Facebook
— How Social Networking Can Improve Your Online Business

By
Joel Comm,
Publisher, WorldVillage.com

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION — WHAT IS FACEBOOK AND HOW CAN IT HELP AN ONLINE BUSINESS?

There's a rumor running around the Internet. It's the kind of rumor that can get your heart racing and your palms sweating.

It says that websites are old hat.

No one cares about websites any more. No one reads blogs or browses articles. They don't even check their email.

Instead, they use social networking sites to discover everything they want to know and to stay in touch with their friends.

Of course, you shouldn't believe everything you hear. Websites and blogs aren't under threat at all. In fact, they seem to be doing better than ever as publishers figure out what makes users come back and readers follow them with RSS feeds and out of sheer love and loyalty.

But that doesn't mean you should ignore social networking sites. On the contrary, the rise of social networking is proving to be a huge opportunity for marketers.

I'm using it and you should be using it too.

In this report, I'm going to focus on just one social networking site: [Facebook](#).

Why Facebook?

Because Facebook is not just the fastest growing social networking site, it's also the one most likely to contain the sort of people who would read your blog, buy your products and click your ads.

Although Facebook started as a way for college students to keep in touch, it's now open to anyone who wants to join. People aged over 35 are now the group most likely to be piling in.

Members can track down their friends, view each other's photos and contacts, and let everyone know what they're doing.

As a way to keep in touch and make important contacts, it's become a hugely popular tool.

And as a way to promote a business, it's become a low-cost means to spread your message and bring in loyal users.

In fact, you can think of this as a whole new way of marketing.

It's a form of marketing that doesn't involve pushing a message out to people and hoping that they'll absorb it.

It's a way of selling that involves spreading information across networks.

It's word-of-mouth marketing at its most powerful.

In this report, I'll explain how to make the most of it.

I'll start by talking about personal Facebook accounts.

These are accounts that are just about you. Because your contacts might contain a mixture of friends and business associates, you'll have to be careful how you use an account like this. You might not want to blur the line between work and personal life.

But if who you are is an important part of what you're selling, then a personal Flickr account could be an important part of your marketing strategy.

I'll explain how to open an account and how to use it.

I'll then discuss business accounts.

This is where things start to get much more interesting. Some of the world's biggest companies have started opening pages on Facebook and are using them to promote their products. Companies like Coca Cola, Walmart and Target.

I'll explain what they're doing… and what you can do too.

I'll then get into detail. The backbone of Facebook is the friends and contacts you collect on the site. I'll explain how to fill your contact list.

And if names and people are what count on Facebook, it's what they do together that can spread your name the fastest. That happens with groups and networks.

I'll talking about joining them, using them and what happens when you see each group as a market.

And finally, and perhaps most importantly, I'll touch on some of the ways you can turn your Facebook contacts into cash.

Success in any business is always about who you know as much as what you know. Facebook gives you the opportunity to get to know lots of people, to benefit from the people *they* know, and to market your website to them.

This report will give you an opportunity to make the most of Facebook.

1. YOUR OWN PERSONAL FACEBOOK ACCOUNT

My face on Facebook.

There's an old saw about not mixing business with pleasure. I don't know how old it is but it must have been invented before blogs came along.

For most publishers, writing a blog means tossing in elements that are personal, bits that are professional and ideally, plenty that's profitable too. Who you are is often as important as what you say. It shows that you know what you're talking about and helps to build trust among users who don't know you from Adam.

But it also creates a problem.

Lots of people have lost jobs after criticizing their bosses on their blogs. I'm sure plenty of people have lost friends too. And I have no doubt that there are few bloggers out there who haven't posted a personal opinion that they've later regretted.

Facebook is meant to be personal. Although businesses are moving in, most Facebook pages have been put up by individuals as a way to make new friends and stay in touch with the old ones.

That doesn't mean you can't use Facebook for business purposes. But if you're using your personal Facebook account to do that, you'll need to be a little careful.

1.1 Post A Picture That Means Business
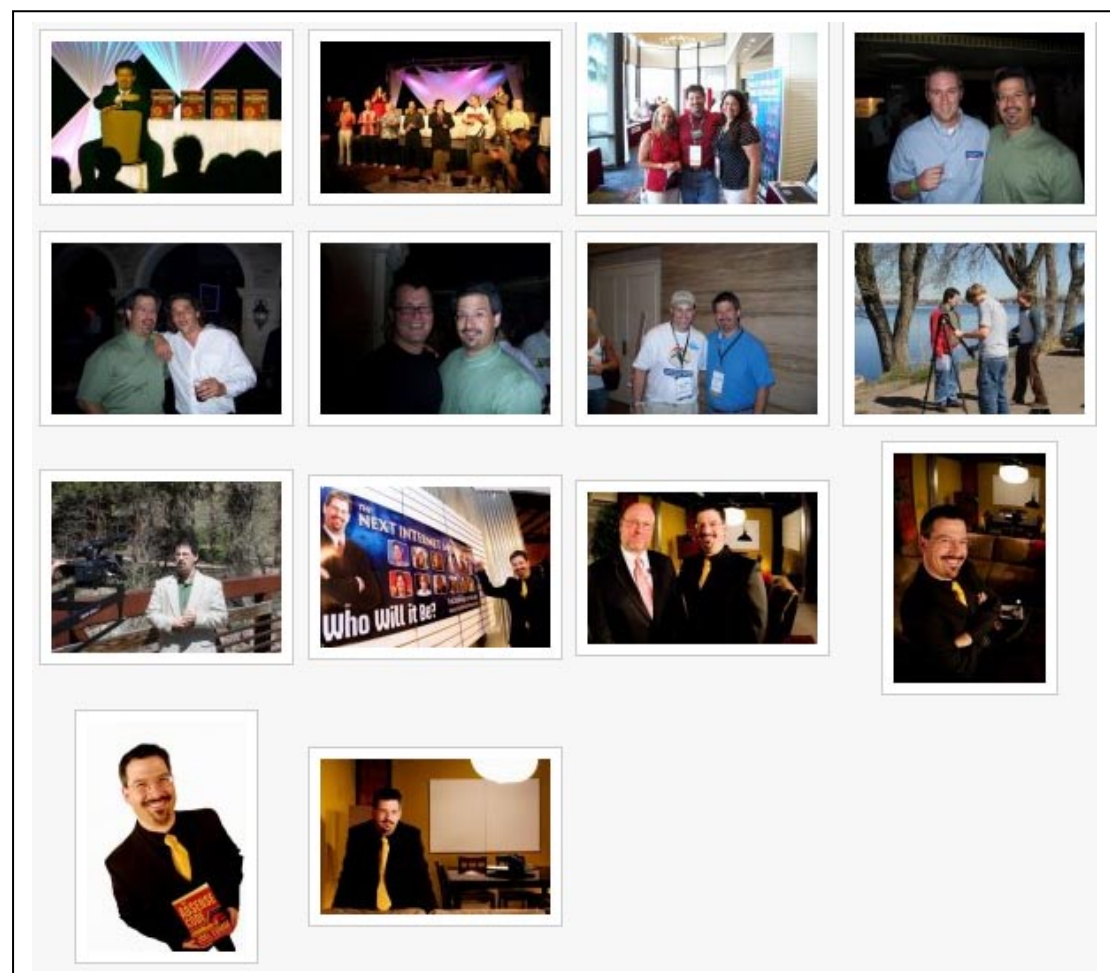
I have fourteen pictures on my personal Facebook page, and you know what?... they're all professional.

That starts with your picture.

Or rather your pictures, because Facebook lets you put up a string of them.

There's nothing wrong with posting pictures of your family, of your pets, or of you serving stew at the church fundraiser.

But remember that every photo that you put up contributes to your image.

So if you don't think that a photo of you wearing a funny hat at the office Christmas party would impress your users, don't put that photo up. If the picture your partner snapped of you fast asleep on the sofa contrasts with the content you write on your fitness blog, you should probably give that one a miss. And if the only digital photo you have of you is blurry, tiny or out of focus, take another one.

In fact, some photography studios now offer special packages that include portraits for social networking sites (as well as dating sites, if you're interested...). Rates vary but they can be worthwhile investments. You can also use the photos on your blog, your business card and even in your email signature.

The main picture that I use on my Facebook page was shot by a pro. It's a lot better than the one I would have taken by holding the camera at arm's length and trying to push the button. The other photos were taken at conferences or during the filming of The Next Internet Millionaire. They contribute towards telling Facebook users who I am and what I do.

Note that there are no pictures of my family there. I mention my family in my personal details but they're entitled to their privacy and because this Facebook page is about me as well as my business, I think it's best keep them off. You'll have to make your own call.

1.2 Choosing Your Contact Details

Putting up a photo that only does you good should be fairly easy. Choosing your contact details is a little tougher.

In practice, most of the messages you get on Facebook will come through the site's own messaging system. But you should add an email address too. It would look a little odd if you didn't and you want people to feel that they are free contact you.

This though is where that difference between work and pleasure comes back to haunt you.

You probably have more than one email address. You might have a personal email address and at least one for your website.

Which should you place on Facebook for your contacts to see?

Use your website address.

▼ Information

Contact Info
Email: joel@worldvillage.com
Website: http://www.joelcomm.com
                http://www.askjoelcomm.com
                http://www.nextinternetmillionaire.com

Personal Info
Activities: computer gaming
                walking
                hiking
                skiing
                creating
Interests: World of Warcraft with my family
                Long walks with my wife
                Coming up with the next big thing
Favorite TV Shows: The Office
                    Lost
                    Scrubs
Favorite Movies: The Shawshank Redemption
                    Singin' in the Rain
                    Groundhog Day
                    Memento
                    The Sixth Sense
                    The Matrix

My personal information includes my WorldVillage email address, three URLs and a bunch of details that reveal something about me.

If friends you haven't seen for a while write to you through your blog, you can always answer them from your personal address. You might not be able to keep your work life and personal life completely separate on Facebook but you should be able to do in your email.

1.3 Information, Education And Work

The other details are much easier than they look. You might think that adding information such as favorite movies and interests could make a Facebook page that you're going to use professionally a little too personal. But in practice, it doesn't work that way.

That's because you're not expected to write a book.

You just have to make a quick list of activities you like to do in your spare time. If you read my blog, you won't be surprised to find that I've listed World of Warcraft on my profile, but I've also got skiing and walking there.

What does that reveal about me?

Next to nothing. But here's the thing… it shows that I'm a flesh-and-blood human being. It makes me look approachable, and lets people see whether they have something in common with me.

That's crucial.

The backbone of Facebook is the relationships you build with the people you'll meet on the site.

If you look secretive, shy or closed, you'll make building connections harder than necessary. The people you'll be asking to become Facebook friends with have revealed something of themselves. They'll expect you to do the same.

That's true of the details you put in the education and work fields too.

The education bit is straightforward (you don't have to include the day care center you attended when you were two but your college and even your high school can give you good networking potential, so list them.) The work field though gives you space to add a short description.

This *is* a place where you need to be a little careful.

It's very tempting to use this spot as a sales pitch for your business.

But that would be wrong.

My company description simply says: "New media company I started in 1995. Can't believe it's been that long already!"

I could have mentioned what Infomedia does and who it does it for, and so on, but this wouldn't have been the place. Again, this profile is mainly about me. If anyone wants to learn more about the sites that my business produces, they can look at the URLs I've listed.

The feeling here should be that work is almost an aside. It's the person that counts the most.

There isn't a great deal of difference between marketing through a personal Facebook account and marketing through a business page . But the differences that do exist are important.

You want to retain your privacy but you also want to come across as a real person who can form networks and relationships. That's the balance you need to strike.

Most people will market themselves on Facebook this way. It's how I do it, but it's not the only way to do it.

In the next chapter, I'm going to look at some of the ways that businesses use their Facebook accounts to build their brand.

2. BUILDING A BUSINESS PAGE

Coca Cola's Sprite was one of the first brands to make use of Facebook's marketing power. It gave Facebook members Sips to play with.

In November 2007, Facebook created a whole new way for businesses to market themselves on the site. Instead of promoting their products through a personal Facebook page, business are now able to create commercial pages.

One of the first companies in line was Coca Cola, who created a page for Sprite.

The page has a main image, information about the product, music, discussion boards, video, fans instead of friends, and perhaps most important of all, its own application: users can add little animated Sip robots to their Facebook pages and play with them. Whenever they make a change to their Sip, that piece of news is related to all their friends. And as if that wasn't enough, Coca Cola also gets access to the information on every Sip user's profile.

You don't have to be that busy… or that scary.

But you can build a special Facebook page for your business and use it to promote your brand.

In this chapter, I'll explain how.

2.1 Facebook's Business Services

Facebook tries to justify its $15 billion valuation with some neat little business solutions.

Log in to Facebook and at the bottom of the page you'll find a link that says "Business." That link will take you to a page of Business Solutions that lists a number of different tools that businesses can use to promote themselves on the site.

You want to ignore most of them.

Facebook Social Ads let you place ads on Facebook pages, either on the side of the page or in the news stream. You do get to choose the demographic of the people who will see the ad, but with a little clever use of Facebook, you should be able to get similar benefits for free.

Facebook Beacon is a much more powerful idea… and a lot more creepy too. It lets you add three lines of code to your website so that when a user takes an action on one of your Web pages, such as buying a product or adding an item to a wish list, that action appears in the news section of their Facebook profile — and from there is visible to all their friends.

That's a pretty powerful way to spread the word about your business. It's free and although users are asked permission before the news of their action is sent, it's still sending shivers down the spines of privacy guardians.

Facebook Insights is a stats page used mostly to help advertisers keep track of their Social ads.

Facebook Polls can be a useful way to gather information about the people on Facebook. You can ask any question you want… and pay 25 cents per answer. If you're prepared to shell out the cash to get information you need, it might have its uses.

And **Facebook Platform** is a hugely powerful tool that can let you massively boost your marketing. It lets you build applications (like Sprite's Sips) that can spread your name around Facebook faster than a cold virus in a children's playground.

It's free but you'll need to have a good idea and either know coding or know someone who does.

At the moment, these services are relatively new. They've been set up to help monetize a service that's been valued at bucketloads of cash but hasn't yet made a dime.

So far, advertising on Facebook hasn't proven to be particularly successful — Facebook users want to keep in touch with friends, not buy stuff. And as long as Facebook isn't rewarding its members for the ads that appear on their pages, it's going to have limited appeal.

That may change, in which case Social Ads could turn out to be a good way to promote your online business. Until then though, and unless you're good at building creative applications, the easiest and best way to use Facebook's business services is by building a business or personal page and putting it in front of lots of people yourself.

2.2 How To Create Your Facebook Business Page

Creating a Facebook business page is very simple. Hit the Facebook Pages button in the business section of the site, then press the Create a Facebook Page in the top right corner.

You'll be asked what kind of business you want to create a page for.

The three options are Local, Brand or Product, and Artist, Band or Public Figure.

Note that there isn't an option for websites or blogs.

You could choose local if the market for your site is local but otherwise stick to the second option: Brand or Product. You will, after all, be using this page to improve your branding.
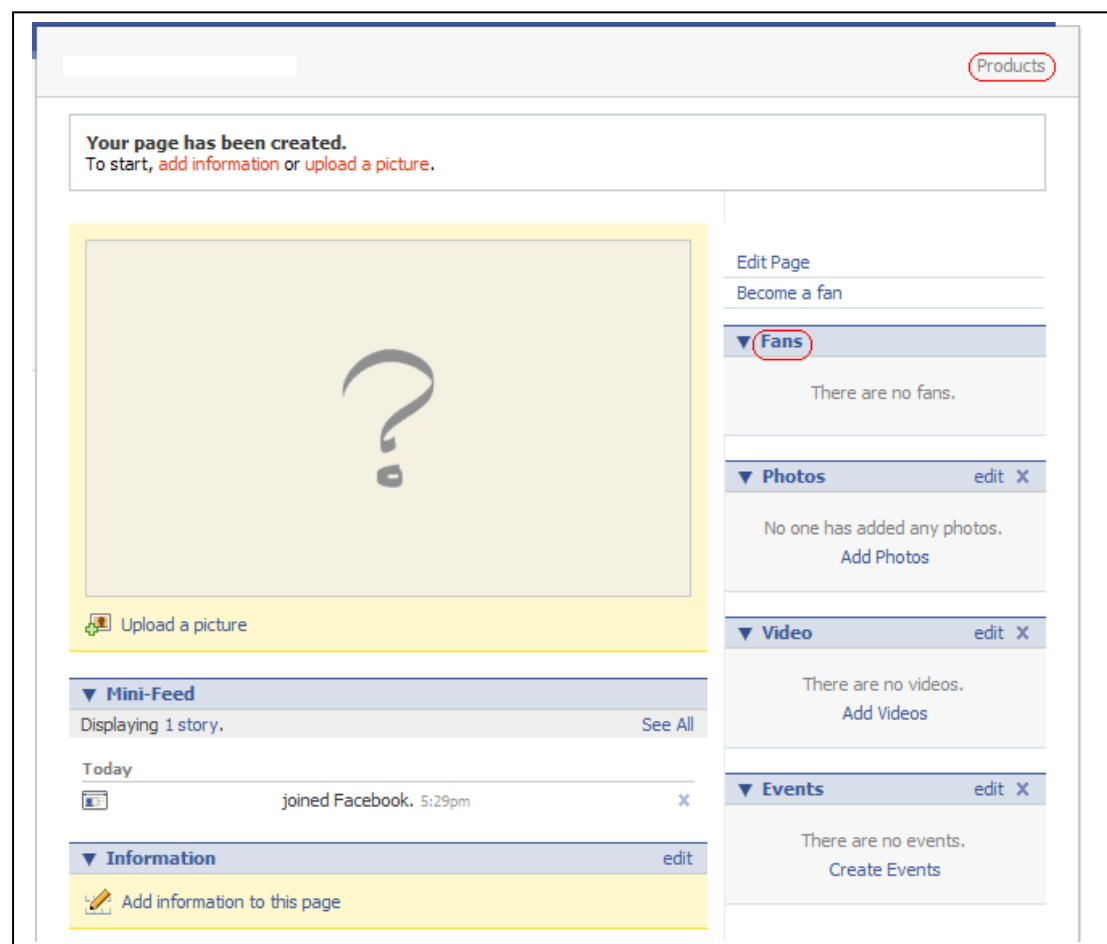
The start of a whole new business page. And it looks *almost* the same as a regular page.

Once you've signed up you'll notice that a business page on Facebook looks almost the same as an individual page on Facebook.

There are a few differences though.

The first is that the type of service your business offers appears at the top right of the screen.

That's like hanging a big sign saying "advertisement!" It's not the end of the world, but it will affect how people will relate to your page. They're going to see that it's a business and that's something you have to bear in mind.

The second difference is that you have "fans" not friends.

That's a very big change.

"Friends" suggests a relationship of equals. Information and fun flow both ways. Fans support something and the thing that they support has to provide entertainment.

To keep people interested in receiving your news and staying a "fan" then you'll have to provide greater rewards than you will for friends. Sprite currently does that by providing a fun application, but there are plenty of other ways too. Most of them involve being active in groups and discussions. I'll talk about that in more detail later in this report.

For now, just understand that the relationship between your page and the people who connect with it is an important difference between business pages and personal pages.

2.3 What To Do And What Not To Do On A Business Facebook Page

That difference also affects what you put on the page.

The first thing you'll notice when you come to create a business page, is that you're given a giant picture. You can put pictures on your personal Facebook page but the image you get for a business page is huge. In fact, it's the main focus of the page… just like an ad.

You can use it — but you have to do it creatively.

Coca Cola, for example, has got it all wrong on its company page. It's used the picture as a placeholder for its logo.

But everyone knows what the Coca Cola logo looks like!

They don't need to become a fan of Coca Cola's Facebook page to see the logo or to read that the company produces "carbonated soft drinks, as well as noncarbonated beverages."

Big yawn.

No one is going to be interested in keeping in contact with a page like this. (In fact, most of the posts on Coca Cola's wall attack the company — and even the content on its page.)

What Coca Cola did wrong was to use its Facebook page as a place to provide information.

Commercial websites can do that.

Facebook pages have to reward their fans. They do that by providing them with fun.
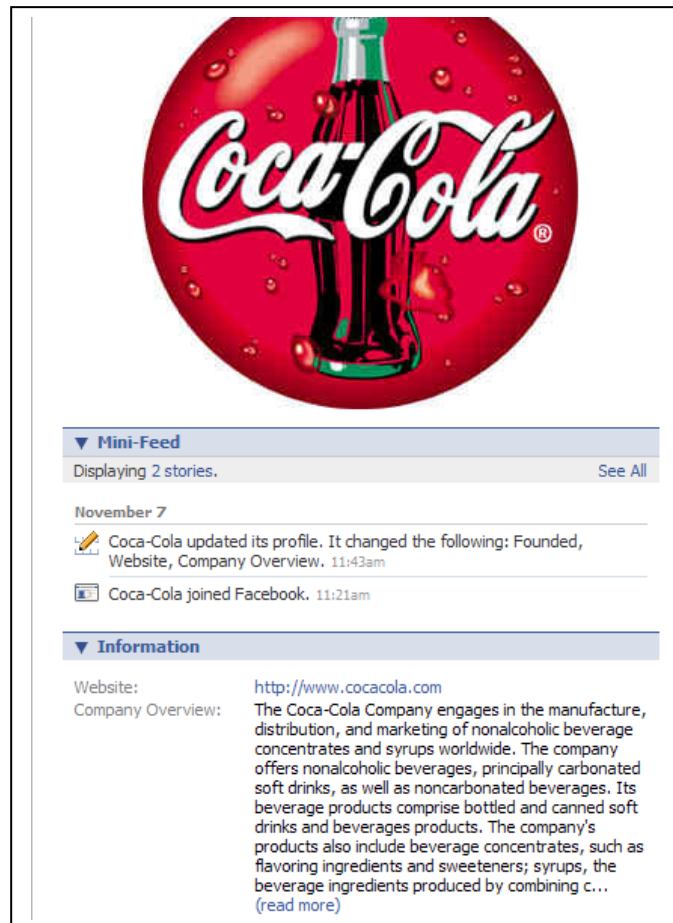
Could this be the most boring page on Facebook?

So the picture has to be exciting. A photo of you in an interesting pose might work. A Flash image would be better.

And the information about the business or the website can't read like a company prospectus. If it's drier than a bag of sticks no one will want to look at it.

Where Coca Cola says:

> "The Coca Cola Company engages in the manufacture, distribution, and marketing of nonalcoholic beverages and syrups worldwide…"

the Sprite Sips page says:

"Sprite hits you with a crisp, refreshing Lymon taste and a fresh, cutting edge attitude. People all around the world enjoy it 10 billion times each year."

Do you see the difference?

That continues into the rest of the page too. Where Coca Cola only has a mini-feed, a wall and a discussion board, Sprite's page has a music player and videos.

G.A.P Adventures, a Canadian travel firm, does the same sort of thing. They use their logo as their main image but stuff the page with pictures of trips that they're organizing, leave room for a video unit, and — here's the best idea — offer a photo contest and put the winning pictures in one of its galleries.
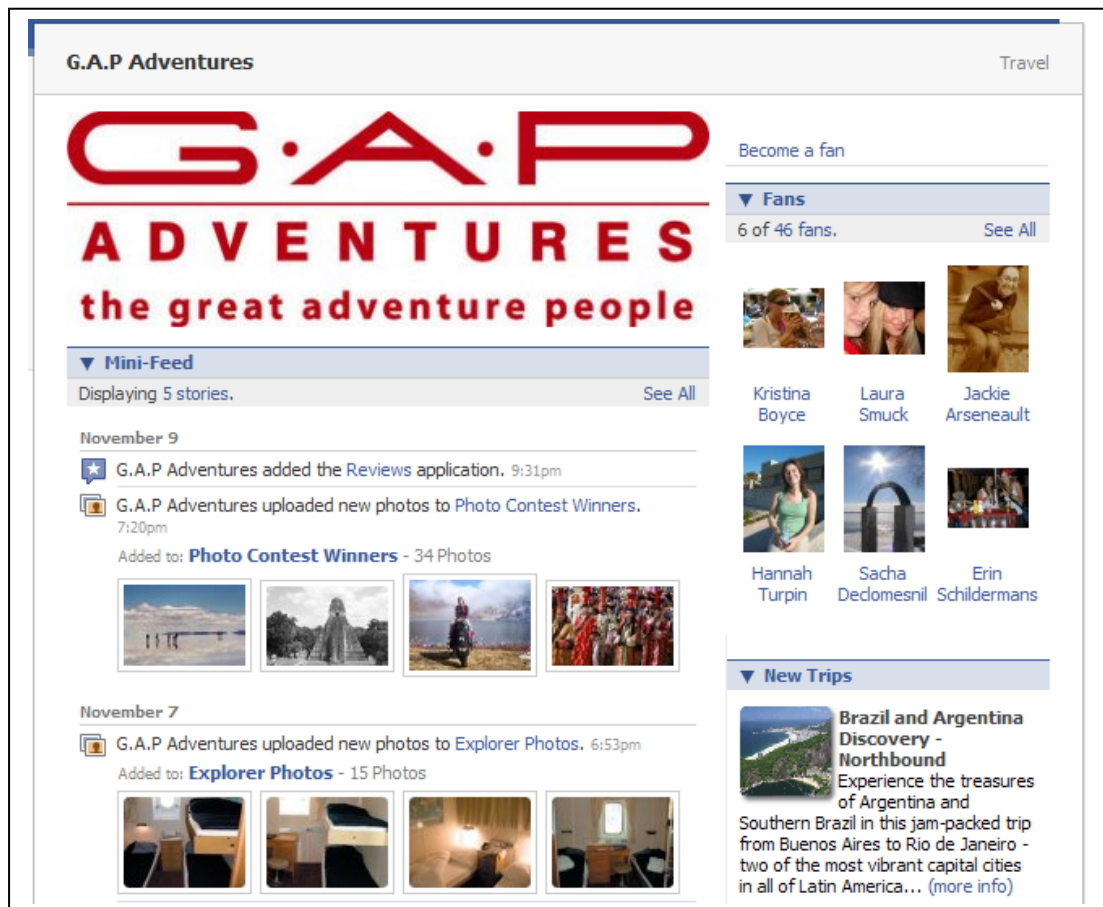
G.A.P Adventures' business page is both fun and informative.

So what does this mean for an Internet publisher using a Facebook business page?

It means that you need to make the page an experience. Here are just three of the things you can use to make that happen:

- **An exciting image.**

A logo can work but a cartoon-style picture or a Flash animation would work better as the main picture on your Facebook page.

- **Videos from YouTube**
  Sprite's page has a clip from the NBA that was taken from YouTube. It's free, it's fun so it's something that you can do too.

- **Competitions**
  Competitions keep people coming back to see who's won and to see the winning entries too. You don't have to award prizes — just being named a winner can be incentive enough — but if you have information products that you can hand out, you'll be giving your business some extra promotion too.

Those are only three strategies that you can use. If you look at the list of applications that you can put on a Facebook page, you'll find thousands more tools that you can use to make your business page more exciting. There's no limit to what you can do.

As long as it makes your page more exciting, keeps fans in touch with what's happening in your business and helps them remember who you are, you can use it.

2.4 So Which Should You Choose: A Personal Facebook Page Or A Business Facebook Page?

Until very recently, you had no choice at all about which sort of page you created on Facebook.

It was a personal page or no page at all.

The creation of business pages has created a whole new world on Facebook. While it's too early to say what the effect of those business pages is likely to have, they do give Internet publishers an interesting choice.

Should you go for a business page or a personal page?

We've seen that there's a difference in the way that other Facebook members are likely to react to these different types of pages.

Business pages have to entertain fans. Personal pages have to feed a relationship of equals.

In general then, I think the best bet is to use a personal page if your website is closely identified with you.

If your blog is based on your opinions, your experiences and your personality, then a personal Facebook page can be an excellent way for your readers to get closer to you.

It can deepen loyalty, encourage referrals and bring new readers to your site to find out more.

If your online business isn't closely related to who you are (if it's a retail site, for example, or a review site) then a business page could give you more flexibility.

It all boils down to who other Facebook users might want to learn more about: you or your business?

2.5 The Golden Rule: Promote Your Business

Facebook has done an excellent job. It's created a website with millions of people, all of whom provide personal — and valuable — information.

It's now opened its services to businesses so that they can make the most of those crowds.

And it's even started offering ad campaigns to those businesses so that they can spread the word to targeted markets.

Do you notice what's missing?

There's no way for businesses to earn money from their Facebook pages.

That's a huge gap but at the moment, if an ad appears on your Facebook page, you won't earn a penny from it. Nor can you sell products or choose your own ads.

For businesses, Facebook is a branding site, not a retail site. It's a place to find new users and to create a closer relationship with the users you have.

The only way you can turn your Facebook presence into cash is to send the people you meet on the site to your own website.

Whether you use a personal page or a business page, your URL has to be clear.

The news that feeds through to your friends or fans has to relate to your site so that they'll be curious enough to come and have a look.

And content that you put on discussion boards or on other boards should supplement what happens on your website so that the two complement each other.

You can build the most popular page on Facebook, but if it doesn't bring people to your website where they can click on ads or buy products, it won't help you at all.

You will have to be popular though. In the next chapter, I'll reveal the secret to making friends and building fans on Facebook.

3. MAKING FRIENDS AND BUILDING A FAN BASE ON FACEBOOK

Facebook is a social networking site. Just as the value of a website will be measured, at least in part, by the number of users it has, the value of a Facebook page is measured by the number of friends or fans it has.

Getting traffic to visit a website can be difficult.

Getting friends and fans to connect to your Facebook page is much easier.

Facebook itself provides a number of tools to build up your friends lists. There are a number of other strategies that you can use too.
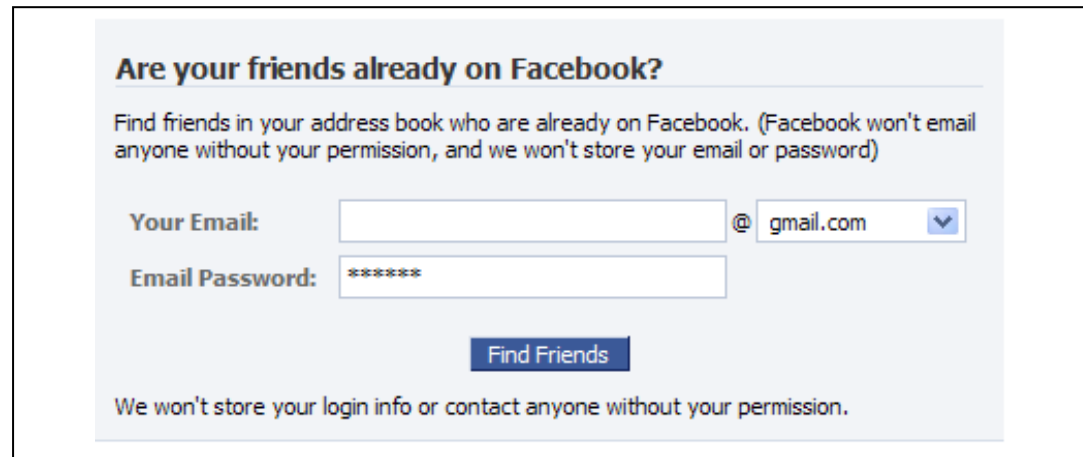
3.1 Are Your Friends Already On Facebook?

Log in to your Facebook account and there's a chance that right at the top of the screen, you'll notice a big box asking if your friends are already on Facebook. Hit the Find Friends button, and Facebook will look through your Address Book to see if anyone you have listed is on the site.

Sounds like a neat thing to do, doesn't it?

It can be, especially when you're looking to use Facebook socially. It's a very quick way to see which of your friends are already on the site so that you can add them quickly.

It can also be helpful when you're using Facebook professionally… as long as you search in the correct email addresses.

Are your friends already on Facebook?

Find friends in your address book who are already on Facebook. (Facebook won't email anyone without your permission, and we won't store your email or password)

Your Email: _____ @ gmail.com

Email Password: ******

Find Friends

We won't store your login info or contact anyone without your permission.

One quick way to find new friends on Facebook.

Facebook's friend finder searches the address books of each email address you enter. It then lists the people already on Facebook in each book. It also suggests that you invite the people in your address book who aren't already on the site.

You can see how Facebook grew so quickly!

But before you start asking everyone in every address book to be your friend — and all the people in your contact list who aren't on Facebook to join — remember that what you're doing is a marketing venture.

You don't want to be like a member of one of those MLM plans forced to sell stuff to friends and relatives.

You want to bring people who will enjoy staying in touch with your news on Facebook. Anyone you've written to as part of your website will do fine. Friends and family could certainly work too.

But think twice about inviting or asking anyone who wouldn't want stay in touch with you through Facebook. There's no point in burning good relationships that work outside the site.
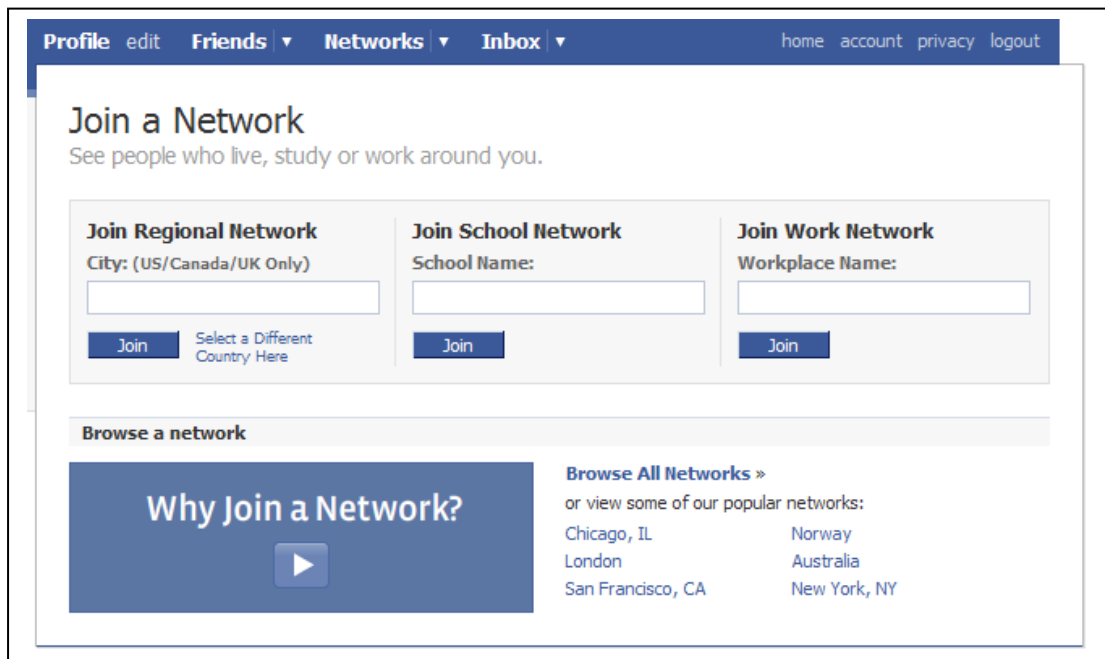
3.2 Search For Friends

While Facebook's friend finder can help you gather a base of friends and fans fast, you can also toss names into its search engine.

It's a little time-consuming and you might find it easiest to make a list of people first. But if you have contacts who aren't in your email address book — especially people you met at conferences — it's an effective way to find them.

It's also a good way to put the stack of business cards piling up in your drawer to work.

3.3 Working The Networks

Facebook's networks are one of the easiest ways to build connections.

So far I've been talking about contacting people you already know on Facebook. That can be fun but it's limited. When you're using Facebook to market a website, you need to contact lots of people, especially people you don't know — and you need do it all in one go.

That's where networks can be useful.

Networks are large groups which enable people who have one specific characteristic in common to get together.

That might be something as unique as a previous workplace or as general as your city.

Some of those networks then can be huge. The London network, for example, has over a million members. The New York City network has over half a million.

Join more than one network and you could give yourself a sizable potential audience to market your online business… which is why so many people do it and why spamming the networks is such an ineffective way to promote anything.

To understand how to make the most of the networks, it's important to understand how the network pages are laid out.

At the top of the page, you'll find some basic information about the network, such as the number of members, and some random pictures from their profiles. Beneath that, you'll find Events, followed by Popular Items, Groups, Flyers (a form of paid advertising), a Marketplace, a Discussion Board, The Wall and Network Statistics.

In theory, many of those places could be a free message board to market your website.

In practice, most of the ads that appear in these spaces look too much like ads to be very effective.

You can't rely on them to remain on the page for very long before they're pushed down the order, and just putting up the sort of spam that people find in their inboxes every day isn't going to win you any friends or fans. It could even cost you both when people hit the Report link at the bottom of the post.

Philip Bernaerts (New York, NY) wrote
at 12:00pm

want to earn some money? visit http://tremium.jlu.jp

Message - Report

Gerhard Platzer (New York, NY) wrote
at 11:56am

I'm probably the biggest internet dummy ever, but yesterday I made $240. The day before I made $160; The day before that I made $80, and the day before that I made $280.

And do you know what I did to make that money..........nothing!

Actually I let someone else do all the work, they did all the leg work and put all the time in, but I made all the money..........100% of it.

I don't even sell anything. I give something away for free, and every time I give it away, I make money.

It's awesome!

I don't even need a website.

http://600usd.here.ws

Message - Report

These people spammed the New York network. Don't be these people.

There are ways to get something out of networks — to use them to find new friends and fans, and to publicize your website. The key is to pay your way.

Submit something to the Events board, for example, and it has to be something relevant both to you and to the group.

So if you had a website about photography, you could organize a photography meeting in New York and publicize it on the network. Include your URL in the post as a place for people to find more information and you'd get some extra impressions, as well as a deeper community for your site.

A post on the discussion board would also have to bring together both your site's interest and the interest of the network. That's a lot easier than organizing an event. Asking people to suggest the best places to do photography in New York could work well, and anyone who answered would be a potential friend or fan.

But steer clear of the Wall and, unless it's relevant to the network, avoid the Marketplace too.

The Wall is far too general. You might get a few clicks by posting a message with your URL on a network wall — spammers obviously get enough clicks to make hitting Send worthwhile — but I don't think it's going to be worthwhile for an AdSense site; it's far too much effort and it will just give you a bad name.

And the Marketplace is too much like Craigslist. Although you can put products there, classifieds really aren't the best place to market a website.

The fact is, networks are better at finding new contacts than at marketing to them. You can use them to find old school friends or old workmates. You can also use them to pitch carefully to people who happen to be in particular areas.
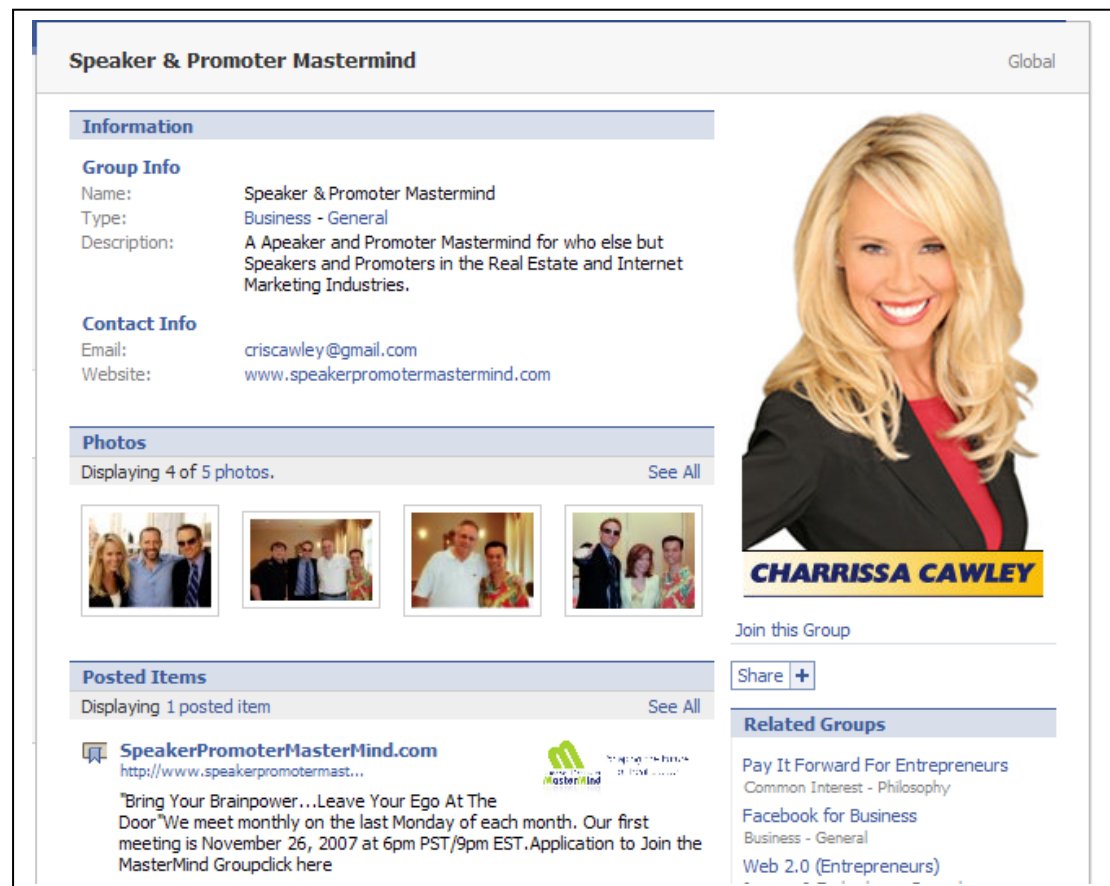
But Groups are a much better way of finding contacts and creating new users.

3.4 Joining Groups As A Way Of Making Friends

In theory, networks should be one of the most powerful aspects of Facebook.

They can be, but only if you're looking to renew a friendship with someone you once worked with or if your website has something special to offer people in a particular city or who went to a particular school.

If you had a website about Harvard alumni, for example, the Harvard University network would be very valuable.

You can meet all sorts of fun people in Facebook groups. I'm in this one.

But most websites aren't like that. Most websites are about the sort of topics that don't fit too neatly into the sort of geographic, work and educational networks that Facebook has prepared.

Groups though can be about anything you want. There are groups about fashion, groups about celebrities, groups about politics and groups about anything you can imagine.

And if you can't find a group you can imagine, you can create one.

Being a member of a group brings two advantages.

First, it gives you access to lots of potential new friends and fans. If you've created an AdSense-supported website about iPods, for example, you could join a group about iPods, create discussion

threads, answer questions… and ask other members of the group to become your friends.

You can also use it to drive traffic to your site. So you could create a post asking people what they think about a piece of content that you've placed on your blog.

That would send people to look it without creating the impression that you were spamming them.

Groups can be a very good way to find new contacts that aren't in your address book and who could be come loyal users of your website.

3.5 The Power Of Your Own Group

[My AdSense group on Facebook](#).

Joining a group that already exists will give you access to everyone in that group. Take part in the group's discussions and place posts and comments, and you'll have paid for access to those members and increase the chances that people will say "yes" when you ask to add them as friends.

No one wants to be friends with a wallhanger.

So if being an active member of a group makes you look like someone people would want to know, just think what being a *founder* of a group can do for your Facebook social skills.

You don't just get access to a group of people. You get to be seen as a leader of those people.

That's very powerful.

It's also why one of the first things I did when I joined Facebook was to set up an AdSense group. At last count, it had almost 700 members.

Obviously, not all of those people are in my Friends list. But as members of my group:

- They see my URL, some of my video content, and some of my posts too;
- They read contributions from other marketing experts and speakers;
- They get access to the special offers I make available from time to time;
- And they see me as an expert on AdSense and someone with whom they have a special relationship.

And as for me, I get to promote my book, my websites and my speaking appearances. I have access to the group's members as a marketing source and I know that they're interested and targeted.

Best of all, I get to help more people to create successful online businesses. Nothing is more satisfying than that.

There are two ways to create successful groups like this, with lots of members.

The first is to put a number in the title. Lots of people do this on Facebook. They create groups with titles like "1,000,000 people who like frogs" or "The fastest group to get 200,000 members."

It's a bit old and while it might bring you lots of people quickly, it's not likely to bring many targeted people.

It might take a little longer to use the second method — to build a group about a niched subject that matches your business — but the value of the members should make it worthwhile.

3.6 Turn Your Users Into Friends

So far I've been talking about Facebook as a way to make contacts that could bring more traffic — and more loyal traffic — to your website. But the flow can go the other way too.

You can send your users to Facebook and turn them into friends and fans.

A BBC technology journalist called Rory Cellan-Jones, for example, once wrote an article claiming that Facebook wasn't for middle-aged people like him (or me).

The response?

He received over 700 invitations to become friends. A group was even set up on Facebook called "Befriend Rory Cellan-Jones."

Journalist Rory Cellan-Jones picked up more than 700 friends by writing about his Facebook page.

What does that mean for you?

It means that talking about your Facebook page on your blog or your website can bring you more friends and fans. It's a bit like using your site to collect email addresses. Even something as simple as mentioning that you're looking to add as many friends as quickly as possible can be enough to give your Facebook contact list a flurry of extra names.

And of course, you can simply place a link to your Facebook page on your website and write above it "Befriend me on Facebook."

Very simple.

So you can create a personal Facebook page or a business Facebook page. You can find friends, add friends, join groups and networks, and create your own groups.

In short, you can build up a giant list of contacts who are interested in you.

But what can you do with them?

4. TURNING FRIENDS AND FANS INTO CUSTOMERS AND AD CLICKS

Facebook has been valued at billions of dollars. I don't know whether it's really worth that sort of money. But from the point of view of Internet publishers, I do believe it's worth something.

I've already outlined some of the ways that my Facebook presence is helping me to market my knowledge, my products and my website to people interested in AdSense.

But there are other ways too.

4.1 Using News Feeds As Reminders

One of the most important aspects of Facebook is that it lets people know when their friends have done something on the site.

Add a new friend and everyone on your list will know about it.

You can think of that as the easiest kind of automatic reminder. It's like sending a message to several hundred of your users every day or two saying, "Hey, do you remember me?"

And you don't have to do anything out of the ordinary. Just add new applications, make new friends and join groups. It will happen automatically.

4.2 Blog Friends And My Questions

There are all sorts of applications that can help to promote both your Facebook presence and your online business. I'm not going to go into all of them in detail here. There are far too many of them.

But I will mention two of the most powerful.

Blog Friends adds an RSS-style blog feed to your page. That's valuable because it lets your friends find content that they'll enjoy (and therefore give them a reason to come back). But it's also valuable because it provides another way for your blog posts to reach an audience.

Give content, get readers with Blog Friends.
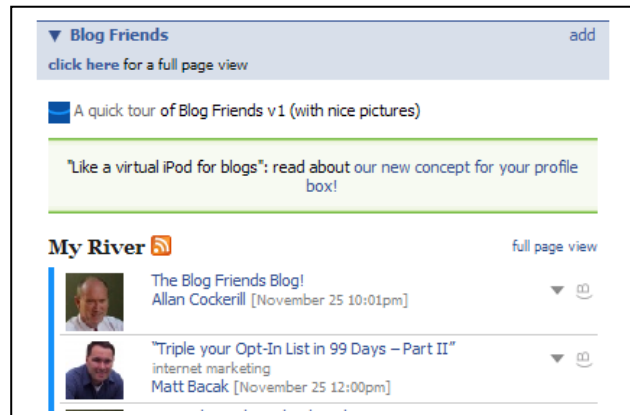
Facebook members will only see the opening paragraph or so of the post, but that should be enough to get them clicking through to your site, your ads and your products.

And another application that I think is excellent is **My Questions**. This lets you pose a question on your profile page and get answers in the same place. Just take a look at how I use it to send people to my site and bring the discussion back to Facebook!

The main benefit that Facebook brings to online entrepreneurs is that it can provide new users and deepen the relationship between a site and its visitors.

There is one more benefit it can bring though and this is perhaps the most powerful of all. It can put you in touch with people with whom you can form joint ventures. Those might be people you've met at conferences. They might be people you met through people you met at conferences. Or they might just be people you meet in groups and networks on Facebook.
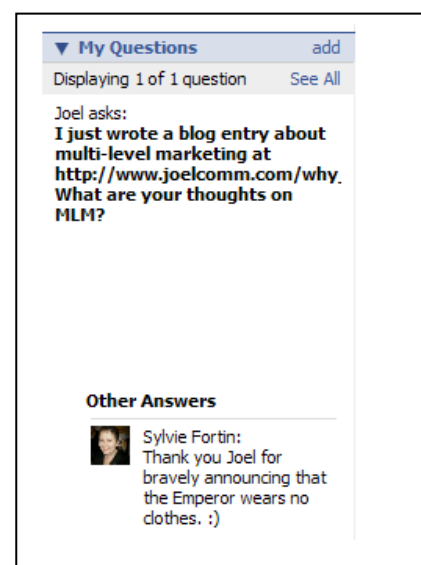
But if you find a valuable partner on Facebook, you might understand why the site is worth so much money.

From Facebook to my site and back again.

CONCLUSION

Facebook is still fairly new. It might have millions of members but its ability to drive sales and generate advertising revenue has still not been tested completely.

That's changing. Facebook is now becoming more business-oriented.

In this report, I explained how to create a personal Facebook page and pointed out what the site is doing with its new business pages.

I discussed which sort of page you should create for your business and which of the new tools that Facebook is rolling out looks most useful.

I also talked about building up the most valuable resource of all on Facebook: contacts. Gathering those people can take time but groups and networks help. The most important point is to be active. Do things on Facebook and people will see you, know about you and be friends with you.

And finally, I discussed some of the ways that you can turn those contacts into cash.

That includes sending as many of them as possible to your website and striking deals with others.

At the moment, you can't earn from your Facebook page itself, but you can use it to generate more revenue on your own site.

It's an opportunity that looks likely only to become more and more important as the site continues to grow. It's something we're all going to have to experiment with and keep a close eye on.

About the Author

Joel Comm is an Internet entrepreneur who has been building successful web sites since 1995. Dedicated to providing a family-friendly Internet experience, Joel's flagship site, WorldVillage.com, continues to be a popular family-safe portal. Joel is the co-creator of Yahoo! Games and author of the New York Times Bestseller, *The AdSense Code*. Joel makes frequent appearances at Internet marketing conferences and seminar, conducting workshops and training others in the latest ways to make money on the Internet. He is the host of the world's first Internet marketing reality show, The Next Internet Millionaire.

Joel's sites include:

JoelComm.com – **Joel's Blog**
AskJoelComm.com – **Question submission page**
AdSenseChat.com – **Google AdSense Member Forums**
DealofDay.com - **a popular bargain-hunting community**
FamilyFirst.com – **Family-friendly sites reviews**

More Resources by Joel Comm

DISCLAIMER AND TERMS OF USE AGREEMENT

The author and publisher of this eBook and the accompanying materials have used their best efforts in preparing this eBook. The author and publisher make no representation or warranties with respect to the accuracy, applicability, fitness, or completeness of the contents of this eBook. The information contained in this eBook is strictly for educational purposes. Therefore, if you wish to apply ideas contained in this eBook, you are taking full responsibility for your actions.

EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO ACCURATELY REPRESENT THIS PRODUCT AND IT'S POTENTIAL. EVEN THOUGH THIS INDUSTRY IS ONE OF THE FEW WHERE ONE CAN WRITE THEIR OWN CHECK IN TERMS OF EARNINGS, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL EARN ANY MONEY USING THE TECHNIQUES AND IDEAS IN THESE MATERIALS. EXAMPLES IN THESE MATERIALS ARE NOT TO BE INTERPRETED AS A PROMISE OR GUARANTEE OF EARNINGS. EARNING POTENTIAL IS ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON THE PERSON USING OUR PRODUCT, IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES. WE DO NOT PURPORT THIS AS A "GET RICH SCHEME."

ANY CLAIMS MADE OF ACTUAL EARNINGS OR EXAMPLES OF ACTUAL RESULTS CAN BE VERIFIED UPON REQUEST. YOUR LEVEL OF SUCCESS IN ATTAINING THE RESULTS CLAIMED IN OUR MATERIALS DEPENDS ON THE TIME YOU DEVOTE TO THE PROGRAM, IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES MENTIONED, YOUR FINANCES, KNOWLEDGE AND VARIOUS SKILLS. SINCE THESE FACTORS DIFFER ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUALS, WE CANNOT GUARANTEE YOUR SUCCESS OR INCOME LEVEL. NOR ARE WE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY OF YOUR ACTIONS.

MATERIALS IN OUR PRODUCT AND OUR WEBSITE MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT INCLUDES OR IS BASED UPON FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE SECURITIES LITIGATION REFORM ACT OF 1995. FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS GIVE OUR EXPECTATIONS OR FORECASTS OF FUTURE EVENTS. YOU CAN IDENTIFY THESE STATEMENTS BY THE FACT THAT THEY DO NOT RELATE STRICTLY TO HISTORICAL OR CURRENT FACTS. THEY USE WORDS SUCH AS "ANTICIPATE," "ESTIMATE," "EXPECT," "PROJECT," "INTEND," "PLAN," "BELIEVE," AND OTHER WORDS AND TERMS OF SIMILAR MEANING IN CONNECTION WITH A DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL EARNINGS OR FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE. ANY AND ALL FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS HERE OR ON ANY OF OUR SALES MATERIAL ARE INTENDED TO EXPRESS OUR OPINION OF EARNINGS POTENTIAL. MANY FACTORS WILL BE IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING YOUR ACTUAL RESULTS AND NO GUARANTEES ARE MADE THAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE RESULTS SIMILAR TO OURS OR ANYBODY ELSES, IN FACT NO GUARANTEES ARE MADE THAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE ANY RESULTS FROM OUR IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES IN OUR MATERIAL.

The author and publisher disclaim any warranties (express or implied), merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose. The author and publisher shall in no event be held liable to any party for any direct, indirect, punitive, special, incidental or other consequential damages arising directly or indirectly from any use of this material, which is provided "as is", and without warranties. As always, the advice of a competent legal, tax, accounting or other professional should be sought. The author and publisher do not warrant the performance, effectiveness or applicability of any sites listed or linked to in this eBook.

All links are for information purposes only and are not warranted for content, accuracy or any other implied or explicit purpose.