantage for small companies is that Facebook users expect them to interact. They think, "I'm a big part of your business and you need to be talking to me."



CHIP maxwell

One of the best uses I've seen is a small-scale local carpenter posting pictures of his work. It was more of the blog-style format. Because it was Facebook and because he had some fans, he had gotten some traction out of it. It was neat to see people have commentary around or discussion around a beautiful bar or workbench that he had created. I hadn't thought about individual contractors using Facebook in that way or at least that's not typically the people who will do it, and for exactly that reason, it made it attractive. Even if there are 10 better ones out there, just that in-your-face presence makes a big impact when you're thinking about that next job and who you're going to call for your gutters, your roof or your driveway. They are not just an entry in the yellow pages.



PETER dunn

I think one of the best uses of Facebook business pages is on news sites, where stations are teasing a story and allowing people to comment on that post, which also starts discussions. They will even say, "Hey, we are just starting our May sweeps. What investigative pieces do you want to see? What are problems in our city?" And I think a big lesson is that you can't control the comments and if you're going to invite comments, what you get is what you get. There is some pretty heinous stuff on news sites, but it really continues the conversation. Facebook also allows a company to show its personality because it's a more fun environment. You can be creative and people don't judge an organization for trying to get creative on Facebook. Whereas in normal print media and TV, if that got a little wonky off the message, it would be scrutinized more than if it's on Facebook, where it's meant to be more of a viral thing.



SIMON andrews

With large and small brands and businesses, a custom tab on a Facebook fan page has become a substitute for a microsite. Instead of having to create a custom site or page inside a website, some of the largest brands on the planet are launching initiatives inside their fan pages. These custom tabs are some of the most original and exciting uses of Facebook to date. Take a look at Nike Football – Write the Future.



CLAY mabbitt

The promotion style that has been around for years where people are asked to take a picture of themselves in different locations around the world with a particular product — from books to beer — is even easier with Facebook. People can upload their photos and tag people's names in the photos so quickly. Those campaigns really create some buzz.



CHUCK gose

Another area is the stunts arena. Scotty's Brewhouse followed that model, where people took pictures of jumping in a canal or sticking their tongue to a frozen pole. It's generated interest and people followed it and clicked to see pictures. It's like this reality TV kind of stunt drama because people can share their photos for everybody to see and prove that they've done it. It's an engagement opportunity to get people to react to a message and see how many people react to that message.



PETER dunn

Businesses are also rewarding fans with incentives. I became a fan of a TV show on HBO and because I "liked" it, I received the soundtrack to the entire show. It was really cool. That concept could be applied to small businesses, giving away e-books, car washes, a free appetizer — whatever their product or service might be.



2

What

new IDEAS

are you seeing on
FACEBOOK?

3

Why would a

business
OWNER
need
FACEBOOK
and a website?

SIMON andrews

A business website is a custom presence online — which businesses need in order to control their message, create their brand and be recognized by search engines. Facebook is the largest website on the planet, where all your customers, consumers or users hang out. Having a symbiotic relationship between the two is maybe the easiest and most effective tactic of social media marketing.



CLAY mabbitt

Generally, people are coming to your website through a search engine or by manually typing the URL off of your business card. They are looking for specific information about you at the top-level view. On Facebook, you're getting more people who are fanning you on Facebook because they're interested enough about you that when you have something new so share, they want to know about it. They're not going to go check your site everyday, but put something out on Facebook when they need to know about it, and fans like you enough that they want to hear about it. Facebook also shows users that your business knows people, which a website can't do. When people interact with your business or comment on Facebook, it introduces new people to your business. It's a key element of the spirit of social media.



CHUCK gose

With a website, you own it. That's your space and you control it. With Facebook, you're kind of at the mercy of whatever Facebook decides to do at that time, and you play within its sandbox. That's something to consider as a reason for needing both. At any point, Facebook could just change the rules and you've got to adapt, whereas your website is your foundation. That's your home base.



ERICA dobson

A business owner needs Facebook because that is where all of their customers are. Another great perk: It's free! You can reach so many more people through Facebook than you could anywhere else. A business owner needs a website because most business is done online these days. Even if someone is just looking up information, the Internet is the first place they go. For me, if I am buying something or looking up information, the person or business I'm researching better have a website or I'm most likely not buying.



SIMON andrews

Create an engaging campaign through a custom tab on your fan page. It can involve hooks such as a contest, video gallery or community. Then use a combination of Facebook advertising — great at targeting unique audiences — word-of-mouth and public relations to promote your campaign.



CHUCK gose

The key is that it takes work. People only know you or your business if they “like” you or if they see a friend that has “liked” you or “fanned” your page. There might be some organic growth, but it takes a lot of work and promotion if that number is important to you. There is such a variety of opportunities for content on Facebook. It could be a picture, a link to something or a video. It’s a safe and easy way to share that content. Getting people to “like” you is not something that will happen overnight, but if you’re out there creating content, you should care about it and work at it.



CHIP maxwell

Vulnerability is the way to get an audience. You have to share what only you would know. You have to admit when you make a mistake. People are tired of being pitched and advertised to and people see right through it. So the best thing to do is to be authentic with your clients. Be real with them and they will appreciate that.



PETER dunn

I had a lot of luck with this when I was trying to build my fan page on Facebook. I was very strategic. I looked at other media outlets that I appear on and I did targeted ads to people who “like” those other outlets — like the Smiley Show, WISH TV, Paul Poteet. I targeted people who are fans of these other outlets, so my ads would pop up for them. In about two weeks, I raised about 800 fans by doing that. Pay-per-click obviously was an investment in me and my ability to create content. But using targeted ads to try to get fans can really make sense, targeting areas where you or your business is going to be recognized.



4

How do you
GET people
more
to like you?

5

What do the

PRIVACY CHANGES mean to business?

SIMON andrews

The current Facebook privacy issue resulted from changes to the platforms that were in part aimed directly at helping large brands and small businesses connect with consumers. These changes will be more beneficial to small businesses because everyone will have the same amount of access to very powerful tools, including social plugins.



ERICA dobson

I don't think they will have any effect on businesses. I think the changes are mostly a good thing for businesses because they can access their future customers' information more easily than in the past.



CHIP maxwell

Facebook's terms and conditions have changed over the past few years from a few pages to multiple pages, and businesses need to be aware of those changes and settings and how that affects their businesses. One of the biggest changes recently is if you "fan" something, that's public. For example, if you fan the Rolling Stones, it becomes public even if you aren't friends with other fans. Another change is that if you become a fan of something, like the Rolling Stones, you are going to see a Rolling Stones page that has been aggregated from other people's sites rather than just seeing the Rolling Stones fan site. You have to remember that the goal of Facebook is to be social, and we are seeing more interaction integrated into privacy changes.



CHUCK gose

I think it's important for businesses to understand the privacy settings and changes. Are you going to let people post photos on your page? How does this affect your business? How open are you to allowing fans to interact with you?



CLAY mabbitt

According to the legal terms and conditions, Facebook prohibits you from running a contest where part of the entry requires you to take some action on Facebook, like leaving a comment on your wall. You can do it through a third party but not directly on Facebook. But based on what I see happening on Facebook, the rules aren't being enforced. There are so many active accounts that it would be a monumental task to try to police all the "illegal" contests that are running, but the rules are officially on the books. So Facebook could drop the hammer any time without notice.



ERICA dobson

Any contest that gives away free prizes is a good contest. For instance, Ruth's Chris Steak House gives away free gift cards if you interact on their Facebook page and Einstein Bros. Bagels gives away free bagels just by becoming a fan.



PETER dunn

I don't think contests are always useful. I think a lot of times companies see more value in a contest than what's actually there. It seems forced.



SIMON andrews

Three of the best contests I've seen are Dex Knows Weddings, Sperry Topsiders and Dead Space.



b

What have been some of the

BEST
contests
OF FACEBOOK?

7

What should be the
**most
important
ROI** for business
owners giving
time to
FACEBOOK?

SIMON andrews

There have been studies equating a dollar amount with a Facebook fan — a “like” — but it’s really impossible to tell. In any case, with the development of Facebook’s Open Graph, the value of a connection or a like should be high in a business’s marketing budget, especially one that wants to build an online presence. In the near future, these connections will help guide how people use the Internet and will be harder to come by.



CHUCK gose

I think it’s a different conversation for B2B than it is for B2C. I manage our Facebook page and it’s not a lead generator for us, but I do encourage our clients to visit our page and use it. Southwest Airlines is a client, and the VP said he saw that we were going to be at a specific show and he would have never known that if he had not visited our page. It’s a customer engagement and communication tool. It’s an individual account. People aren’t going to Facebook to buy; they are going there to interact. It’s not to say that they won’t buy, but that’s not the initial purpose.



CHIP maxwell

You can measure your ROI based on fans and friends and conversations, but capturing who was a lead on Facebook is the big question. I haven’t managed a campaign on Facebook to know how to track that. One of the things Giggil will do on our Facebook page is post the results of our interaction with a not-for-profit or library. People see that and see how credible and reputable we are and that’s hard to measure, but it does matter. For a business with a smaller client base, it’s probably easier to determine where referrals are coming from. The eye-rolling buzzword is, “What’s your social media strategy?” and I feel like setting those expectations up front is important.





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