

Using Facebook to Increase Your Company's Web Presence



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Table of Contents

About Facebook.....	3
Articles & References.....	3
Why Use Facebook?	4
Advantages of Facebook	4
Disadvantages of Facebook.....	5
Facebook Registration & Set-Up	6
Using Facebook.....	8
Creating Profiles.....	8
Adding Friends	8
Find Relevant Groups	9
Other Basic Tips.....	9
Advertising on Facebook: Flyers	10
Advertising on Facebook: Traditional Banner	11
Third Party Applications.....	13
Tips to Developing an Application.....	13
Implementing Your Application	14
Additional Facebook Developer Resources.....	14

About Facebook

Facebook is an online community and social networking site where users create and personalize profiles detailing information about themselves and their interests. It is currently ranked as the 13th most popular site on the web (according to www.alexa.com data as of July 2007). Facebook users are only allowed to view profiles of people in their network or people who are friends with them.

Originally only available to Harvard University students, the site quickly expanded to over 800 colleges across the United States and eventually opened up to high school students and international universities. As of today, registration is only limited to having an email address.

Profiles are all very similar in appearance. Users do not have the ability to customize fonts, colors, or backgrounds. However, the recent addition of third party applications and a drag-and-drop module for visual organization of your profile, allows each user to make a unique profile.

Articles & References

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook>
- <http://blog.facebook.com/>
- <http://www.insidefacebook.com/>
 - <http://www.insidefacebook.com/2007/07/16/inside-facebook-nfo-is-the-new-seo/>
- http://money.cnn.com/2007/05/24/technology/fastforward_facebook.fortune/index.htm
- http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/aug2007/tc2007085_051788.htm
- <http://del.icio.us/popular/facebook>
- <http://developers.facebook.com/>

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Why Use Facebook?

Facebook is not advantageous for every person or business but it can be for many. With a strong web presence and such a large community, Facebook is a cost-effective way for businesses to reach their target audience, specifically college students and recent grads.

"About 85% of students in [previously] supported colleges have a profile [on the site]. [Of those who are signed up,] 60% log in *daily*. About 85% log in at least once a week, and 93% log in at least once a month." (TechCrunch.com).

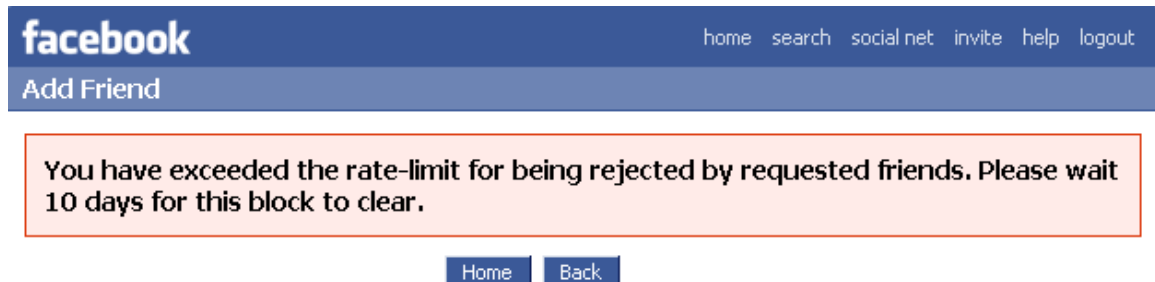
Advantages of Facebook

- **It's Free** – Unless you are advertising through the site there are no associated costs but your own time.
- **Improve SEO Efforts** – While all the SEO benefits have yet to be fully determined, Facebook does help in overall optimization efforts:
 - **Visibility** – Facebook profiles that are kept public are indexable by the search engines. This provides another opportunity for your audience to find you in search results.
 - **Links** – The values search engines place on links from Facebook is unknown. However, having people link to your site is always beneficial (minus spam, link farms, etc).
- **Multimedia** – Facebook allows users to upload videos and pictures to their profile pages and share them with friends. This is a great opportunity for a business to spread its message without paying thousands of dollars for a television commercial.

- **Simplicity** – Facebook is easy to set up and even easier to manage. Everything is filled in by answering a series of forms and then neatly displayed on your profile.
- **Third Party Applications**- Developers can now create applications for users to add to their profiles. You can also collect and store data on anyone who is using your application.
- **Advertising**- Facebook offers very inexpensive advertising campaigns through a targeted impression system. As of August 2007, it costs \$2 per 1000 impressions and each impression can be targeted by network, age, gender, and/or location.

Disadvantages of Facebook

- **Reporting & Analytics** – As of August 2007 no reporting capabilities on Facebook to show how many people are coming to the page, what they doing, etc. This is also true of their flyer advertising campaigns. Facebook will email you when your ad/flyer has reached the number of impressions you have paid for. They will not, however, provide any statistics for measuring the effectiveness of the ad. (e.g. click through rates)
- **Link Attribution** – Any links pointing to a Facebook page do no benefit the actual company site (in terms of search engines). These links are only credited to the Facebook page itself.
- **Lack of Control** – With no domain or hosting capabilities the user has no control over web host or downtime. The site can be down for maintenance, freeze up or simply shut down for that matter.
- **Profiles**- Users can only view profiles that are in their network or that they are friends with. Random users will not be able to see a profile otherwise. Facebook closely monitors friend spamming and can disable your account.



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of Facebook with the logo and links for home, search, social net, invite, help, and logout. Below the navigation bar is a blue bar with the text "Add Friend". A red-bordered box contains the error message: "You have exceeded the rate-limit for being rejected by requested friends. Please wait 10 days for this block to clear." At the bottom of the screenshot are two buttons labeled "Home" and "Back".

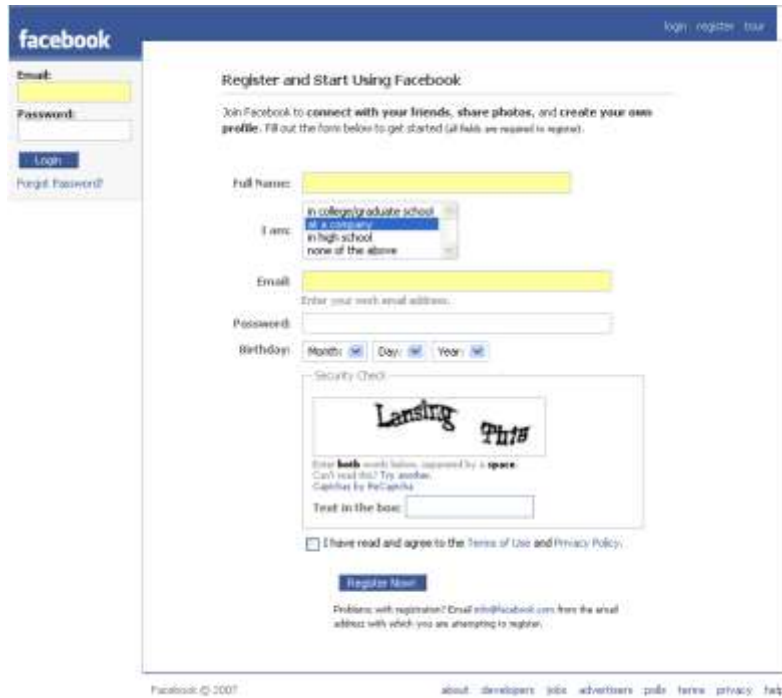
Facebook Registration & Set-Up

Registering for Facebook is extremely easy and takes no more than five minutes. Each user adds as much or a little information they want to complete their profile.

1. Choose the Join link in the center-right side of the homepage:



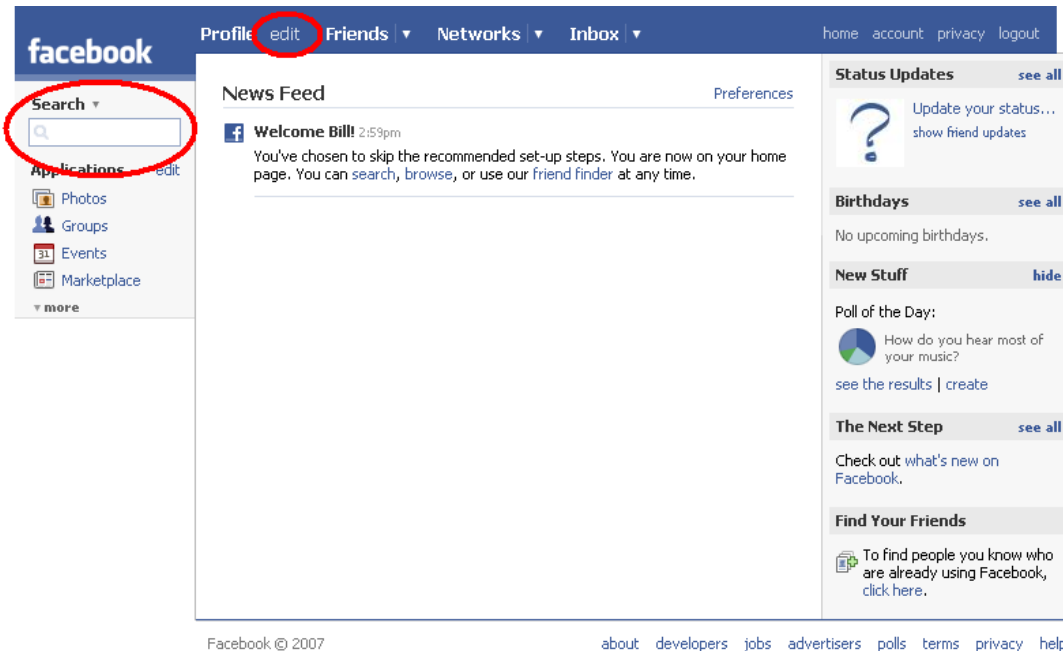
2. Add contact information to each field (be sure to use a real email address for verification):



The image shows a screenshot of the Facebook registration page. The page is titled "Register and Start Using Facebook". It includes a sidebar with "facebook" logo, "Email:" field, "Password:" field, "Login" button, and "Forgot Password?" link. The main content area contains the registration form with the following fields: "Full Name:" (with a dropdown menu showing "in college/graduate school", "in high school", and "none of the above"), "Email:" (with a note "Enter your web email address."), "Password:" (with a note "Enter both words below, separated by a space. Can't read that? Try another. Click for help."), "Birthday:" (with dropdowns for "Month:", "Day:", and "Year:"). Below the form is a "Security Check" section with a CAPTCHA image showing the words "Landing" and "This". At the bottom, there is a checkbox for "I have read and agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy" and a "Register Now" button. A footer note says "Problems with registration? Email email@facebook.com from the email address with which you are attempting to register."

3. Verify Account via Email.
4. Once you reach the profile page, you can choose a network, invite people to join Facebook, or skip this section and go to your homepage.

5. From your homepage you can edit your profile and add information about yourself, or search for friends on Facebook and add them to you network of friends.



Using Facebook

The purpose of Facebook is to connect people rather than as a marketing tool. Because of that, it is not easy for companies to use the Facebook profile as a medium for promoting their business. Users typically do not respond well to people they don't know or company profiles. Also, because users cannot view a profile without being a friend first, requesting friends becomes a very difficult path to pursue. The best way for companies to use Facebook is through their advertising campaigns and the Facebook third party application functions.

Creating Profiles

Profiles on Facebook should always be real people, not business entities. Fill in the information on the profile truthfully to gain the trust of potential friends.

Adding Friends

- **People you already know** – Invite real friends first. Make sure they know who you are and what you're doing. Often it's good to include a personal message with friend requests, so they know you aren't spamming them.
- **Friends of Friends** – Ask business colleagues, friends of your current friends, husbands, wives, etc. Have them help you start spreading the word.
- **Clients/Partners** – Find out if any clients, vendors or partners have profiles.

Find Relevant Groups

Find groups that your target audience participates in and are relevant to your business. Join them and start establishing relationships with people. By joining a group you have already established a common bond. You can also start your own group and invite your friends to join.

Other Basic Tips

In order to be successful on Facebook you must participate. Creating a profile and letting it sit will gather no momentum and in turn no new traffic to your site. Once you have created your profile you are on your way.

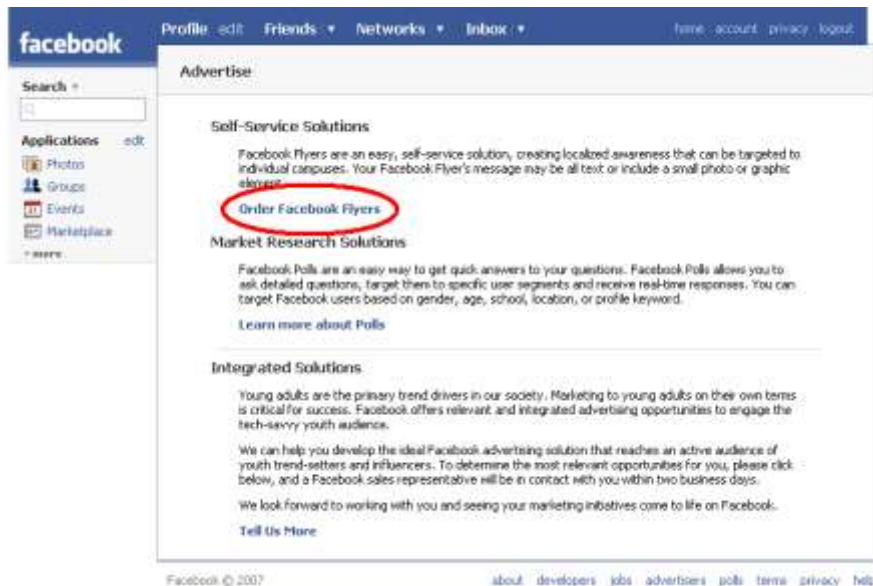
- Be honest.
- Always be looking for and requesting new friends.
- Leave helpful or relevant comments on your friends' profiles.
- Be active in the Facebook community. Remain engaged in groups, video posts, wall conversations.

Advertising on Facebook: Flyers

1. Click on the advertisers' link at the footer of any page.



2. Click on “Order Facebook Flyers” (Facebook’s impression-based advertising).



2. Fill in the required information for your flyer.
3. Choose the demographic information you wish to use to target who will receive your flyer.

4. Choose the amount of flyers you wish to show per day and for how many days. Then pick the start date for this flyer campaign and click “continue”
5. Finally enter your credit card information and select purchase to complete the transaction.

Advertising on Facebook: Traditional Banner

1. Click on the advertisers' link at the footer of any page.



2. Under Integrated Solutions click “Tell Us More” And fill in the appropriate fields.

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Integrated Solutions

Young adults are the primary trend drivers in our society. Marketing to young adults on their own terms is critical for success. Facebook offers relevant and integrated advertising opportunities to engage the tech-savvy youth audience.

We can help you develop the ideal Facebook advertising solution that reaches an active audience of youth trend-setters and influencers. To determine the most relevant opportunities for you, please click below, and a Facebook sales representative will be in contact with you within two business days.

We look forward to working with you and seeing your marketing initiatives come to life on Facebook.

[Tell Us More](#)

Advertiser Information

First Name:	<input type="text" value="Bill"/>
Last Name:	<input type="text" value="DeRusha"/>
Email:	<input type="text"/>
Phone:	<input type="text"/>
Company:	<input type="text"/>
City:	<input type="text"/>
	<small>US/Canada/UK only - other countries click here.</small>
Product Category:	<input type="text" value="Select Product Category"/>
Estimated Budget:	<input type="text" value="Select Estimated Budget"/>
Estimated Start Date:	<input type="text" value="Select Estimated Start Date"/>

Comments:

(optional, max 2,000 characters)


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3. Facebook will then contact you to discuss your traditional banner advertising campaign

Third Party Applications

Facebook provides a platform for developers to create their own applications to be used within Facebook. The platform can be found at <http://developers.facebook.com> and includes resources, tutorials, tools and even code samples to help developers build an application.

As of August 2007, there are more than 2,400 applications ranging from YouTube videos to fashion updates to job search apps. Businesses are even using it to promote products and create brand awareness. For example:

-  **LinkedIn** Allows users to integrate LinkedIn with their Facebook profile. The app shows when jobs are available within a person's company.



- **Gladgathering.com** offers users the ability to find business contacts and ask them questions about their company, job, city, etc.



- **Blue Nile** developed an application that allows users to create a wish list from their online catalogue that is then integrated into the Facebook profile.

While it may seem like a good idea to create an application around your business, it is important to remember that development will require time and technical programming knowledge, but the investment is worthwhile if you can provide an application that can be of use to Facebook users.

Tips to Developing an Application

- **Keep Your Audience in Mind** – Who are you trying to reach? What is it that this audience is looking for? Don't develop something that you think is great, develop something that your audience wants and will benefit from.
- **Goal** – What is the goal of the application? To acquire new business? To create brand awareness? Make sure you establish your objective before you begin development.
- **Make it Easy to Use** – People do not want to spend 5, 10 or even 15 minutes trying to figure out how to use something on the internet. Generally, if they can't immediately figure it out, they will move on to the next thing.
- **Make it 'Cool'** – The application profile, the name, the application's features should make people want to have it on their profile and want to tell their friends about it.

Implementing Your Application

Once you have created your application:

1. Go to the follow web address http://developers.facebook.com/get_started.php
2. After installing the developer application on your Facebook profile return to the link above and learn about the different method calls and languages available to Facebook application programmers
3. After completion of the application it can be posted to the application directory, on group forums (as a link), really anywhere that a user can comment a link to the app can be posted.

Additional Facebook Developer Resources

<http://insidefacebook.com/>

<http://developers.facebook.com>