# Fact Sheet: Facebook

## What Is Facebook, and How Does It Work?

The dominant social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. All began as interpersonal communication channels, but have quickly become essential tools for businesses and organizations. They allow easy, direct communication between your team and current or potential clients and members. Their logos can be displayed on the home page of your Web site so that site visitors know they can click through to connect.

Facebook is a social networking site that allows individuals to create profiles and then post a variety of content such as status updates, photographs, videos and links to websites. Individuals may follow other individual's profiles, join Facebook groups, or follow pages of content posted by businesses or other organizations (more on Facebook pages below.) Individual profiles have privacy controls which determine who on Facebook gets to see status updates and other content an individual posts. The news feed of an individual's profile page consists of status updates and other content posted by friends they follow, the pages they "like," and the groups they join, as well as comments others might have made on that content.

Businesses and organizations may create Facebook pages. Pages have much of the same functionality as profiles: the organization may create an information page, post photos and videos, status updates, and links to sites around the web. There is also additional functionality available to pages, such as discussion boards. These pages can act as mini websites, including such things as information on the company, its history and contact information; a running update of a company's twitter feed; photographs of products or events, grouped into albums; and videos of events, product demonstrations, or other instructional content.

Where pages differ significantly from profiles is in the type of interactivity allowed: individuals, via their profiles, can "like" or "fan" a business page, and thus get that page's content into their newsfeed just as they get content from the friends they follow. Pages, however, cannot "friend" or "follow" anyone. The content on pages is generated by the page owner and – depending on settings - by those who choose to comment on the content or post directly, if allowed. Since "following" is not reciprocal between pages and profiles, organizations must build their Facebook fan base by aggressively advertising their Facebook page via other communication channels, but the payoff is in deepening relationships by building a community around your organization, product or service.

## *Why Is Facebook Important?*

According to Nielsen Co. research:
- In December 2009, Facebook was the most popular social networking site globally, with 67 percent of social media fans logging in.
- In May 2010, Facebook's parent company ranked third in the world, behind Google and Microsoft, with a unique audience of 239,924,802 people and an active reach of 55.8 percent.
- Also in May 2010, Facebook ranked fourth in the United States, behind Google, Microsoft and Yahoo!, with a unique audience of 125,243,000 and an active reach of 63.2 percent.

## *How Can Your Company Implement Facebook?*

- Commit to a weekly SM strategy and coordinate efforts among team members.
- Designate one or two team members to post news releases on the Facebook page.
- Use the "Find Friends" tool to connect with people in your email address books and to look for former colleagues or classmates (http://www.facebook.com/find-friends/)
- Make your Facebook page easy to find by posting links to it on your website, blog and other communication channels, making certain to add it to the Company's email signature block.
- Repost content from your blog and other sources on your Facebook profile.
- Tag people, pages, or events you mention in Facebook posts. To link to a user or page in your status, type "@" followed by the person's or company's name.
- Contribute to discussions in Facebook groups and become a fan of pages related to your industry.
- When anything of note occurs, make a short post on the Facebook page wall sharing your thoughts and why you are excited by this new product, service or event.
- All team members should do basic tasks, such as becoming a fan of the company Facebook page and including links in their e-mail signatures.

## *What Principles Should You Keep in Mind?*

- Follow Facebook rules, and remember that the more you engage with fans of your page, the more they will engage with you. If you allow others to comment or post directly, be sure to respond as soon as possible.
- Observe etiquette guidelines: contribute to the discussion in a respectful way; listen to what others say instead of rushing to "correct" them; and be accountable for and responsible about what you say.
- When posting company news, make sure that it is truly valuable to the group. If it's sheer self-promotion, don't do it.