Facebook for Small Business

How to Get Discovered and Generate New Business





Facebook.

Even if you're not one of the over one billion monthly active users, chances are you've heard of the enormous social network. As you might suspect, there's power in that enormity.

When a business sets up a Facebook Page, it can easily connect with existing customers to build relationships and drive repeat business while also reaching a new audience that can turn into new customers.

How, you ask? That's what we'll cover in this e-book.

How Consumers are Discovering New Businesses on Facebook

How to Set Up Your Facebook Page for Maximum Discoverability

Tips for Engaging Your Facebook Audience for Increased Social Visibility and Discoverability

Let's get started!



To fully understand how consumers are discovering new businesses on Facebook, let's first take a look at how Facebook works.



In a nutshell, people using the social network send "friend requests" to the people they know. Once those requests are accepted, users can contact each other and also see what the other is sharing to the network. Facebook users share status updates, photos, videos, and links. They can also comment on, share, and "like" (Facebook's way of allowing users to show approval of something) the things that they come across on the network.

In addition to making personal connections, users can also elect to connect with the businesses and brands that matter to them via Facebook Pages.

This allows a user to see and interact with the information shared by the business's Facebook Page right within the user's News Feed (this is where the user sees what's happening with their friends and the Facebook Pages they're connected to).

When a user interacts with a friend or Facebook Page, these interactions are shared with the people they're connected to. This exposes the business to each user's network. This is great for businesses with a Facebook Page since the average user is connected to 130 people. These people share similar tastes, interests, and localities as the people already connected to your business, making them perfect prospects.



Here's an example of how word-of-mouth marketing works on Facebook:



Countless Cupcakes, a bakery, shares a picture of its latest Halloween cupcakes.



Mary, a frequent customer, sees the picture in her News Feed and shares it with her Facebook Friends. She asks, "What do you think? Should I pick up some of these for the Halloween Party?"



This picture, along with Mary's question, is now visible to her friends who either "like" the picture or comment on it, letting Mary know that they look delicious and she should definitely grab some for the party.

Not only did Mary expose the business to her Facebook Friends, but the interactions her friends had with her post were shared with their friends as well. This creates a multiplying effect that leads to a very powerful form of word-of-mouth marketing.

Consumers engage with businesses on Facebook in other ways, too.



🔶 If a business has a physical location, users can "check-in" when they visit the store or office, alerting their friends of where they are. The update contains a link back to the business's Facebook Page.



Consumers can also write recommendations for their favorite businesses right within Facebook. These recommendations live on a business's Facebook Page and are available for all visitors to see.



Search also plays a big part in how consumers discover new businesses on Facebook.



Here's an example of how Graph Search works:



When a consumer searches for a business using a search engine like Google, a business's Facebook Page is often one of the top results. Facebook is such a big network that it receives more weight within search rankings.

Users can also search directly within Facebook. This search tool has become more powerful with Facebook's introduction of Graph Search. Graph Search allows Facebook users to search directly within Facebook for information related to not only their interests and specific locations, but those of their friends as well.

Mike is looking for a place in Boston to take his wife to dinner for a special night out. On Facebook, he can search for "restaurants in Boston, Massachusetts my friends like" to get a list of restaurants that help him narrow down his options. Mike will then be able to explore each option and see which friends have visited a particular restaurant, photos that were taken there, as well as the logistical information for the restaurant. This is why it's extremely important to make sure your information on Facebook is complete and up-to-date so your business shows up in these searches and potential customers get accurate information. (We'll show you what information you should include on your Facebook Page in the next section.)



Let's summarize how businesses are getting discovered on Facebook.



The businesses that are easy to find and keep their connections engaged benefit most from Facebook. If your business isn't already taking advantage of what Facebook has to offer, you may be missing out on opportunities to get discovered by new potential customers. Hosting an active Facebook Page is essential if you want to reach new customers where they're spending time and looking for new information.

Let's move to the next section to see how you can set up your Facebook Page so people can easily discover your business.



Whether people are using a search engine like Google or Facebook's Graph Search to find local businesses, you want to be sure your Facebook Page has all the correct information so your business can be discovered in search results.

Here's how to make sure your Facebook Page can be discovered easily:



1. Choose the right Page Type and Category.

You'll want to choose your Page Type based on how your audience views you. For example, if you're creating a Facebook Page for a museum that's also a nonprofit, you'd want to choose the Page Type that includes "museum" rather than "nonprofit" if that's how your audience is trying to find you.

In most instances, you'll be choosing between "Local Business or Place" or "Company, Organization, or Institution." **Choose Local Business or Place** if people physically visit your location — for example, a local business, professional services office, spa, or sports/recreation/activities facility. **Choose Company, Organization, or Institution** if people don't visit your location or if your events are always someplace different.

You'll be able to see the categories that fall under each Page Type before you make a decision.



2. Choose the best name for your Facebook Page.

It's best to choose your business name, as this will serve as the title of your page. It will show up when you post a status update or make comments. You can also include a short description here if it makes sense — for example, "Giuseppe's - Fine Italian Dining." You'll want to avoid stuffing your page name with keywords, as this comes across as spammy and people may be less likely to engage with your page.



3. Include your address and phone number.

This information will help get your page indexed for local search results. In addition, Google places higher importance on pages with this information.





4. Include a subcategory.

If you selected "Restaurant/Café" as your main category, be sure to narrow it down with a subcategory, for example, "Italian restaurant."



5. Include a description with the appropriate keywords.

Fill out the About section, Mission, and Company Description fully. All of this information is searchable on Facebook and other search engines, so make sure it's accurate and complete.



6. Choose a unique Facebook web address.

This is the URL people will enter to get to your Facebook Page. It follows a format like this: http://facebook.com/ username. URLs are heavily weighted by search engines, so choose a web address that reflects an aspect of your business. For example, Giuseppe's could use: http://facebook.com/Giuseppes.

7. Include a menu, list of services, or product list.

When people discover your Facebook Page, it's likely they'll be interested in what you offer. If you use a service like <u>SinglePlatform from Constant Contact</u>, you can include detailed product and service information directly on your Facebook Page. This makes it easy for potential customers to find what they're looking for without having to leave Facebook to visit your website or other listings pages.

In the next section, we'll provide you with some tips to increase your page's visibility and discoverability.





Tips for Engaging Your Facebook Audience for Increased Visibility and Discoverability

As we mentioned earlier, the more people interact with your Facebook Page, the more visibility you get for your business. This happens because the interactions are shared with the friends of those users interacting with your page.

For this reason, it makes sense that if you have more people connected to your page, there's more opportunity to reach a larger audience and have your business discovered.

This means that you should always be looking to add new "likes" (this is how Facebook users connect to a business) to your Facebook Page. You can get new "likes" by simply letting people know about your page.

Here are some free ways you can increase the size of your Facebook audience:

Note: With each of the following methods, be sure to include a reason why people should "like" your page. What's in it for them if they do? People often "like" pages for promotions and discounts, exclusive content, and to show support for a business.



1. Advertise your Facebook Page at your location.

Put up signs at your place of business to let people know you have a Facebook Page. Ask them directly to "like" your page. Be sure your staff is also letting people know that they can connect with your business on Facebook.



2. Send a dedicated email to your subscribers.

Email is the best way to drive action to your Facebook Page. Send a dedicated email letting your customers know that you have a page and why they should connect with you there.

3. Link to your Facebook Page on your website and other accounts.

Many businesses forget about including a link to their Facebook Page on their business's website. Don't let this happen to you. Not only will these links help your page's search engine rankings, but they also give you the opportunity to connect with prospects that may not be ready to make a purchase from you. Be sure to link to your Facebook Page from the other social networks you use too.





Now, how do you engage this Facebook audience?

In order to increase the visibility of your business on Facebook, you'll need to keep your audience engaged. The more engaged your audience is, the more likely they are to interact with your updates. This means you'll need to share content that resonates with them.

Follow the 80/20 rule.

80 percent of the content you share should be educational, useful, or fun and designed to engage your Facebook audience. Use the other 20 percent for promotional content. This mix allows you to keep your audience interested — and they'll be more likely to act on the Facebook promotions you post.

Here are some tips for creating engaging content:



Keep posts between 100 and 250 characters. Posts within this range get 60 percent more likes, comments, and shares



Tell your Facebook audience what to do. Ask your audience to engage in a particular way. Ask them to "like," caption this, share, respond yes or no, or fill in the blank. Posts with simple and clear calls-to-action receive 48 percent more engagement.



Vary the content formats you share. Use images, videos, links, and text. Images and videos grab more attention in the News Feed and generate lots of shares and "likes." Links are good for driving traffic to your site. Text updates usually receive the most comments.

You'll be able to see how it's working.

Every page gets access to Facebook Insights, which allow you to see how well your posts are performing.



You'll also be able to see the posts that are getting the most engagement to help inform future content.

All this engagement helps increase your business's visibility and discoverability.

The key to building an engaging Facebook Page is to know your audience and what they respond to. A robust, accurate, and engaging Facebook Page can improve the chances of your business getting discovered.



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