



# Facebook For Business

## Launch And Maintain Your Presence On Facebook

By: Jason Hemsoth

July 2011



*This summary is an original report researched, produced and released by BMG to help construction and related equipment manufacturers understand social media and related technologies. © Barlow Marketing Group – All rights reserved.*

## Facebook For Business

### How To Start And Maintain An Effective Presence On Facebook

With more than 750 million members, 1 in every 10 people on earth have a Facebook account (as of June 2011). If the social site were a country, it would be the third largest country in the world. The societal impacts of sites like Facebook have become impossible to ignore. What does this mean for you and your business? It's time to set up a Facebook page and start connecting with customers.

#### Game Plan

As with any endeavor, one must first have a game plan for moving forward. This is especially true with social media and specifically Facebook. The steps necessary for getting the most out of your game plan include:

- Do some research. See what others in your sector of the industry are doing. How often do they post? What type of content do they include? How often do they interact with their audience?
- Set clear-cut goals and objectives. Do you want to generate leads? Increase sales? Or maybe build your reputation and brand awareness?
- Plan for tracking those goals and objectives to see if you're meeting them.

Using Facebook is a great way to connect with current and potential customers, keep in touch and continue building relationships. Figure out what you want to accomplish, then go after it.

#### Page Set Up

Once you have your plan in place, it's time to move your vision into reality. Start with the basics of simply setting up the Facebook business page.

1. Set up a personal profile. This profile will be the administrator to your business page.
2. Set up your business page. Now that you have a business page, remember to update your personal profile consistently as well.
3. Design a custom landing page with the look and message you want to portray to current and potential customers. This can be designed with iFrames or through third-party apps/developers. By default, what visitors see first when going to your new page is the "wall." However, you don't have to settle for that.
4. Be creative with the layout. If you have a goal of attracting more fans, why not use graphics pointing to the "Like" button, encouraging users to like your page. You don't need to be subtle about it.
5. As soon as you get 25 fans, you'll be able to register your custom domain for your page; for example: [www.facebook.com/companyname](http://www.facebook.com/companyname). On Facebook, these are referred to as "vanity URLs." They are great for quick recognition on promotional items and is an important part of adding professionalism to your page.

## Attracting Fans

Once your page is set up, you need people to see it. Unfortunately, the old adage “build it and they will come,” does not apply here. You’ll have to give people a reason or incentive to come to your Facebook page. Below are some key elements to think about when attracting new fans.

1. **Database/Advertising** - You need a mailing or email list of potential “fans” that you can send information to regarding your incentive. Many companies already have this list for marketing-related activities. Or, you can publicly advertise your incentive program to a targeted audience.
2. **Incentive Promotion** - Determine your incentive deadline(s) for redemption and how you are going to promote it. You could use print advertising, e-blasts, emails or other traditional promotion techniques. Then put that promotion plan into action.
3. **Way To Get The Incentive** - Very clearly communicate how customers can receive the incentive.
  - a. Example: Go to [www.facebook.com/abccompany](http://www.facebook.com/abccompany) and “Like” “ABC Company”. Be one of the first 50 people to post “I love ABC Company” on our page and click on the “ABC Company Incentive Form” link to receive “Insert Incentive Here”.
4. **Manufacturer Provides Incentive** - Delegate one person to ensure that all criteria for the incentive have been met and then deliver the incentive.
  - a. Example: Manufacturer representative checks that all 3 steps have been completed and then provides the incentive.
  - b. Email help: When possible, provide an email address if less tech savvy people have questions.
  - c. Follow up/problems: Have a manufacturer representative in charge of following up with those that don’t correctly complete all 3 steps.

## Writing Content

Using a Facebook page for business is different than using it for personal use. You’ll want to plan the messages you want posted to your page. As there is no one “right” way to do it, below is one example of a workable solution for writing and posting content:

- Planning the content: Team of 1-2 people brainstorm numerous ideas at a time on what should be included on your Facebook page.
- Writing: 1 person is in charge of producing content “drafts”.
- Editing: A different person edits the content “drafts” for accuracy and to determine whether it’s appropriate for the audience.
- Final Approval: 1 person of high authority chosen by company provides final approval on all content (this person can also be the editor).
- Post on a consistent basis.

Make sure your content is intriguing, short and of value to your audience. Be careful not to make it too sales oriented, promotional or repetitive. Readers don’t appreciate this. They want to be informed, not sold—unless it’s related to price breaks or discounts.

Some good examples for a construction-related manufacturer are:

- New products
- Tips on how to solve problems
- Programs the company offers that will help the reader better do their job
- Customer success stories
- Discounts/promotional pricing
- Free things
- Product videos/pictures with short problem/solution messages
- New/updated product information (brochures, sales sheets, spec sheets, etc.)
- Industry information or market forecasts
- Industry event updates
- Newsletters with content related to them
- Important personnel changes (sales managers, dealers, etc.)

### **Facebook Is *Social Media***

Don't forget what has made Facebook and other social media sites so popular and successful—they are social, making it easy for people to connect online. If your company is on Facebook, it needs to be social too. Use your page to engage with and have a dialog with your customers. Build relationships with customers and fans. Have somebody that is dedicated to responding to the comments fans leave on your page, whether they are positive or negative. Don't be afraid to ask for people to leave comments about their experiences using your product/equipment.

Should you be worried about negative feedback? Not necessarily, if you're ready to respond and take advantage of it. Negativity can be a great opportunity to show the world what extraordinary customer service you have. Go the extra mile to see what that customer was unhappy with, provide a solution that exceeds their expectations and post it as another company success story. The key is to truly listen and not dodge the issues. Being up front and authentic goes a long way in the online social world. After all, here your reputation is your currency.

Whether you're on the fence about the relevancy of Facebook in the construction industry or you've been actively engaging your audience for quite some time, one cannot deny the fact that Facebook has a potential goldmine of customers you and your company can connect with. Setting up a page and getting started isn't difficult. Set aside some time to do some research, put your game plan together, and put it into practice. As you provide content your customers are looking for, you'll attract more fans and more potential customers.

Know what your goals are. Track them to make sure the time and resources you're investing in your Facebook presence are paying off. Need some help? Contact BMG to see how a Facebook page can impact your business and its bottom line. Or check out the other BMG SMART Group reports at [www.growwithbmg.com/smart](http://www.growwithbmg.com/smart).