

Chapter 1

Introducing Facebook Marketing

In This Chapter

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 - ▶ Targeting the changing demographics in Facebook
 - ▶ Introducing Facebook Pages
 - ▶ Marketing to consumers and businesses
 - ▶ Understanding profiles, Pages, and Groups
-

1t's been said that if Facebook were a country, it would be the sixth most populated nation in the world. Imagine being able to get your message in front of the Facebook nation free. That's exactly what Facebook is offering companies with Pages: an online location for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to market themselves to the Facebook community.

Not just for businesses, Pages can be created by not-for-profit organizations, public figures, entertainers, photographers, and professionals of all types. Facebook Pages are fun and easy to set up, provide a powerful set of online tools for engaging with your customers (or, as they are called in Facebook, *fans*), and easy-to-understand metrics to measure your success.

Every day, 3.5 million people become fans of a Facebook Page, according to eMetric's February. 2009 Facebook Usage Metrics Worldwide study. That's a lot of fans. Although popular consumer brands, such as Apple, Coke, and Skittles enjoy large installed fan bases, smaller brands, business-to-business (B2B) companies, consultants, and personalities can also build a loyal following by using Facebook Pages.

Building a Presence on Facebook

Prior to online social networks, companies centered their Internet strategies on their Web site. Typically, advertisements and promotions focused on driving traffic to that site and success was measured by traffic metrics and conversions, such as how many forms were completed or how many items were purchased. Now, the market is throwing these companies a twist: With the

growing popularity of social networks in general, and Facebook in particular, people's online consumption habits are changing. For one, they're spending a lot of time on Facebook. The average Facebook member visits the site an average of nearly 18 times per month, according to recent figures by Web traffic analytics provider comScore.

That's why marketers like you can no longer be content to stay on your .dot-com islands. In response to the challenge, many marketers are adapting their Internet strategies to include these major hubs of social activity by using a mix of advertising, promotional, and word-of-mouth campaigns to drive awareness, traffic, and engagement. And they're interacting with their customers in new and unprecedented ways.

Facebook has remade itself to satisfy marketers' needs to take part in the conversation. They've managed to balance commercialism with its members' strong desire for privacy while fostering an open, transparent environment where discussion flows freely between consumer and marketer.

It's within this new Facebook marketing paradigm that the role of traditional marketing is changing. It's no longer a question of whether your business should have a dedicated marketing presence on Facebook. Now, the only question is do you really need a Web site anymore!

Chasing the Changing Demographic

Look into a mirror sometime: You are the future of Facebook. Young, middle-aged, elderly, male, female, Hispanic, Caucasian, African American, Asian, Indian — no single defining demographic represents Facebook members. If you thought you were too old, guess again. Facebook is experiencing its fastest growth among women 55 and older. Furthermore, teenagers now make up a paltry 12 percent of the Facebook audience. Overall, however, the fastest growing group by total users is still age 26 to 34.

So why are adults flocking to Facebook in droves? Could it be the desire to reconnect with old friends, former co-workers, and family separated by time and distance? That pull is strong within most of us. Or, is it the basic human need to be part of a community, recognized for one's contributions and right to express thyself? One thing's for sure, Facebook is no longer a fad and is not to be ignored by marketers, big or small.

Facebook opened to non-students in May 2006. Since then, Facebook has grown to become much more than a social network. According to Facebook, it is the largest online depository of photos, with more than 850 million images uploaded to the site each month. Additionally, Facebook is available in 35 languages (another 60 languages are promised) with more than 70 percent of users coming from outside the U.S.





The Facebook factor

The astounding growth rate of Facebook continues to amaze. Here are some stats provided by Facebook as of July 2010. For updated stats, visit the Facebook statistics page. Scroll to the bottom of your Facebook screen; click the About link; and at the top of your screen, click the Press tab to access the Latest Statistics link.

People on Facebook

More than 500 million active users.

50% of our active users log on to Facebook in any given day.

Average user has 130 Friends.

People spend more than 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook.

Activity on Facebook

People interact with more than 900 million objects that (Pages, Groups, Events, and community pages).

The average user is connected to 80 community Pages, Groups, and events.

The average user creates 90 pieces of content each month.

More than 30 billion pieces of content (Web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, and so on) are shared each month.

Global reach

More than 70 translations available are on the site.

About 70 percent of Facebook users are outside the United States.

More than 300,000 users helped translate the site through the translations application.

Platform

More than one million developers and entrepreneurs from more than 180 countries.

Every month, more than 70 percent of Facebook users engage with Platform applications.

More than 550,000 active applications are currently on Facebook Platform.

More than one million Web sites have integrated with Facebook Platform.

More than 150 million people engage with Facebook on external Web sites every month.

Two-thirds of comScore's U.S. Top 100 Web sites and one-half of comScore's Global Top 100 Web sites have integrated with Facebook.

Mobile

More than 150 million active users currently access Facebook through their mobile devices.

People who use Facebook on their mobile devices are twice more active on Facebook than nonmobile users.

More than 200 mobile operators in 60 countries work to deploy and promote Facebook mobile products.

Take a closer look at Facebook's recent demographics, as reported by noted Facebook blog, *Inside Facebook*, in February 2009. Clearly, the site's appeal is both broad and growing, highlighted by the following:

- ✓ Facebook is growing in every age and gender demographic. Fastest growing segment: Women over age 55, up 175 percent over the previous 120 days.
- ✓ Facebook is growing faster with women than men in almost every age group. Women comprise 56 percent of Facebook's audience, up from 54 percent in 2008.
- ✓ In Facebook, 45 percent of the U.S. audience is now 26 years of age or older.



Facebook offers you the opportunity to get your message to all these demographics for free. What an efficient way to reach out and expand your customer base.

Homesteading on a Facebook Page

Pages are probably the best place for an organization to hang a shingle out on Facebook. Pages serve as a home for business entities — a place to notify people of an upcoming event, provide hours of operation and contact information, show recent news, and even display photos, videos, text, and other types of content. For example, the Skittles Page encourages users to share experiences and memories of Skittles, as shown in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1:
The Skittles
Facebook
Page has
millions of
fans.

Pages also allow for two-way conversations between a business and its customers. In this way, Facebook provides a great feedback mechanism to learn about your customers' needs. A Facebook Page is similar to a profile: joining as a fan is similar to becoming a friend of another member. (For more information on personal profiles and Pages, see "Why Create a Facebook Page" later in this chapter.

Facebook Pages are publicly available to everyone, (personal Profiles can also be made available to public search engines via Search Engine Privacy Settings as seen in Chapter 3), regardless of whether the viewer is a Facebook member or not. This last point is important because public availability of Facebook Pages means that search engines, such as Google, can find and index these pages, often improving a company's positioning in search results.

So, let's look at some of the ways that Pages can help you promote your business on Facebook.

Wall

The Wall tab serves as the central component of a Facebook Page and is similar to your personal profile. The Wall allows your company and your fans to upload content, such as photos, videos, and notes. These actions generate updates (called *stories* on Facebook) and often display as stories on your fans' News Feeds.

News Feed

A News Feed displays these stories and publishes any new social actions that take place on your Page. For example, an addition of a new photo to your Page is reported as a story on your News Feed.

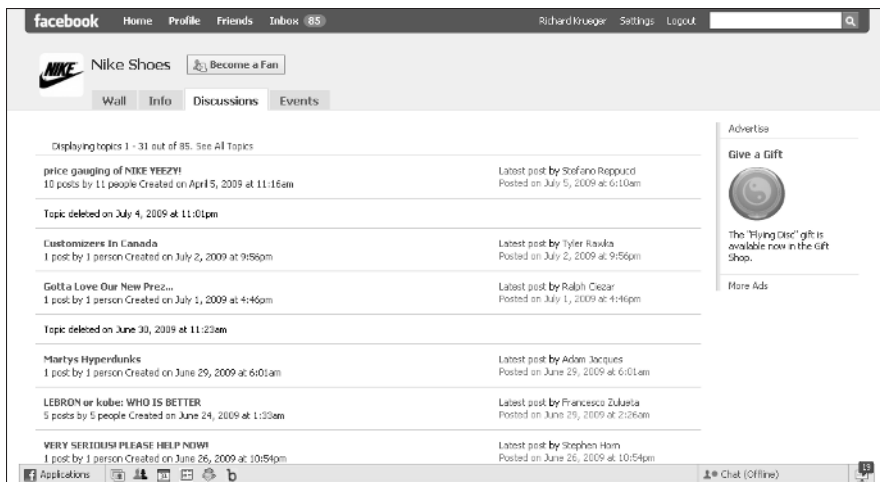
Status updates

If a company wants to push out a message, the addition of status updates is a welcome tool in the Facebook marketer's toolbox. Like in personal profiles, Pages allow you, a Page administrator (*admin* in Facebook), to send a limitless stream of updates (short messages up to 160 characters in length), which, in turn, appear in your fans' News Feeds.

Discussions

Discussions are another standard feature that allow anyone to create a new topic of conversation and permit follow-up comments. (See Figure 1-2.) Members can add to any discussion by typing their comments in the appropriate box and clicking the Post Reply button.

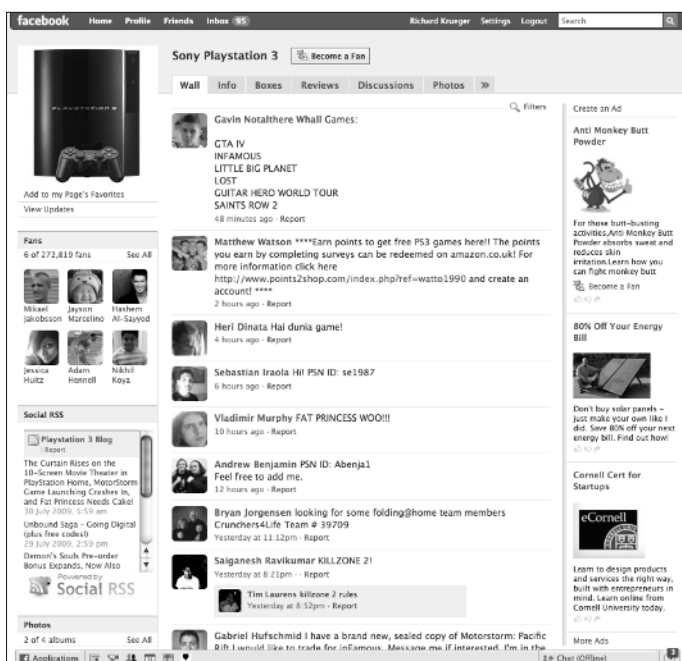
Figure 1-2:
Facebook
Pages
feature
discussions
that allow
two-way
interaction.



Applications

Just like a profile, you can customize a Page with a host of applications (*apps*). Not all Facebook apps work on a Page, but a wide range of useful apps are available ranging from virtual business cards to RSS feeds from your favorite blogs and news services. (See Figure 1-3.) (To find out more about Facebook apps, see Chapter 12.)

Figure 1-3:
Pages can
also sport
third-party
apps, like
this Sony
PlayStation
3 Page that
features the
company's
blog posts
via the Social
RSS
app.





If you want to view a directory of Facebook apps that can enhance your business Page, you can choose Applications → Browse More Applications on the bottom left navigation bar. In this new Facebook apps directory, click Business in the left column to list relevant apps for your Page. (Alternately, you can get to the Application Directory by going to www.facebook.com/home.php?#/apps/index.php.)



When creating a Facebook Page, use only those elements that either provide value to the visitor or represent the brand in a positive, audience-appropriate way.

Who Uses Facebook Pages?

Facebook Pages are for public figures, businesses, and brands who want to establish a presence on Facebook and start interacting with fans. Pages can be enhanced with apps and provide an open forum for discussions and shared content. Only the official representative of the artist or business controls their Facebook Page. (For more information, see Chapter 4.)

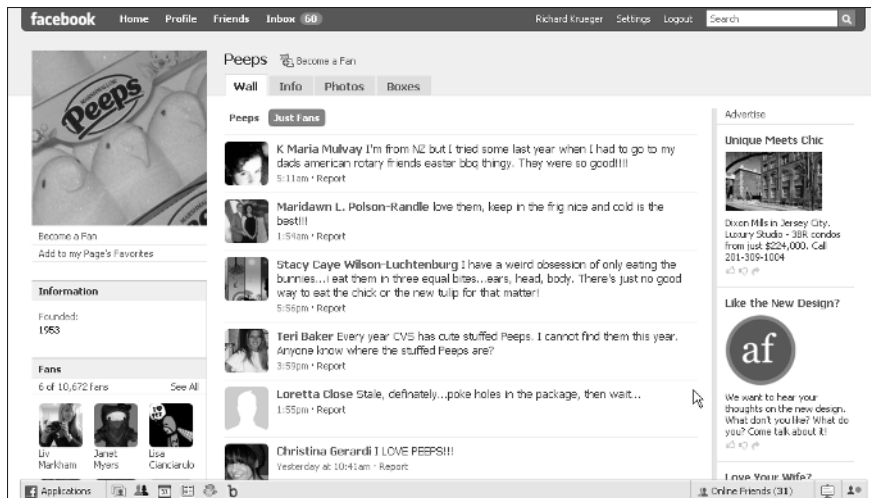
Facebook Pages provide a great opportunity for both business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) marketers to get the word out about their product or organization. Here are some examples of companies who use Facebook now.

Benefits for business-to-consumer marketers

Business-to-consumer (B2C) marketers were quick to realize the value of Facebook as a branding opportunity. Entertainment companies, such as movie studios, book publishers, and music labels, were among the initial advertisers on Facebook and that continue to have a major presence.

Although well-known brands, such as Coke, Nutella, and Pringles attract millions of fans to their Facebook Pages, there are also more esoteric brands, such as Marshmallow Peeps (shown in Figure 1-4) and Bacon Salt, that are leveraging their Facebook Pages to drive engagement with customers and build interest in their products. Their marketing strategies take advantage of the viral power of Facebook, relying on fan participation to generate a stream of News Feed stories, which in turn creates word-of-mouth awareness and funnels new fans to the Page.

Figure 1-4:
The
Marsh-
mallow
Peeps Page.



The challenge is giving people a reason to participate. Whether it's sharing hilarious pictures of Peeps in compromising situations or debating the benefits of salt and bacon as an essential part of a diet, consumer-facing businesses are interacting with their customers in entirely new ways via Facebook.



Here are the main reasons every B2C marketer needs to have a presence on Facebook:

- ✓ Facebook offers consumer marketers an excellent brand-building environment, thanks to its viral marketing capabilities.
- ✓ Facebook allows companies to interact with their customers to gain valuable consumer insights.
- ✓ A Facebook Page improves a company's search engine rankings.

Benefits for business-to-business marketers

Consumer marketers aren't the only ones to benefit by having a presence on Facebook. Many B2B (business to business) marketers are also tapping into the social network's business appeal by reaching out to their customer base where they live and play. From accounting firms like Ernst & Young, who launched a targeted recruitment advertising campaign to attract recent CPA

graduates, to technology management consultancy BearingPoint, who sponsored a contest for best “Green Enterprise” idea, B2B marketers are leveraging Facebook’s community-oriented tools in exciting ways.

And why are they on Facebook? Because that’s where their customers are. For many B2B marketers (for example, see BearingPoint in Figure 1-5), Facebook is another touch point, a new channel from which to communicate directly with their customers, partners, and employees — past, present, and future.

Figure 1-5:
B2B
companies
use
Facebook to
build brand
awareness.



Many of the same benefits that B2C marketers enjoy on Facebook apply to the B2B world. From community building to providing a customer feedback loop to search engine positioning, Facebook helps build relationships regardless of whether an organization is selling to businesses or individuals.



Here are the main reasons every B2B marketer needs to have a presence on Facebook:

- ✓ Companies are leveraging Facebook as a recruitment tool by reaching out and promoting positions via the Facebook Marketplace (see Chapter 11), industry-related groups within Facebook (see Chapter 7), and highly targeted Facebook advertising campaigns (see Chapter 9).
- ✓ B2B marketers are using Facebook as a feedback loop, giving the customers a forum where their voice can be heard and appreciated.
- ✓ Facebook offers B2B companies with disparate offices a centralized online hub to interact, share knowledge, and facilitate employee communications.

Why Create a Facebook Page?

Both personal profiles and Pages have gone through several transitions and the distinctions between the two continue to blur. Capabilities once found only on profiles, such as status updates, the News Feed, and the Wall are finding their way onto Pages. These feature upgrades all serve to the marketer's advantage. (To create your own Facebook page, see Chapter 4.)

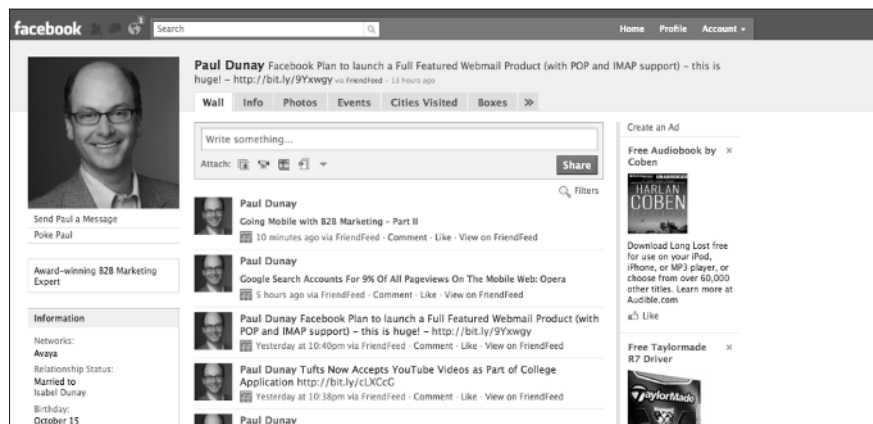
Pages versus personal profiles

Each Facebook member has a unique personal profile on Facebook (Figure 1-6 shows an example of a personal profile.) An individual can have only one profile per email account and that profile can only be created, maintained, and credited to that person. Often, people create both a personal profile and a more public profile using separate e-mail addresses.

A Facebook member can have multiple Pages, but only Pages created by the real public figure, artist, brand, or organization, or by an official representative of the entity. Pages are managed by admins, whose names are never revealed. You are the admin for your Page unless you specify someone else.

Finally, Facebook Pages have no fan limit, and can automatically accept fan requests, whereas profiles are restricted to a 5,000-friend limit and friends must be approved.

Figure 1-6:
Every
Facebook
member has
a profile.





Using a personal account for promoting business interests, or creating an unauthorized Page, may result in a warning or even an account termination. So, be safe, use your profile page for personal networking and your Page for business promotion.

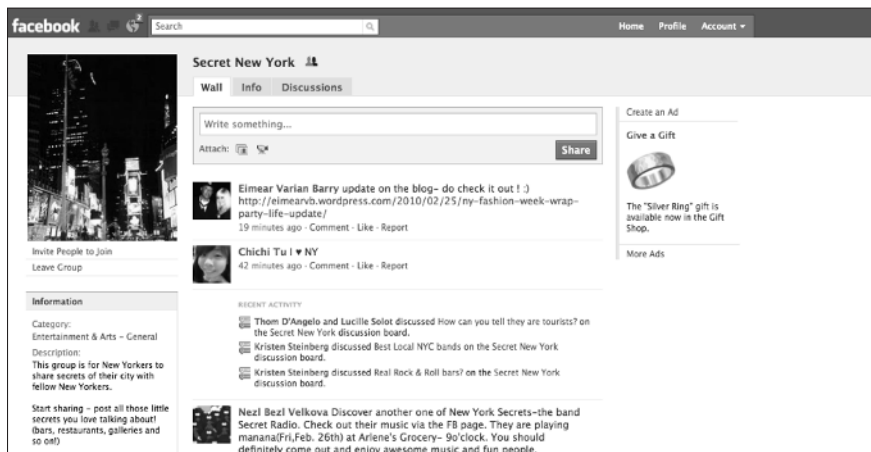
Pages versus Groups

Only an official representative of a business, public figure, nonprofit organization, artist, or public personality can create a Page and serve as its admin. Pages are designed to provide basic information and feature community building blocks, such as discussion boards and the ability to comment, upload user-generated content, and post reviews.

By contrast, any members can create a Facebook Group about any topic — and they do. Groups serve as a central hub for members to share opinions and discussions about that topic. Whereas Pages allow for a high degree of interaction and rich media with the addition of applications, Facebook Groups do not allow for the addition of applications.

When an admin updates a Group page (see Figure 1-7), the News Feed story includes the name of the group's admin. Pages, however, attribute updates to the Page and never reveal the admin's name. Groups also don't offer the status update capability, which has recently been added to Pages.

Figure 1-7:
A Facebook Group provides members with an online hub to share opinions about a topic.



Group admins can send messages to the entire group's individual Inboxes, provided the group has fewer than 5,000 members. Page admins, however, can't send messages to all members. Group admins also have the ability to restrict member access by requiring a member approval process, whereas Pages can only restrict members from becoming a fan by age and location requirements. For example, alcohol and cigarette companies are prohibited from marketing themselves to minors and so restrict fans who are below legal age limits.



To create a Group, choose Applications⇄Groups in the bottom left navigation bar, and then click the Create a New Group button.