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CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL, MOBILE, AND LOCAL MARKETING

LEARNING TRACK 7.1 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: FACEBOOK

Having a company Facebook page has quickly evolved from an option to a requirement. Businesses now use it to post hours of operation and other basic information, promote press releases (which are linked to the company Facebook page), announce new partnerships or community events in which it is participating, facilitate word-of-mouth advertising, elicit customer feedback on both current and forthcoming products and services, direct product development, showcase merchandise, drive website traffic, and run contests. Facebook contests, whether proffered directly from your wall or through a specialized Facebook app, are a popular method for expanding your community. Even after attrition (as long as you do not overuse them), contest entries usually net an increase in followers.

Beyond connecting with customers, Facebook is used to recognize employee accomplishments, awards, and even birthdays, making it a potent employee retention tool as well as a customer acquisition and retention tool. A temporary tab can be created to house details for an upcoming event. This easily shared location can serve as your event coordination headquarters. Event-day questions posted by participants either on your wall or in your Twitter stream can be answered by your social media event planner in both locations. Facebook events can be created for local community service activities in which your company is participating. Persuading your customers, business partners, and other local merchants to participate in charitable giving, park cleanups, walkathons, etc. is a public relations boon that will garner you loyal supporters. You can also incorporate a software service such as MailChimp to add a simple e-mail sign-up form and create an e-mail newsletter to send to your most ardent fans.

Facebook also has a smartphone app with which users can check-in to local businesses. You can offer a discount to customers when they check-in for the first time and build a customer loyalty program around app use, rewarding specific check-in milestones.

To begin creating your Facebook business page, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/create> and select your business type from the six available options: Local Business or Place; Artist, Band or Public Figure; Company, Organization, or Institution; Entertainment; Brand or Product; or Cause or Community. The type of business you select determines the dropdown list of business catego-

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ries presented and other required information. For example, if you choose Local Business or Place, the list of categories includes Bookstore, Doctor, Lawyer, Library, Church/Religious Organization, etc., and Facebook provides data entry boxes for your business or place name, street address, city/state, zip code, and phone number. If you select Company, Organization or Institution, the list of categories includes Aerospace/Defense, Biotechnology, Legal/Law, Media/News Publishing, Retail and Consumer Merchandise, etc. and the only other data entry box is for your company name. After you have chosen the business type and category, entered any additional information, and agreed to Facebook's Page Terms, click the Get Started button. You will proceed to the basic Facebook information form (e-mail address, date of birth, and password) to complete the account registration. Once the account e-mail is confirmed, you are prompted to either upload or import a profile picture. This is the icon that will accompany all of your posts on Facebook. For a company or brand, this is generally your logo. The profile picture must be at least 180 x 180 pixels but displays at 160 x 160 pixels on your page on computers, 140 x 140 pixels on smartphones, and a thumbnail size of 32 x 32 for status update posts, so make sure that it looks good in all sizes.

Next is the About section in which you enter your company description and the URL for your Web site. Since this is your introductory sales pitch, highlight such topics as company accomplishments, strengths, values, specialties, the uniqueness of your product or service, your market niche, any business awards, titles, or distinctions earned, and your credentials. In two to three easily readable sentences, your goal is to attract potential followers. This is the text that visitors will see on your main page.

After you decide whether to set up paid advertising (enable ads), your Facebook page appears. It has a menu bar that includes several tabs, including Messages, Notifications, Publishing Tools, Settings, and Help. Once your page has at least 30 people that follow it, an Insights tab that provides Facebook Page analytics will also appear. This menu bar (the Admin Panel) is visible only to Page administrators. The Messages tab enables you to check private messages from followers. The Notifications tab provides a quick look at your page's most recent activity. The Publishing Tools tab allows you to see published posts, as well as posts you have scheduled to appear at a later time. The Settings tab contains a number of useful tools. It enables you to modify the general settings for the page (including managing the permissions of what people can and can't do), edit the information that appears on the page, manage notifications, set and modify the Page administrators, edit the settings for any apps installed on the page, see suggested edits, see details about the various way you can post to the page from a mobile device, and also view an activity log that shows all the activity on the page.

Use the Add a Cover button to upload a horizontal image that will be fitted into an 851 x 315 pixels space. In accordance with Facebook policies, your cover photo cannot include price or purchase information, contact information, calls-to-action (CTAs) or references to Facebook features or actions. False, deceptive, or misleading statements or items that infringe on third parties' intellectual

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property are strictly forbidden. The image you use for your cover photo should exemplify the image you and your company want to convey.

Use the Call-to-Action button to create a call-to-action for your fans to help them learn more about your business or take some action. Options include Book Services, Get in Touch, Learn More, Make a Purchase or Donation, and Download App or Game, each with their own alternatives. The Call-to-Action button allows you to link to an external landing page.

After you publish your finished page, you are ready to begin posting. While varying your posts to keep the content fresh and appealing, keep in mind the demographics of your audience. What do they want or expect from you? Post updates, blog links, and images that provide value and will be of interest to your audience, and encourage them to share your updates. To highlight a post by extending it horizontally across the page, hover the cursor in the upper right corner of the entry and click the star button. Use this to magnify posts that announce new products, coupons, special promotions, or CTAs. Click the Edit button (pencil icon) to either pin a story to the top of your Timeline (which you can do for up to seven days) or to hide it. Pinning a story to the top of your Timeline is another way of highlighting it so that more recent updates do not overshadow it.

You can also create a special post called a Milestone to highlight company achievements such as a certain number of Likes, a product release, or an award. Above the status update box are three posting options: Status, Photo/Video, and Event, Milestone, +. Click Event, Milestone, +, then Milestone, name the milestone, enter the date it occurred, use an existing photo or upload a new one, add a description and location if desired, and save it. Milestones are slotted into place on your Timeline and automatically highlighted (as if you had used the star button). The image will be set to 843 x 403 pixels. Facebook has found that posts that include images or videos generate up to double the response rate of text status updates, and the Timeline format is particularly conducive to the use of visual content. Charts, infographics, and comics are formats that can concisely and engagingly convey complex information.

However, your social media staff's most important task is monitoring users' posts, not creating content. While responding to every fan comment is not necessary, it is important to demonstrate that you are engaged, accessible, and caring. Ignoring a negative post can be downright destructive. The attrition rate, commonly referred to as the churn rate, measures the number of members leaving a group. It can spike as high as 15% following an improperly handled response. This statistic highlights the importance of having social network policies in place and employees dedicated to the task. Just because you have the option to delete posts does not mean that you should employ it. Posts that can be clearly identified as trolling can either be ignored or quickly deleted, but criticisms that have merit must be responded to with candor, admission of guilt when appropriate, and by outlining the steps that will be taken to remedy the problem. Sometimes, after an appropri-

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ate public response has been posted, you can take a conversation with a disgruntled customer to private messages to bring it to resolution.

Finally, once you have 30 fans, use the Insights tab to monitor your Facebook page activity. The Insights tab has several different dashboards. The first is Overview, which, as its name suggests, provides an overview of page likes, post reach, and engagement in the form of charts. The Likes dashboard provides further data on page likes. The Reach dashboard provides statistics on post reach, likes, comments, and shares. The Visits dashboard provides information on the number of page and tab visits and other page activity. The Posts dashboard provides data on the performance of different types of posts based on reach and engagement, and details on the most recent posts on your page's Timeline. The People dashboard provides demographic information on fans, people reached, people engaged, and check-ins, with aggregated data on gender, age, country, city, and language. Because social media operates at such an accelerated pace, analyze the impact of your content on a daily basis. Once you know how many people like your page, how many friends they have (your total reach), and the ratio of how many people were actually reached to your total reach, you can set your Marketing department analysts to work dissecting which types of content are and are not working. The goal is to expand your reach thereby creating more opportunities to turn Facebook fans into leads that you may then be able to convert into customers. The more you can engage current friends in your content, the better chance you have of attracting more fans, thus increasing the number of leads you garner from your Facebook business page.

SOURCES: "How to Use Facebook Page Insights Like an Expert," by Adam Heitzman, Searchenginejournal.com, October 27, 2017; "How to Build a Facebook Page for Business: A Guide for Beginners," by Tammy Cannon, Socialmediaexaminer.com, June 4, 2017; "Step by Step Guide to New Facebook Business Page Timelines," edited by Magdalena Georgieva, HubSpot, accessed January 20, 2015; "Facebook Insights: A Detailed Guide to Facebook Analytics," by Ian Cleary, Razorsocial.com, December 22, 2015; "12 Things You Must Know About Facebook's Admin Panel," Shortstack.com, May 14, 2015.