



How to build a vibrant business community using Facebook Pages

By Peter Fletcher

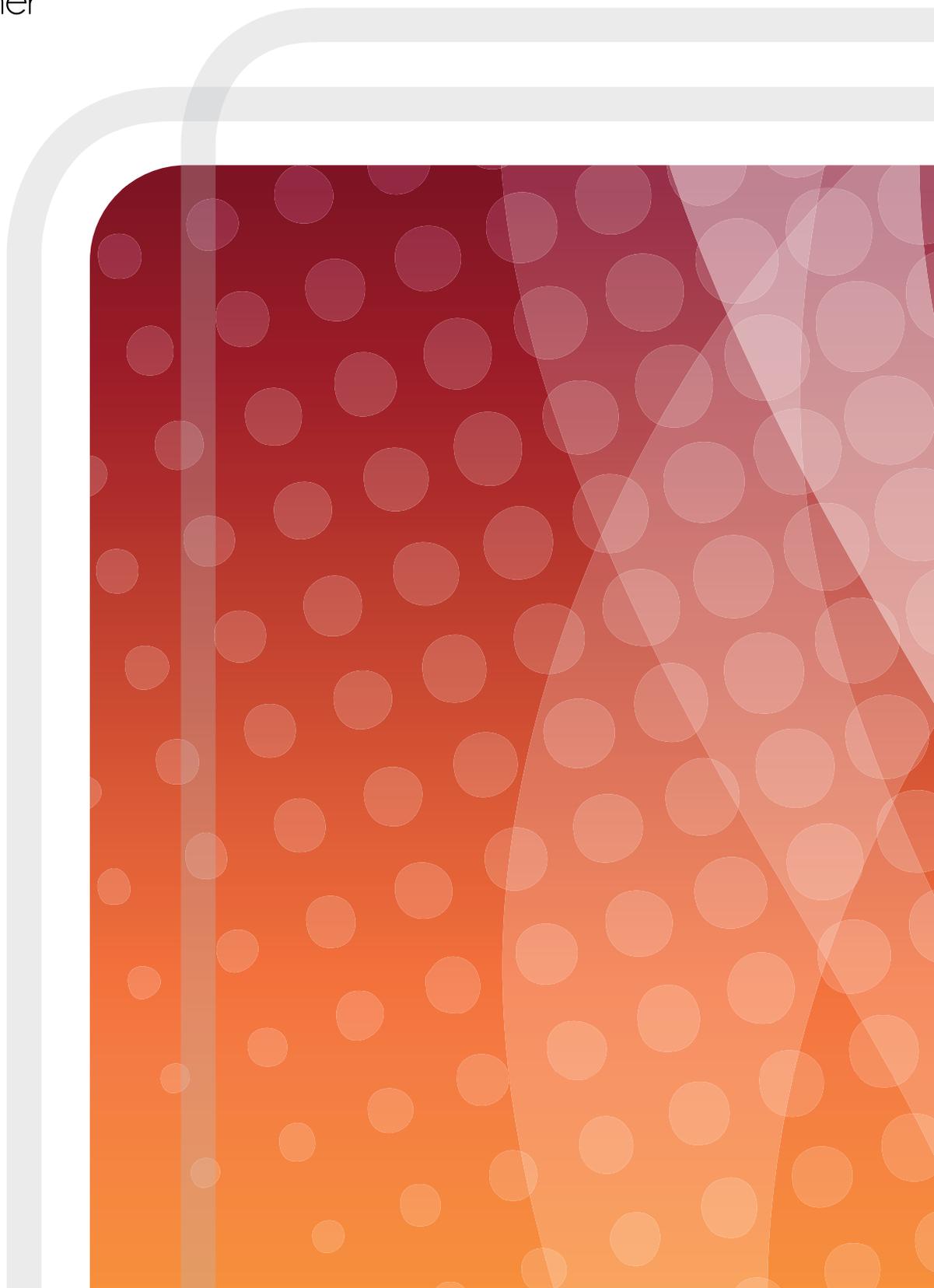
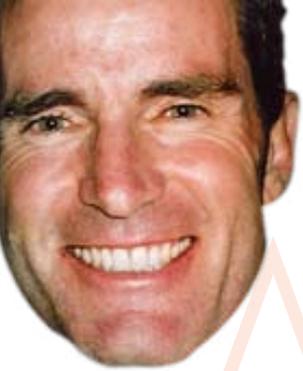


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	5
INTRODUCTION.....	6
PAGES AND COMMUNITY.....	7
WHY COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT TO BUSINESS.....	7
WHY ALL THE FUSS ABOUT FACEBOOK PAGES?.....	8
WHEN IS A PAGE BETTER THAN A GROUP?.....	9
DEVELOPING A PAGE.....	10
THE LAYOUT OF A PAGE.....	10
CREATING A PAGE.....	11
SETTING THE LANDING PAGE.....	14
BUILDING COMMUNITY.....	15
GROWING THE COMMUNITY.....	15
ADVERTISING.....	15
THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTION.....	17
CREATING INTERACTIONS.....	17
MANAGING AND MEASURING PAGE PERFORMANCE.....	19
APPOINTING PAGE ADMINISTRATORS.....	19
ANALYSING PAGE INSIGHTS.....	19
CONCLUSION.....	21
GLOSSARY.....	22
FURTHER RESOURCES.....	23



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Fletcher's business philosophy is based on his belief that we learn about who we are at the limits of what we believe is possible.

From an early age Peter began challenging himself to do that which others thought impossible. Peter grew up on a farm in Jerdacuttup, Western Australia where he was the first person to ride a horse to his primary school; a distance of 27 kilometres (16 miles).

After moving to Kalgoorlie - where he met and married Rita in 1985 - he began selling real estate. In 1989 he moved to Perth and bought into a run down real estate business. Through hard work, determination and the commitment of dedicated team he built a successful business that was at the forefront of technological and management practices.

Through the growth of the business Peter continued to stretch himself at both a personal and professional level. In 2000 he graduated with a Master of Business Administration from Edith Cowan University then, in 2005, along with two mates, rode their bicycles from Kalgoorlie to Perth - a distance of 600 kilometres - in 19 hours, 6 minutes. He has skydived, abseiled, parasailed and parabungeed, and participated in numerous self-development courses.

In 2006 Peter sold his business and enrolled full-time at Curtin University. At the end of 2007 he graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Internet Studies and a year later with first class honours in a Bachelor of Arts.

Peter reads widely. From the Zen master Tich Naht Hahn to the French philosopher Michel Foucault he believes that learning provides clearer vision and more elegant and inspired business solutions.

Today Peter tutors in Internet Studies at Curtin University and consults to business about the effects of social media on organisational culture.

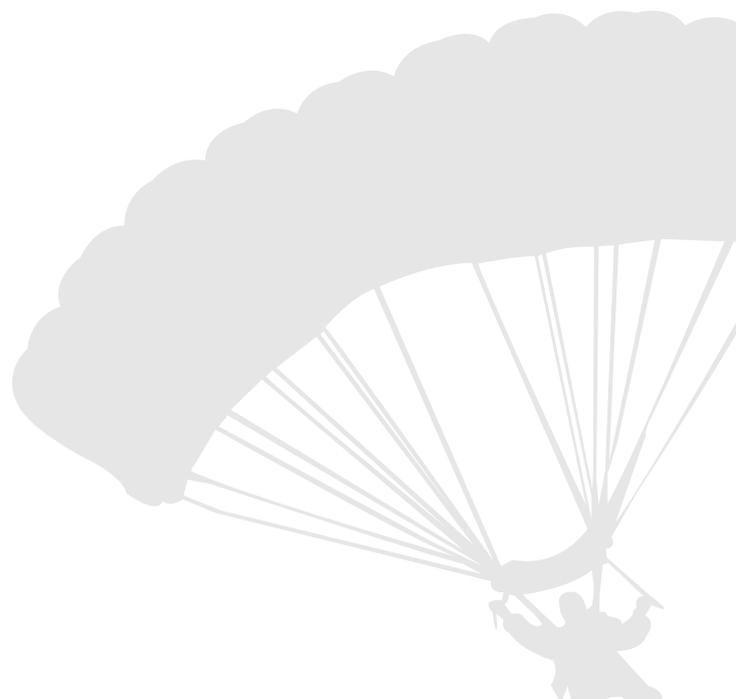
COPYRIGHT NOTICE

This work is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia license, the terms of which can be found at creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/au/legalcode.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Mb: +61 419 538 838
Em: peter@peterfletcher.com.au
Wb: peterfletcher.com.au
therealestatemarketingmaven.com

E-Book Designed by Brett Nickisson of [bnething design](http://bnethingdesign.com)
www.bnething.com



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to two good friends, Nikki D'Agostino and Kylie Atkinson, for their assistance with the always-tedious job of proofreading. Your demands for more accuracy and clarity were invaluable.

Thanks, as well, to Charlie Gunningham for providing valuable feedback on my first draft and for asking questions that deserved answers. Your encouragement and support is appreciated greatly.

Thanks also to my friends and "fans" on Facebook. Your generosity of time and spirit has shown me what a real community is all about.

Finally, thanks to Rita, who puts up with a husband who shaves rarely but loves fiercely. I only love you.

INTRODUCTION

Facebook presents a powerful opportunity for business. At one stage it was just for college kids. But that's no longer the case. As this is written the social networking platform has well over 200 million active users. If Facebook were a nation it would be one of the earth's most populous. Over 100 million log on at least once per day and these users upload over 850 million photos every month¹.

But, importantly for business, Facebook's fastest growing demographic is 35 years of age and older. They're connecting, they're communicating, and they're spending. It's fertile ground for business.

Early in 2009 Facebook released a new version of Pages. Business Pages, or Fan Pages as they're also known, harness the power of some of Facebook's most popular applications. Previously these applications were only available on personal profiles, but today they're being used by business to leverage connections and engage and interact with their community in new and creative ways.

In what's ahead I want to make three things clear. First, I hope to demonstrate how Facebook Pages provide a unique opportunity for marketers to build active communities around their business. Second, I plan to reveal some of the new skills that are essential to online marketers in order to create engagement and dialogue, and to tap into trends and fashions. Finally, I hope to show that the development of a vibrant business community is within reach of anyone with the passion, will and drive to create outstanding results.

1. Source <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics#/press/info.php?statistics> accessed June 29, 2009

The Facebook logo is displayed in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background that is tilted diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the end of the word.

facebook®

PAGES AND COMMUNITY

WHY COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT TO BUSINESS

The desire to connect, to share and to converse is a fundamental part of human nature. We've been doing it since the dawn of time and it's this desire that brings people together in communities the world over. From tiny villages in Western Africa to the mega cities of China people thrive on being with other people.

A community is all about people sharing a common space or interest and often that common space or interest revolves around commerce. Whether it's a couple of fish mongers discussing the price of the morning's catch at a Seattle market or a group of giggling teens in a suburban mall in Sydney, community often takes place in and around commerce. In fact, very often, community forms because of commerce.

Think for a moment about coffee. While it's a great – some would say indispensable – way to start the day, drinking coffee has become more than consuming a drink. It's part of a tradition that involves friends and conversations and laughter. Coffee becomes the reason to commune and converse; and this happens the world over in cafes and bars and restaurants.

Business has long understood the importance of community and place. Many businesses thrive when their bonds to a community are strong. The country hardware store sponsoring a local football club and the telecommunications giant supporting breast cancer research both find benefit in building bonds with their communities. In both cases that involvement changes how the business is perceived, it shapes their respective brands, and it creates financial rewards.

The emergence of social networking sites takes these interactions online, into a virtual, imagined space. Although the space doesn't exist people still connect and share common interests. Freed from the tyranny of time and space people connect faster and more often than is possible in the real world. To connect with a long-lost friend on the other side of the world is as

simple and convenient as a chat session or a Skype call.

With this rush to commune online has come an imperative for businesses to become enmeshed in these communities. They seek to participate in virtual coffee shop conversations and build online spaces knowing that, out of these rich conversations, comes a smoother, more intuitive and more rewarding pathway to sales and productivity.



PAGES AND COMMUNITY

WHY ALL THE FUSS ABOUT FACEBOOK PAGES?

A Facebook Page is the business equivalent of a personal Facebook profile. Recognising an emerging trend, Facebook created Pages that allow businesses to become active participants in the enormous Facebook community.

Many celebrities and public identities see the potential of using Pages to connect with their fans. Britney Spears, Oprah Winfrey and Barack Obama all maintain active Pages, each with well over 1 million fans (Obama has 6.4 million). With every post created by the celebrity, their fans respond by adding comments, sharing the item, or offering a vote of support using the 'Like' button.

A number of businesses use Pages to develop an active dialogue with their niche audience. Notably, Dell Computers maintains a Page dedicated to helping small businesses understand how to use social media as an important part of their marketing and public relations strategy. Although "fans" are often their most vocal critics, Dell uses these negative interactions to show the world they care enough to listen.

Both Pages and personal profiles have many of the same applications and features, such as a wall, where comments, links, photo and videos are shared. Other applications can be added that provide additional ways to connect and communicate. Connections on a personal profile are "friends" but on a Page they are known as "fans".

Pages are indexed by all the major search engines and provide businesses with new opportunities to develop customer relationships.

Interactions on a Page can spread like a virus; and that's a good thing for marketers. New content created on a Page usually shows up in the newsfeed of its fans.

Each news story includes a Comment, Share and Like link, and interactions using these tools show up in the newsfeeds of the friends of the person performing the interaction.

For example, when **Lance Armstrong shared on his Fan Page news of a newborn**, the announcement showed up in the newsfeed of many of his fans. As his fans responded by posting messages of congratulations to his wall many of their friends were notified of these wall posts through their own newsfeeds. Each of these notifications contained a link to Armstrong's Fan Page resulting in more visits, more fans and more interactions. Armstrong, along with a growing number of smart business operators, knows that interactions are the lifeblood of social marketing on Facebook.



PAGE AND COMMUNITY

PAGES AND COMMUNITY

WHEN IS A PAGE BETTER THAN A GROUP?

There are many similarities between Facebook Business Pages and groups. They both have a wall where members and fans can interact, both allow members and fans to share photos and videos, and both allow for the creation of events. There are other similarities, but there are a few subtle differences that make starting a Page more compelling for a business.

As will be discussed later, Page tabs can be customised with the use of applications providing a fans with a more interactive experience; and that's important in any community-building programme. Applications can't be added to a group.

Unlike a group, where the name of the administrator is displayed, the administrator of a Page always remains anonymous. This creates a separation between the professional interactions occurring on a Page and personal interactions on a personal profile.

Whereas personal profiles are limited to 5000 friends a Page can have an unlimited number of fans. Michael Jackson's Page has close to 10 million fans.

Groups can only message 5000 members at a time but there is no limit on the number of fans to which a page can send notifications. Some argue that this is one of the weak points of Pages. Messages

to group members show up in the message centre Inbox but communication from Pages are delivered to the rarely-viewed Notifications tab.

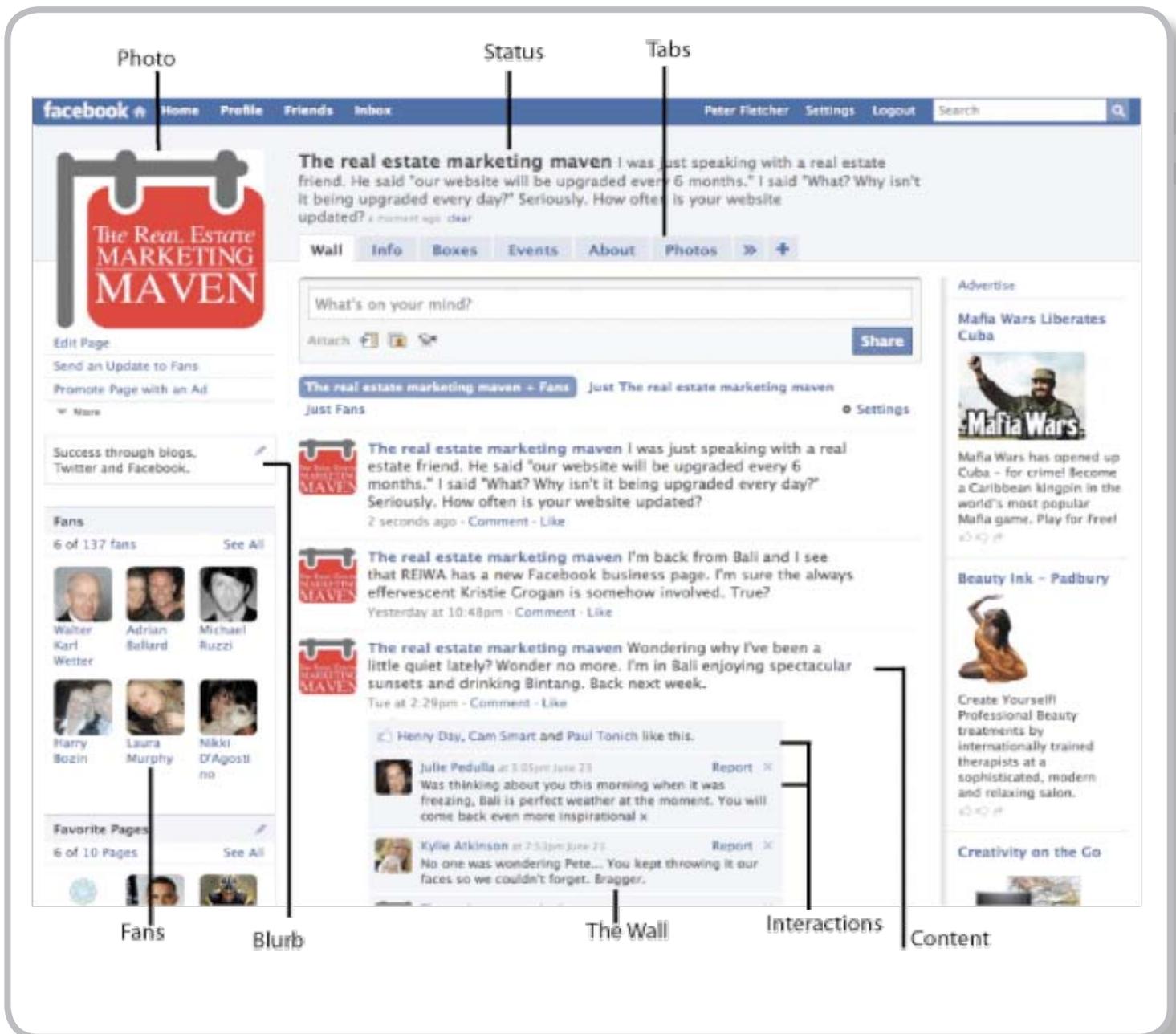
Generally groups are better for communities formed around a common interest or cause, whereas Pages are more suited to businesses, celebrities and artists.



DEVELOPING A PAGE

THE LAYOUT OF A PAGE

Learning to get the most out of a Page is relatively simple. Pages share many of the same functions, such as a wall, publisher and tabs, that are found on personal profiles.



DEVELOPING A PAGE

CREATING A PAGE

As is often the case with social media creating a Page is a relatively simple process. The hard work - and the fun - comes later.

Facebook allows anyone to start a Page, even without a personal profile. A Facebook account without a personal profile is called a business account. These accounts can be used to create and administer a Page and to manage Facebook advertising campaigns. If you have a business account you'll be able to see the contents of your Page and your ads, but you won't be able to view personal profiles and other site content, or send and receive friend requests. Don't attempt to start a business account if you already have a personal profile, as this is a serious violation of Facebook's terms of service and could result in your account being suspended.

To start a page using a business account, on the Facebook home page click Create a Page (just under the Sign Up button) then follow the steps below, starting at step 3.

If you have a personal profile the following steps will guide you through the process of starting your first Page.

1. Click on the Ads and Pages button found in the bottom left hand corner of the screen.



If this is the first time you've created a Page this button may not be visible. If so, click Advertising at the bottom right hand corner of your screen.

2. Click Create Page.



3. Choose a business category from either of the following:

- Local,
- Brand, Product, or Organisation
- Artist, Band, or Public Figure.

Each category provides a drop down list of associated business types.

4. Choose a business type from the drop down menu. It can't be changed, so choose wisely. The choice of business type determines the information fields available for you to complete later in the Info tab on your Page. For example, an artist will be prompted to provide concert and tour dates whereas a retail business will be asked to provide opening hours.

5. Choose a name. It's important to choose the name for your Page carefully. It can't be changed. Why this is the case Facebook doesn't make clear as it poses problems for a business should the business decide to change their name for any number of legitimate reasons. Perhaps Facebook will review this policy at some future point.

6. Click Create Page.

7. You now have a blank page on which to begin work. At this stage the page is not visible to the public until you click on the Publish button.



NOTE: Facebook does not provide all cities, towns and suburbs, and there appears to be no rhyme or reason why this is the case. If your suburb can't be found include the name in the street address field.

DEVELOPING A PAGE

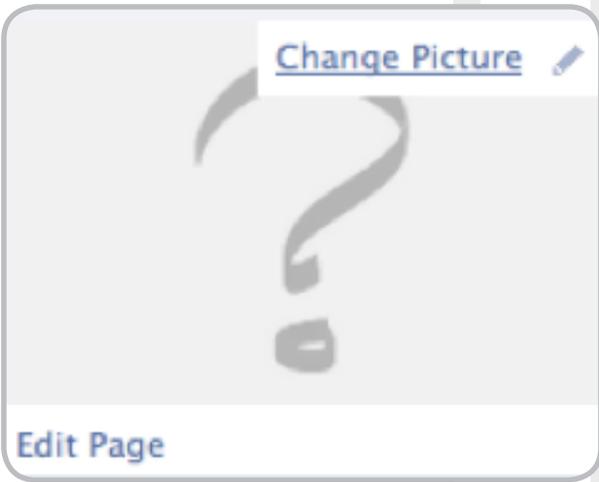
8. There are two sections on the Info tab, Basic Info and Detailed Info. Each business type is provided with different fields to complete. Take the time to complete all of the available fields, such as your web site address, telephone number and opening hours, as this provides your fans with other ways to connect with your business. As each screen is completed click Save Changes.

9. When all information is complete click Save then Done Editing.

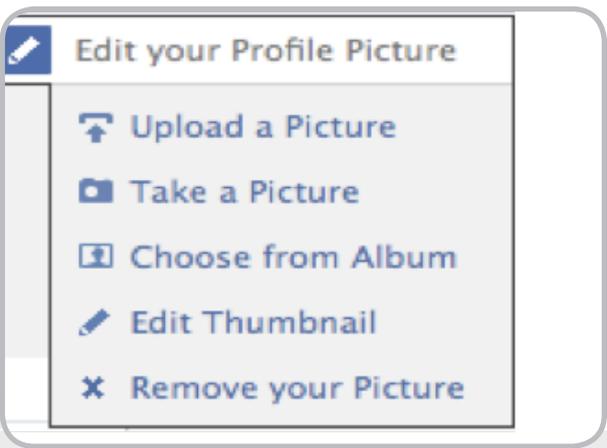
10. Add a photo or logo. This is one of the most important first jobs when starting a Page. Many businesses use their logo but there are lots of other more clever options. Remember, the photo need not be permanent and can be changed to suit what's happening in your business. Here are a few ideas:

- A local icon.
- A member of your team.
- A happy customer.
- Something quirky about your business.
- Your building.

To add a photo, hover over the question mark that is the placeholder for your logo. A Change Picture menu will appear.



Click on the pencil icon then click Upload a Picture.



Once the upload is complete your image will display.

11. Add a "blurb" about your business in the box beneath the logo. Be concise, but informal.



12. Add some photos. Photos are one of the best ways to create interaction on your Page and work especially well if they're tagged properly. To upload photos, first create an album, select the photos you wish to upload from your hard drive, then click upload.

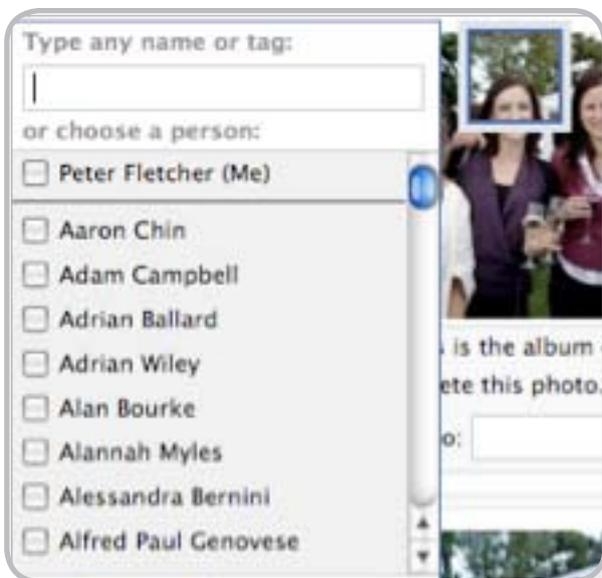


Events

With Facebook Events you can organize gatherings and parties with your friends, as well as let people in your community know about upcoming events

DEVELOPING A PAGE

Once the upload is complete tag at least some of the pictures. In album view hover over the photo and the cursor will turn into a "+". Click on the person you want to tag, and then choose their name from your available friends.



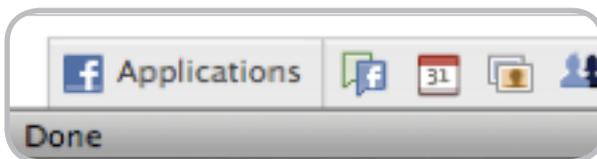
13. Share something on your wall. Facebook provides three options by default: Links, Photos and Videos. Although you'll want to write something - as you do when updating your status on your personal profile - experiment with recording a video or adding a link.

14. Customise your tabs. By default Facebook provide Wall, Info, Photos, Discussions, Reviews, Events, Notes and Video. Only the Wall and Info tabs are permanent. The others can be removed or reordered as required and still others can be added by adding applications.

To remove a tab click on the tab, then on the pencil icon, and then click Delete Tab.

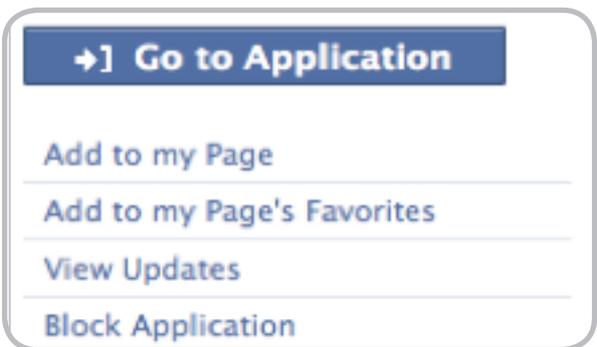


Apps are added by adding the associated application to the Page. To add an application, and its associated tab, click on the Applications button at the bottom



left-hand corner of the Facebook screen then click Browse More Applications.

Not all Facebook applications work on Pages. Finding an application that builds meaningful interaction, and that works on a Page, can be time-consuming. Applications that can be added to a Page have the words "Add to my Page" in the top left-hand corner of the application Page.



There are a couple of applications that are definitely worthwhile though. Static FBML by Facebook allows you to create some pretty fancy tabs using a combination of HTML, CSS and FBML. Rather than being forced to accept pages of plain text, FBML allows you to create customised pages containing pictures and formatted text and that make use of the many interactive functions of the Facebook platform

Discussion Boards

NOTE: Discussion boards enable your fans to get their ideas out into the open. Discussion boards let you know exactly what your fans and customers think and want. Get the conversation started now

DEVELOPING A PAGE

If you have a blog - highly recommended by the way - NetworkedBlogs is both useful and worthwhile. It imports your blog into a tab entitled blog and helps you connect with other bloggers on their network, including some of the most prominent and influential blogs on the web.

Social RSS is another handy application that imports a variety of RSS feeds into a tab labelled blog/RSS. Although best suited to blog feeds, any RSS feed can be added including feeds of hashtags mentions from Twitter or the latest inventory listing from a virtual store.

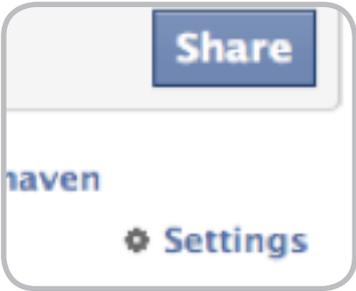
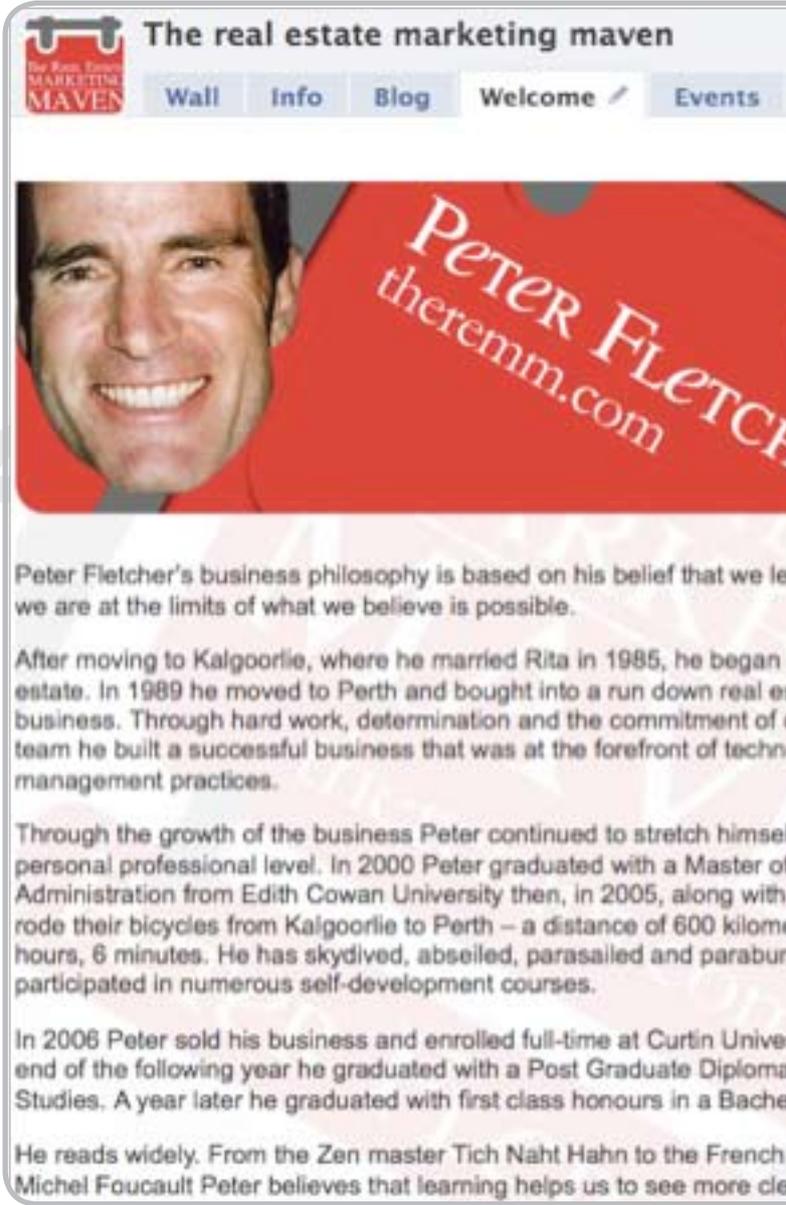
Tabs created by applications rarely allow any form of customised business branding. Unlike tabs produced with Static FBML, those created with other applications are usually one-size-fits-all. This need not be permanent. Social RSS, for example, offer a service to customise any feed; and this can, in turn, be used as an application that others can add to a personal profile or fan page.

SETTING THE LANDING PAGE

Web marketers are always out to make a great first impression. One of the tools they use is a customised landing page for first time visitors to a site, and this can be done on your Page.

By default, visitors who are not fans of a Page are directed to the Wall tab, but this can be changed so they land on any of the other tabs. One of these tabs might be an attractively styled landing page that contains links to your website or other contact details.

To set the default landing page for new visitors click on Settings below the Share button at the right hand end of the wall publishing box, then chose the desired landing tab.



BUILDING A COMMUNITY

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Let's be clear, communities exist because of shared interests. People gather to discuss, learn, and share the experience of something they all have in common. The challenge in creating a community using a Page is to simultaneously be the catalyst for the creation of a brand new community while being a relevant part of the part of the broader Facebook community.

Some communities, such as those formed around sporting clubs, have members who are passionate and vocal about their team. Other communities are far less active. Some communities are tiny. Others are enormous. For a business, building a community shouldn't just be about the numbers. Big is not always the best. Not every business needs a huge fan base to create a genuine sense of community. But one thing is certain; a community requires a collection of people and often a larger group produces an energy and vibrancy hard to create in a smaller community.

Therefore, most businesses find benefit in building their community numbers. But growing a community involves more than simply starting a Page. It involves a range of tactics including good old-fashioned advertising, connecting, socialising and building relationships.

GROWING THE COMMUNITY

Growing a community online is a complex business. It's about outreach and engagement all at the same time. Of the two, developing a space that creates interaction and engagement is by far the most important, but advertising and promotion also play a key role.

ADVERTISING

Advertising is a great way to kick-start the development of a community. There are many options available.

Facebook ads. Facebook makes building a community easier through their advertising platform, which provides a variety of options for advertisers. Ads can be targeted at demographic groups based on location, age, sex, education, workplace, gender interest, language and relationship status. Further targeting is achieved by using keywords that deliver advertisements relevant to a person's interests. Keywords are drawn from a person's biographical information and include interests in music, books and TV shows.

There are a number of opportunities that arise from the ability to hyper-target an advertisement. Rather than having one advertisement, as might be the case when advertising in a newspaper, advertisers can create multiple ads that speak directly to the needs of the target demographic.

For example, a local football club might want to run an advertising campaign aimed at gaining more players for their women's team. An ad campaign could be created with ads only being visible to females of a relevant age, within a 10-kilometre vicinity of the club, and who are interested in "soccer" or "football". But even this targeting can be improved by creating a campaign aimed at young single women and another aimed at more mature married women. Each advertisement would address the perceived needs of the target audience; and this customisation tends to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the advertising campaign.



BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Facebook advertising need not be expensive and the company accommodates small, targeted campaigns with tiny budgets. When setting up a campaign a daily budget can be set based on either the number of ad impressions or the number of clicks and can be set to run only between specified dates.

Facebook recently announced a new feature that allows people to become fans of a Page directly from the advertisement. The advertisement displays the name of one of the viewer's friends, who is also a fan of the Page, along with a Become a Fan link. In this way new fans can join the Page without being forced to visit the Page.



Google AdWords. Whereas Facebook advertising is restricted to Facebook members, Google ads take your message to a worldwide audience. As with Facebook, Google provides a number of customisation and targeting options that help make an ad campaign more effective.

Google reward advertisers who have highly relevant landing pages and this is where taking the time to produce a quality Facebook landing tab begins to pay off. Visitors who are greeted with a page that is relevant to their needs and that meets the expectations created by the ad copy are more likely to become a fan than someone who is met with irrelevant or off-topic information.

Facebook widgets. Facebook provide Page owners with a free widget (Facebook call them Fan Boxes) that makes a beaut addition to a sidebar on a blog or web site. Widgets give Page owners new opportunities to grow their community through new connections. The widget, by default, displays the latest stream items,

thumbnail images of 10 fans, links to the Page, and a Become a Fan button.

To add a widget to a web page click the Add Fan Box To Your Site link then copy the code provided into your page. If you're using blogging software, paste the code into a sidebar text widget.

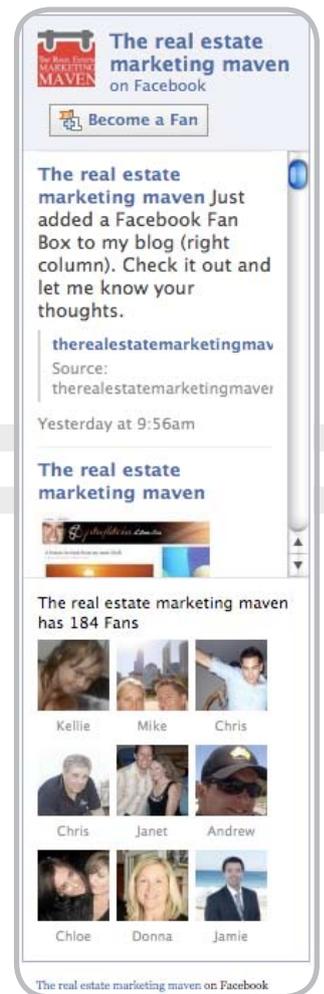
There are a number of widget settings that can be adjusted to make the widget work better on your site.

Twitter. Invite your Twitter followers to become fans of your Page.

Advertising on a blog or web site. Many bloggers and webmasters provide links to their Facebook Page from their website. Facebook provide Page owners with badges that can be embedded into a web site. To get a badge click on the Edit Page link of your Page, then click Get Your Badge (bottom right-hand corner, under the heading Promote with Facebook Badge). Copy the code into the page in which you want it displayed.

Email. Add a badge to the header or footer of your email stationery inviting people to become fans.

Advertising on real world marketing materials such as brochures and business cards. Having a vanity URL makes this job much easier.



NOTE: Facebook recently announced the release of vanity URLs for Pages. This move allowed Pages with more than 100 fans to register a unique username. Once registered, Pages can be promoted as facebook.com/businessname. It's a great way to further brand your business. To see if your Page qualifies visit facebook.com/username.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Each new fan brings opportunities for a business to develop a dialogue with its community members. While that's important it's even more exciting for a marketer to see their fans interacting with one another. A Page really starts working to when this interaction takes place in a vibrant manner. And it is these interactions that help a community grow.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTION

Interactions are the lifeblood of marketing on Facebook. Why? When someone performs an action on Facebook this action usually shows up in a variety of places. It will show up on the users wall, it could find its way to the news feed of their friends, or, if it's a popular action, be displayed in aggregate in the Highlights section of their friends' home page. In the case of Pages, each mention in a news feed contains a link to the Page and acts to prompt friends of fans to visit the Page and connect. To grow a community, therefore, it's essential that content be crafted so as to maximise the number of interactions it produces.

CREATING INTERACTIONS

The single most important tactic for creating a vibrant community on a Page is creating content that produces interactions. Content that is boring and irrelevant rarely produces interaction. Without interaction any efforts to grow a community will prove difficult.

When it comes to creating interaction not all content is born equal. Britney Spears, Lance Armstrong and Oprah Winfrey have no problem generating thousands of interactions per post. What they have on their side is the pulling power of an already committed fan base.

And some types of businesses are more likely than others to generate buzz and interaction. For example a corporate law firm might struggle to achieve the same

levels of interaction as is achieved by Britney Spears or Oprah Winfrey.

But even the superstars of the Facebook community follow some basic guidelines for producing content that keeps their fan base growing. Try these for size:

- **Be relevant.** Honour the reason why your fans joined your page in the first place by posting content that's relevant to their needs.
- **Be consistent.** Stay on topic and post regularly. The frequency and recency of your posts say lots about how important your community is to your business. Posting regularly and consistently shows your community that they're important.
- **Be human.** On Facebook people want to connect with people, so speak in a human voice. Avoid "corporate speak" at all costs. Speak in a voice that reflects the values of your community.
- **Engage with your fans.** There's no need to respond to every comment but responding appropriately says that you care enough to listen and are actively engaged in the community.
- **Sell only as a service.** The best Facebook pages rarely sell. Sales come naturally out of relationships not out of some clever advertising blurb.
- **Don't try to get it perfect.** People don't expect perfection, but they do expect connection. With a real human being.
- **Don't over-share.** Saying too much can sometimes do as much harm as saying too little. Most marketers find the balancing act hard to get right so be willing to experiment.

Interactions fall into four main categories: Share, Like, Comment and Tag. For a marketer creating content that maximises these social actions is a skill that takes time and effort. It also requires a keen understanding of popular trends and fashion and quick action to respond appropriately.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY

The important takeaway from these guidelines is to foster a sense of experimentation and having a go. Facebook is a place for participation and interaction, not for lurking and looking good.

There are many things a business can do to encourage interaction. The following ideas are provided as starting points to get your community fired up in a meaningful way.

1. Invite and encourage your fans to write on your wall. When a fan writes on your Page wall the interaction appears in their friends' news feed.
2. Invite your fans to upload pictures and videos to your Page. Each interaction produces a newsfeed mention that links back to your Page.
3. Add an event. When fans RSVP a further interaction is created that shows up to friends of fans.
4. Encourage your fans to write a review about your products and services.
5. Pose a question. It's a way to leave a space in a conversation and get the community involved. Each response generates further notifications in news streams with more links back to your Page.
6. Upload a photo. Tag a few people and invite your fans to tag others.
7. Write a note. Notes on a Page can be tagged, just like on a personal profile. When a note is tagged that action can show up in the newsfeed of friends of the person that was tagged. Any newsfeed mention contains a link back to the originating Page. Facebook allow a limited number of HTML tags to be used within notes and they can also include photos.
8. Add other Pages to your page favourites and request a reciprocal link. Build a community of like-minded businesses.
9. Add an application that invites further interactions.

Interaction and communication are the heart and soul of community and it takes skilled work to get this interaction going on a Page. It's one thing for a business to produce interaction between the founder and fans, but that doesn't make a community. When the members of your community start discussing, debating and sharing between one another, now that's a community.

Tag spamming is the practice of tagging users in notes and on photos for the sole purpose of getting the tagger noticed on the newsfeed of friends of friends.

Facebook takes a dim view of any form of spamming, including tag spamming, and offending accounts may be warned or deleted.



MANAGING & MEASURING PAGE PERFORMANCE

APPOINTING PAGE ADMINISTRATORS

By default the person who creates a Page becomes the administrator. Whenever an administrator adds content to a Page the interaction is posted as if it came from the business. Their personal name is never displayed on any of the interactions on the Page. There are good reasons for this feature.

First, it allows a business owner to appoint an administrator to take care of their Page and to do so in a manner that doesn't dilute the brand. Second, multiple administrators can be appointed and this provides the business with an assurance of continuity of content creation. Third, being an administrator allows the administrator to distance their personal profile from the Page they manage.

There's a disadvantage to the way Facebook manages administrators. Administrators can't take part in the conversation in their own right. They're consigned to always speaking as the business. In a large community this may be acceptable but in some instances the Page administrator is a key member of a community. Their absence in name sometimes seems a little unusual.

Before appointing a Page administrator businesses should consider the credentials of the prospective applicant by answering the following questions.

- What experience does the person have in a conversational marketing environment?
- Does the person have considerable experience using Facebook?
- How would the applicant respond to criticism by one of the fans?
- Does the person have excellent written language skills?
- How well does the person understand the goal of maintaining a Page?
- Does the person understand the amount of time and effort required to manage a Page?

Page administrators can be so for multiple Pages, and this is particularly useful for businesses managing more than one brand.

ANALYSING PAGE INSIGHTS

Facebook provides Page administrators with a number of ways to measure the effectiveness of a Page through their insights panel. For example, Post Quality measures the number of Likes and Comments achieved by each post, and this provides the Page administrator with a guide to the type of information that appeals to fans.

Other measurements provided by Facebook include:

- Total number of interactions and includes wall posts, comments and likes.
- Number of interactions per post.
- Number of posts.
- Number of discussion posts.
- Number of reviews.

In addition Facebook provides a significant amount of demographic data about the fan community including:

- Sex.
- Age, broken into six age groupings.
- Percentage of male/female by age group.

Administering a Page can be time-consuming. It's important that new content is generated regularly, but it's also important to respond to fans' posts and questions promptly. On a personal profile a wall post always generates a notification from Facebook, but on a Page this is not the case. Therefore it's essential that Page administrators regularly check for new wall posts and comments on posted items. If even a few hours go by without a response to a question a business can appear uninterested and disengaged; and that's not good in a social media setting.

MANAGING & MEASURING PAGE PERFORMANCE

The demographic data found in the Insights area is highly valuable when planning a Facebook advertising campaign. By understanding the demographic of the business, ads can be targeted to appeal to specific audiences thus improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the campaign.

Facebook provides similar statistics about Active Fans (described as any fan who has made an interaction over the past seven days). This provides valuable insights into which segment of the fan base is interacting with the content. For example, if a disproportionate percentage of interactions are coming from a narrow fan demographic there may be room to improve content to appeal to other audience segments; and this may create unexpected opportunities.

Finally, Facebook provides analysis of the countries and languages of both All Fans and Active Fans, and this helps a business target advertising and content with even greater accuracy. Page administrators should be on the look out for emerging trends so that advertising campaigns and content can be tailored to suit changing audience demand.



CONCLUSION

Facebook Pages create a new world of opportunities for business. They also pose challenges and demand new marketing skills. All at once they create excitement and anxiety. Of course they give businesses the opportunity to become active participants in the massive Facebook community. The unique nature of the Facebook platform enables smart businesses to spread their message further and faster than ever before.

But Pages demand a new mindset that places relationships before profits and that listens before selling. They also demand new skills that serve to shape conversations and build connections and communities. These skills, like those of an artisan, are honed by diligent practice in an endless public performance. In a very real way the marketer's true voice only emerges through these performances, many of which are met with applause made of thunderous silence. But with each wall post, comment or Like comes a growing connection with the audience and a growing sense of the marketer's place within the community.

Technically, Pages are easy to build and manage. That, I hope, is evident in the preceding pages. But starting a Page and having it work effectively are very different things. The former is simple, but the latter takes effort. It's an effort that requires insatiable curiosity, a willingness to take risks, and the passion to engage in a very public conversation. But out of that effort emerges a loyal community, formed around a common interest. And that interest might well become the next big success story.



facebook®

GLOSSARY

CSS – Cascading Style Sheets is a language used by web designers to create the look and feel of a web page. A single CSS file can be used to control how a complete web site is displayed; and this creates more efficiency in the design process.

FBML – Facebook Markup Language is a set of tags that allow application developers to create a unique user experience through accessing the functionality of the Facebook platform.

HTML – Hypertext Markup Language uses a series of tags to display text on a web page as, amongst other things, hyperlinks, paragraphs and lists.

URL – A Uniform Resource Locator is the unique address of a web page.

Vanity URL – A URL that contains a person's name, or the name of company or product. Vanity URL's are often used to improve click-through rates from search results pages as they indicate the contents of the page behind a link.

Widget – A piece of re-usable code that is embedded into a web page that produces an element on the page. Widgets usually provide further interactivity to a page.

APPENDIX

FURTHER RESOURCES

The Facebook Help Centre has lots of useful information about Pages. It's found at <http://www.facebook.com/help.php?page=904>. Sometimes the information on the help centre seems a little outdated so be patient.

Mari Smith provides a wealth of information about Facebook marketing and was named "the Pied Piper of Facebook" by Fast Company. She blogs regularly at <http://whyfacebook.com>.

All Facebook is "The Unofficial Facebook Resource" at <http://www.allfacebook.com/>.

Chris Brogan is a social media commentator. His blog at <http://chrisbrogan.com>, although not written directly about Facebook, addresses key concepts at the heart of successful social media marketing.

Mashable is always writing about the latest developments at Facebook. Their Facebook channel can be found at <http://mashable.com/category/facebook/>.

Most of the better Facebook applications have excellent discussion boards on their associated Facebook Business Pages; and these are often full of solutions to common problems. This is particularly the case with Static FBML where many of the application's users actively collaborate to come up with clever ideas.

Check out the author's blogs at <http://therealestatemarketingmaven.com> and <http://peterfletcher.com.au>. Peter blogs regularly about the ways social media shapes brands and how it's being used by businesses to create customer loyalty.