

Facebook for South African Businesses

Version 1.0

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"A powerful global conversation has begun. Through the Internet, people are discovering and inventing new ways to share relevant knowledge with blinding speed. As a direct result, markets are getting smarter—and getting smarter faster than most companies."

[The Cluetrain Manifesto, 1999](#)

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Foreword

This guide is intended for business people in South Africa who are trying to work out how social networking can help in their business. Although there is a South African slant, the information should be relevant to business people from anywhere in the world.

I've tried to cover the basics - for people who are completely new to Facebook - as well as some more advanced topics. If you find that you already know the basic stuff, feel free to skip it.

If you need more help with any of the topics in this guide, the first place to look is the [Facebook Help Center](#).

Facebook changes all the time, with each change usually being greeted by vocal protests and dozens of groups, pages and blog posts demanding that the changes be reversed. All I can do is present a snapshot of how Facebook works as I write this.

Why Social Networking?

Human beings are social animals. Once the Internet had been invented, it didn't take long for people to find ways to connect and discuss topics on interest on the Internet. UseNet and discussion forums have been around for many years. Social Networking websites like Facebook, MySpace and LinkedIn have used improvements in technology to allow users to interact and get involved on a broader scale.

Most business people understand the power of networking. In the offline world, there are a number of ways to connect with people who may potentially be customers, suppliers or strategic partners. Breakfast meetings, seminars and business forums provide opportunities for socializing and connecting with like-minded people.

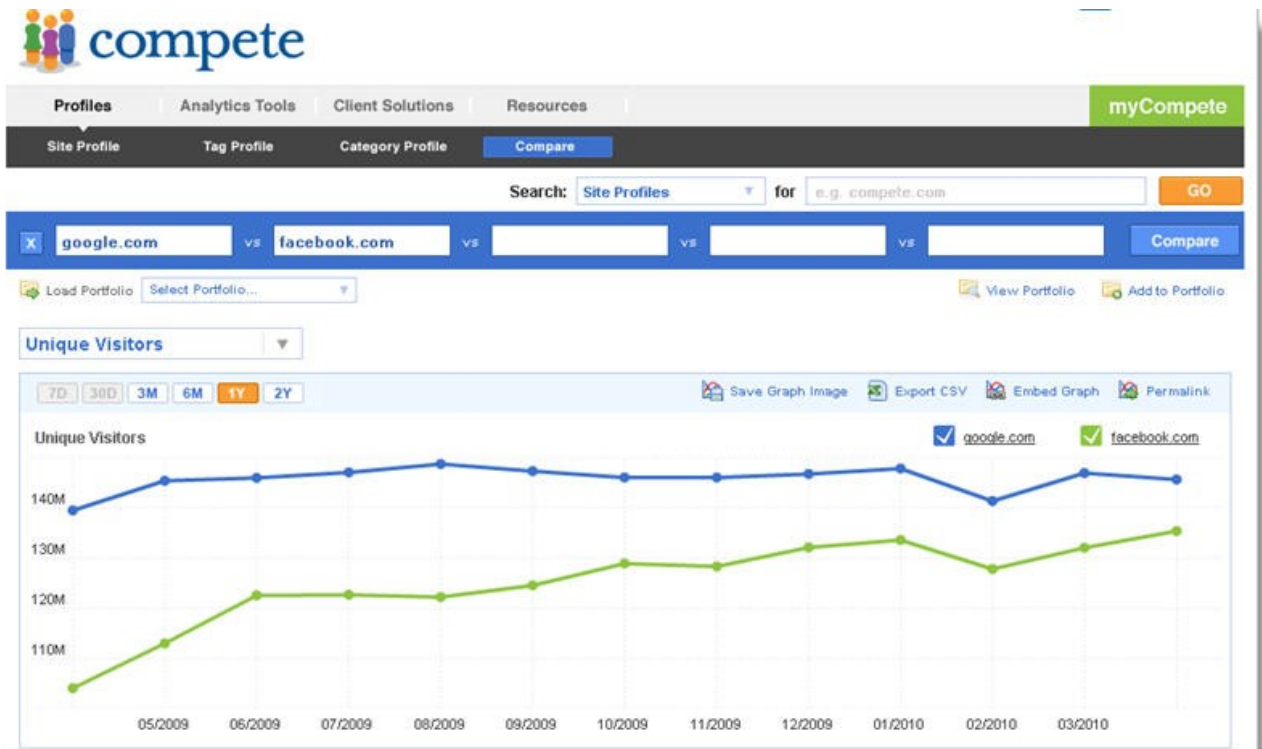
The key difference between offline networking and online social networking is that when you talk to someone offline, you don't know who else that person knows.

In the online world, once you connect with someone, you have access to their connections as well. On Facebook, when you post a photo or a video to a friend's Wall, that person's friends can see it as well. If they find it interesting, they might share it with their friends. They might have a look at your profile and send you a friend request. The Facebook environment positively encourages viral activity like this.

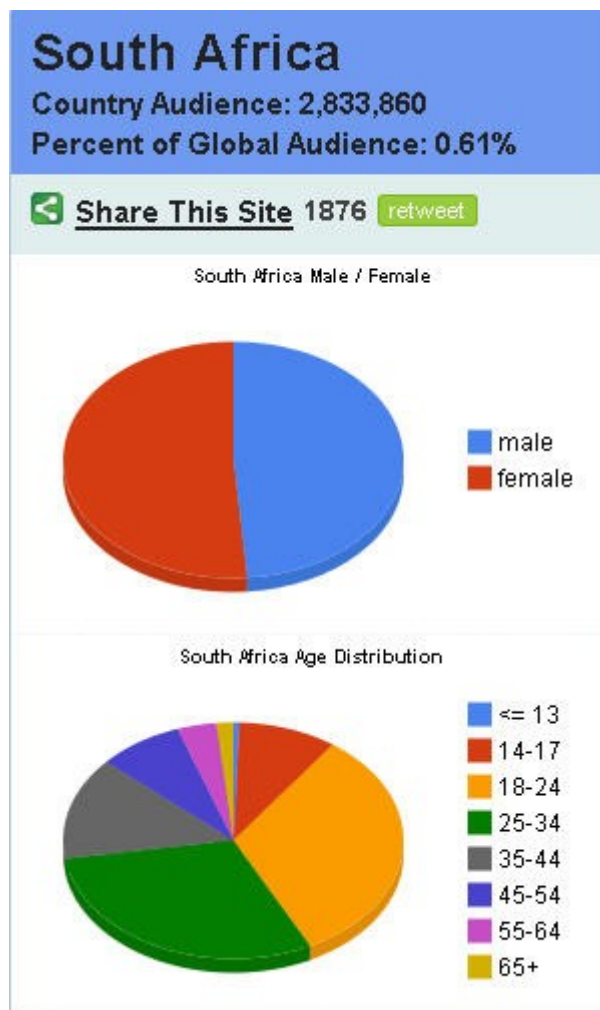
Social networks make it possible to engage with customers and potential customers as never before.

Why Facebook?

As I write this, Facebook is the second most popular website in the world, after Google. Facebook has over 400 million users, and according to the company, 50% of the users log in to their accounts every day.



Facebook is the second most popular website In South Africa, with over 2.8 million users. This means that more than 50% of the 5.3 million South Africans with Internet access are on Facebook.



Of the 2.8 million users, just over a million are over the age of 30.

One of the keys to attracting new customers to your business is to make your business visible in the places where prospective customers gather.

In the past, television, radio and newspaper advertising were effective because of their ability to reach huge audiences. As the world becomes more and more reliant on the Internet, the old forms of advertising will become less effective.

In the UK, [30% of all advertising budgets in 2009 were spent online](#). The [figure for South Africa is much smaller - only 1.3%](#). However, that's still R468 million. You can expect that number to increase as Internet access becomes less expensive and more pervasive.

People are spending more and more time on social networks like Facebook. In fact, the

amount of time spent watching videos on Facebook [almost doubled in 2009](#) compared with 2008.

Facebook is one of the places where people are gathering and connecting, and if you are not prepared to take advantage of the powerful opportunity provided by Facebook and other social networking sites, you can be sure that your competitors will do so.

Playing by the Rules

Facebook, like any business which provides a free service to a large number of people, has a set of rules which need to be adhered to in order to avoid unpleasantness. Ignoring the rules may result in your account being closed, so it's a good idea to know what the rules are before you start.

The full Facebook Terms of Service can be found here:

<http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>

Here are some guidelines:

- You must use your real name for your personal profile
- Only one profile per person
- Profiles are for people, pages are for businesses
- Don't add too many friends too quickly

Read the Terms Of Service and follow them!

Facebook Accounts

There are two kinds of Facebook account, Business and Personal.

Business Accounts

If you want to create a Page for your business and advertise it on Facebook, a Business account may be all you need.

Business accounts, however, are severely limited when compared to Personal accounts. They provide limited access to information on Facebook. If you have a Business account, you will be able to see your own Pages and Ad campaigns. But that's it. You won't be able to see the profiles of other users, or any content on the site that isn't on your own Pages. People with Business accounts are not able to send or receive friend requests, and they can't be found with the Facebook search tool.

If you already have a Personal account, you may not create a Business account as well - doing so would break Facebook's Terms of Use.

A Business account can be upgraded to a Personal account. However, you cannot downgrade a Personal account to a Business account.

Personal Accounts

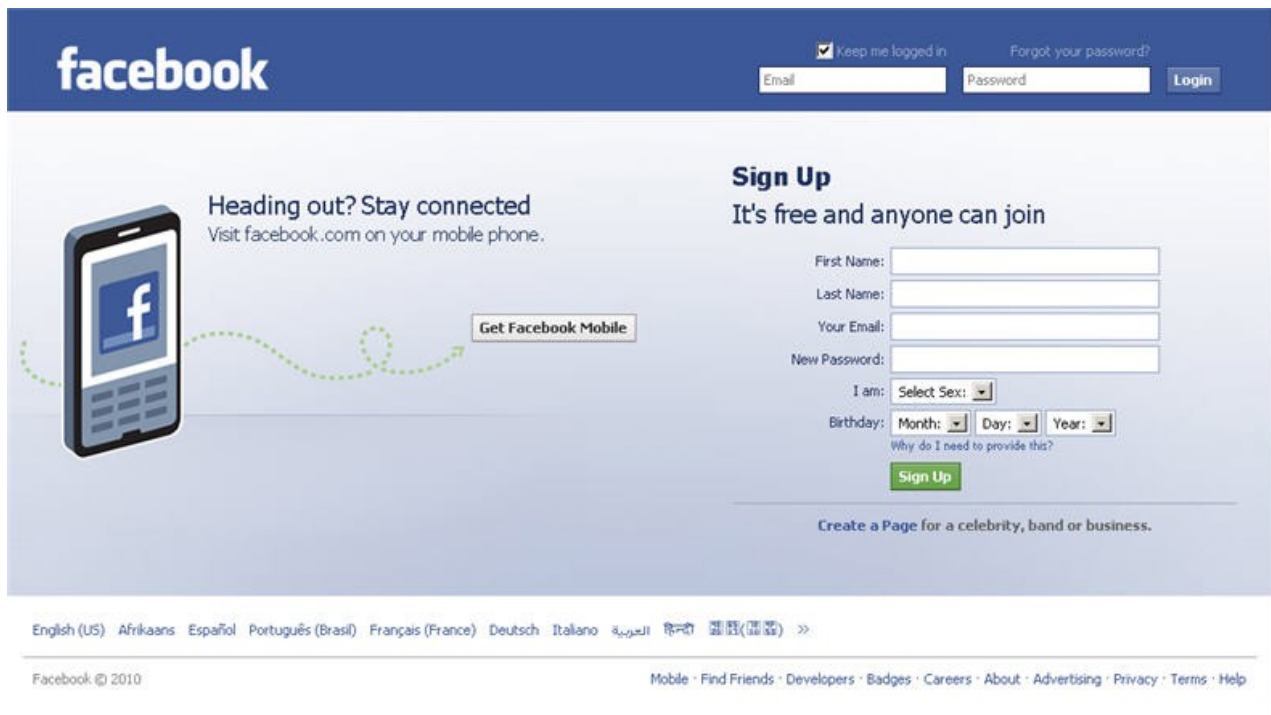
A Personal account (or User Profile) gives you access to all of Facebook's features. You can create Pages, Groups and Events; you can upload videos and photos; you can view other peoples' profiles and send them friend requests.

Which Should You Use?

There's no question that a Personal account is more useful than a Business account. However, I'm sure there are people for whom a Business account is quite adequate.

Creating A Facebook Account

If you don't already have a Facebook account, you can create one by going to [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com).



The screenshot shows the Facebook homepage with a sign-up form. At the top left is the Facebook logo. To the right are links for 'Keep me logged in' (checked), 'Forgot your password?', an 'Email' input field, a 'Password' input field, and a 'Login' button. Below the logo is a promotional banner for mobile access: 'Heading out? Stay connected. Visit facebook.com on your mobile phone.' with a 'Get Facebook Mobile' button and an image of a smartphone. The main sign-up section is titled 'Sign Up' and 'It's free and anyone can join'. It contains the following fields: 'First Name:', 'Last Name:', 'Your Email:', 'New Password:', 'I am:' with a 'Select Sex:' dropdown, and 'Birthday:' with 'Month:', 'Day:', and 'Year:' dropdowns. A small note below the birthday fields says 'Why do I need to provide this?'. A green 'Sign Up' button is at the bottom of the form. Below the form is a link: 'Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business.' The footer contains a list of languages: 'English (US) Afrikaans Español Português (Brasil) Français (France) Deutsch Italiano العربية हिन्दी 日本語 (日本語) >>'. At the bottom left is 'Facebook © 2010' and at the bottom right is a list of links: 'Mobile · Find Friends · Developers · Badges · Careers · About · Advertising · Privacy · Terms · Help'.

If you want to create a Business account, click on **Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business**.

To create a Personal Profile, fill in the form. You will need to fill in all of the fields. Click on **Sign Up**. Facebook will send you a confirmation email; you'll need to click on the link in the email to verify your email address.

Facebook will offer to find friends for you from your email accounts. If you are uncomfortable giving Facebook your email password, you can skip this step.

Facebook will ask you to fill in more information for your Info Page. This is optional, however it's a good idea to fill in your country, city and perhaps company.

Inside Your Profile

When you are new to Facebook, the system will offer you some suggestions at the top of each page. You can safely ignore these, dismiss them or follow the suggestions.

Account

The Account link in the top menu gives you access to a drop down menu which you'll find very useful.



Edit Friends lets you create friend lists, add friends to lists, find friends and delete friends.

Manage Pages gives you easy access to all the Pages you can manage.

Account Settings lets you change your email address, user name, notification settings, preferred language and more.

Privacy Settings allows you to decide who can see your profile, who can post on your Wall and so on.

Application Settings tells you which Applications are activated on your account.

Help Center is Facebook's help system. You should find answers to most questions here.

Home Page and News Feed

When you log into Facebook, your Home Page shows you the most interesting content your friends are posting. This is the News Feed. Facebook automatically picks stories based on factors such as the number of friends who have commented on or liked a story, and how likely you are to interact with the story.

You can get back to your home page from anywhere on the site by clicking on the Facebook logo or by clicking **Home** in the top menu.

Above the News Feed is a box asking “What's on your mind?” This is the Publisher.



The Publisher allows you to update your status – send a brief message to all your friends, telling them what you're doing – and add photos, videos and other content to your profile. The Publisher also allows you to make Wall posts on your friends' profiles and add content to their Walls.

When you click in the box, it expands to show you the **Share** button.



You'll also see a row of icons on the left, which let you attach various kinds of content. Moving your mouse over the icons displays the name of the icon.



The icons which are shown here will depend on what applications you have installed - in the example above, I have the **Networked Blogs** application installed, so its icon also appears here.

Profile Page

Your profile page is where you share information about yourself. You can get back to your profile from anywhere on the site by clicking the **Profile** link in the top menu.

At the top of your profile, just under your name, you'll see an horizontal menu. We'll look at each of the menu items in more depth a little later.



Under the menu is the Publisher, already expanded. You'll see a lock icon next to the **Share** button. This lets you decide who will see the update or content you're sharing.



Your Profile Picture

It's very important to have a picture. It's the first thing people see when they look at your profile, and if you don't have a picture, they see this:



Even a bad photo of you is better than no photo at all.

Social networking is about connecting with people, and you'll find that many people won't bother to connect with you if you don't come across as a real person.

Don't use a picture of your dog, or your car, or your company logo, or anything that doesn't come across as a picture of you.



What you want is a reasonably good quality photograph of yourself, in medium closeup, with a neutral background, preferably smiling. It doesn't have to be a professional photo. You should wear clothes which match the image you're trying to project. That may be a suit and tie; something less formal might be better on Facebook.



The picture is 180 pixels wide, and up to 600 pixels high. The icon image which is used in other places on the site - for example in the Friends box - is automatically created from the middle of the picture, so you might want to adjust the framing of the picture once you've seen what Facebook does with it.

The Info Box

Under the profile picture is a small box which you can use to provide a little background information about yourself. You can see it highlighted in the screenshot below.



Many people don't bother to fill in this box, which is a mistake. People do read it, and it's an excellent place to put a link to your website.

As far as website links go, Facebook doesn't allow you to use Anchor Text (like this: [Virtual Corporation](#).) But it does give you live, clickable links if you use the full URL. In other words, you would use <http://VirtualCorporation.co.za> rather than www.VirtualCorporation.co.za.

The Wall

The Wall is where you and your friends can add content to each other's Facebook profiles. You use the Publisher at the top of your Wall to update your status and share content. You can add content to a friend's Wall by going to their profile and using the Publisher at the top of their Wall.

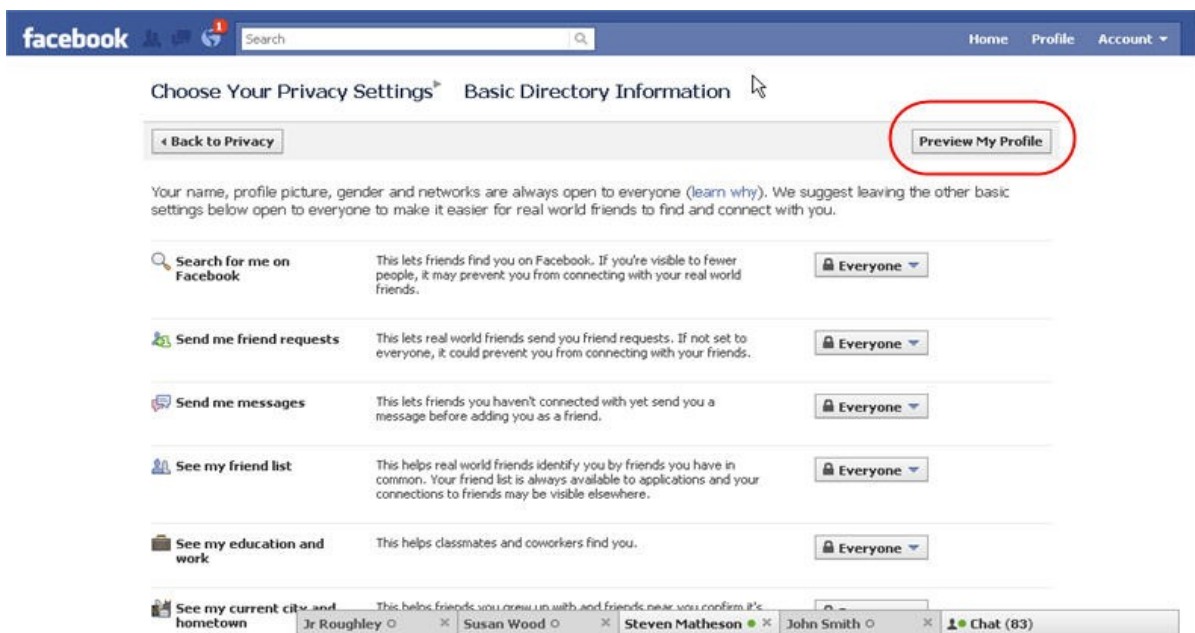
The Wall-to-Wall link lets you see the history of Wall posts between two people. It's only visible to people who are friends of both individuals.

Info

The Info page is where people can find out more about you. You should share as much information as you are comfortable with, and no more. It's unnecessary to list your home address, for example. However, it's important to list your interests, because they help people to decide whether they want to get to know you or not.

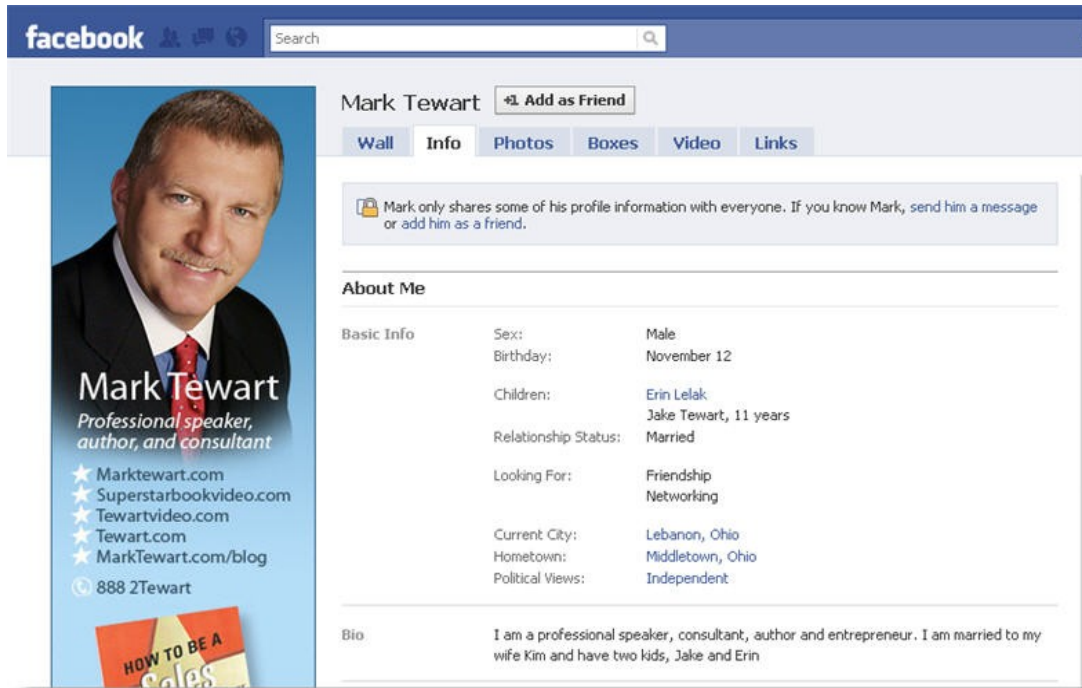
When someone who isn't already a friend looks at your Info page, they'll see whatever information you have decided to make public. If your objective is to get friend requests, you need to make sure you answer the question, "Why should I ask this person to be my friend?"

You can see a preview of what your Info Page will look like to someone who isn't your friend by going to Privacy Settings (in the **Account** menu) and clicking on **View Settings** under Basic Directory Information.

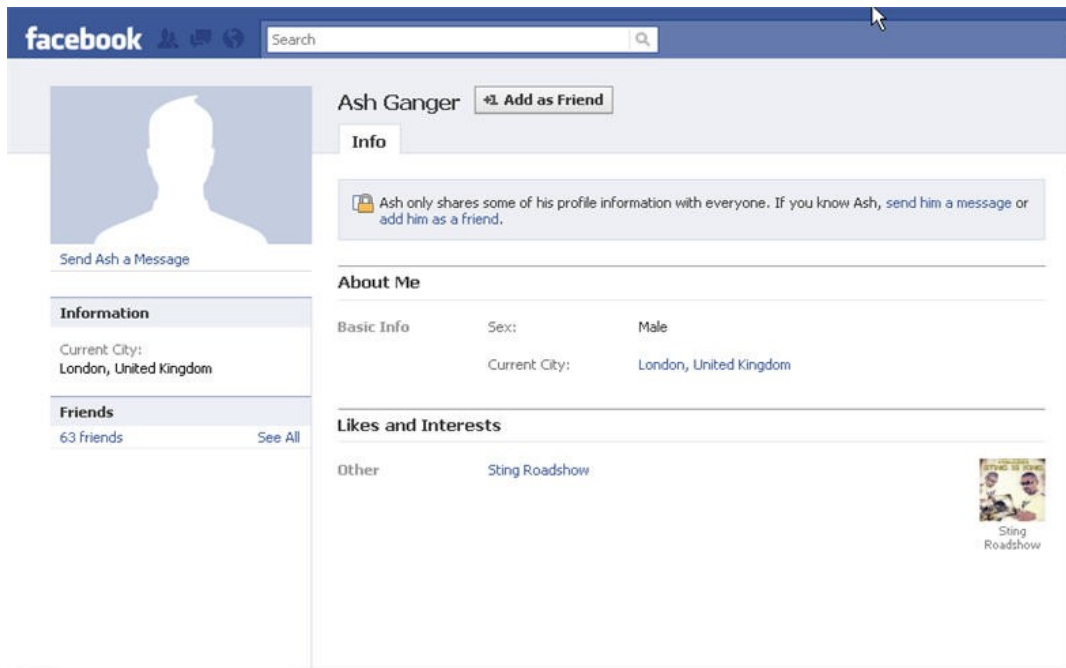


In the examples below, you'll see the **Add as Friend** button at the top of the screen, meaning I haven't sent these people a friend request yet.

Here's a profile which tells you a fair amount about the person:



whereas the Info page below tells you very little:



Applications

Applications (“Apps”) are ways to extend your Facebook profile. Some Applications are built by Facebook’s developers, such as the Events Application and the Photos Application. Others are built by outside developers.

There are thousands of Applications available, some of which are actually useful. For example, the [NetworkedBlogs Application](#) will automatically publish an excerpt from your latest blog post to your Facebook Wall.

You can look through the [Application Directory here](#).

You’ll find that many people enjoy using Facebook to play games like Mafia Wars and Farmville. You’ll start getting posts from “Daily Tarot Cards” and “iHeart” and “Fishville.” Before you know it, your Wall could be filled with these cute yet oddly annoying Application updates.

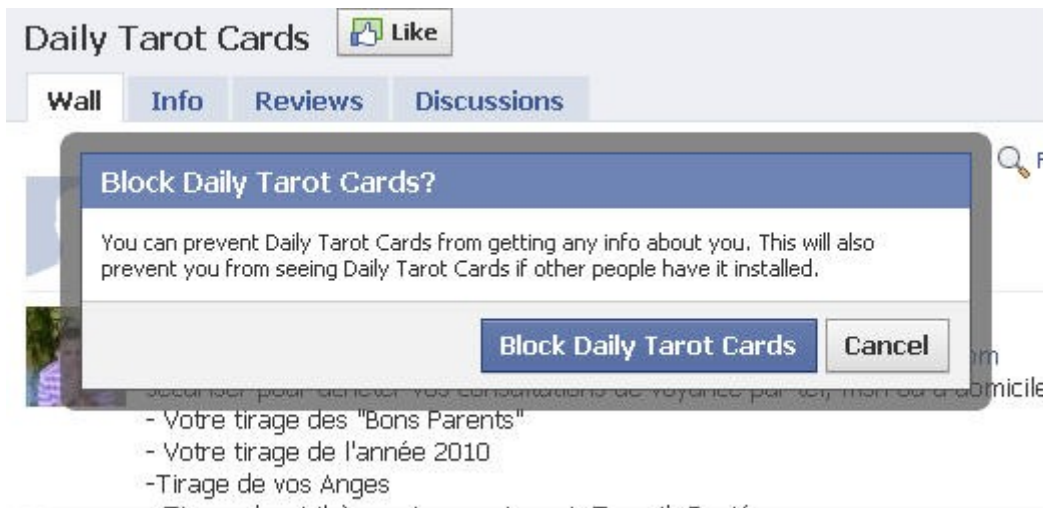
Fortunately, it’s fairly easy to get rid of them. You’ll see the Application Name at the bottom of any Application post:



Click on the name and you'll be taken to the Application Page:



Click on **Block Application** and you'll get a popup:



Click on the **Block** button and that's one less farming, fishing or bling-sharing activity to worry about.

Of course, you can re-activate any blocked applications at any time. At the bottom of your Privacy Settings is a link to your Block Lists, where you can edit your lists of blocked people and applications.

Built-In Applications

There are a number of Applications which are included with your profile. You can decide which of these you want to display on the menu, except for the Wall, Info and Photos tabs which are always displayed. Once you have added more than one additional application, you can rearrange them by mousing over a tab and dragging it to a new position.

Click on the '+' button to see any external applications you have installed, or on the '>>' button to add any of the other built-in Applications to the menu.

Photos

The Photos Application is a powerful photo gallery. You can create albums of photos and upload them to your profile, identify people in photos and “tag” them, share your photos with friends and more.

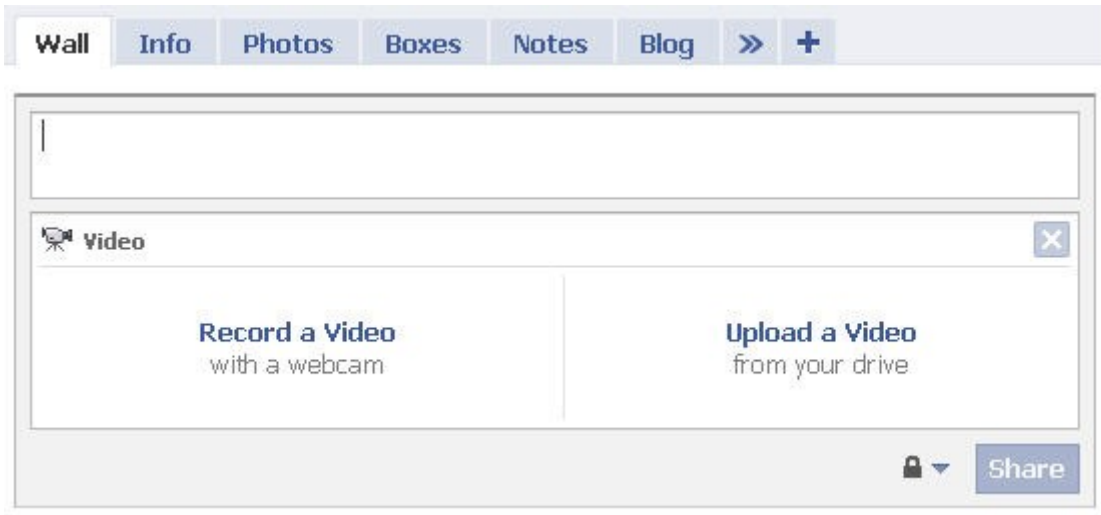
The “tagging” feature is neat. Facebook will try to identify people's faces in a photo, and let you enter the person's name. The tagged person gets a notification that they've been tagged.

Notes

Notes is a very simple Application which works rather like a blog. You can create posts and share them with your friends. You can also “tag” people, which is useful if you refer to them in the note - for example, “Yesterday I went shopping with Janet and John.” If you tag Janet and John (they must be Facebook friends) they'll receive a message saying they were tagged in your note.

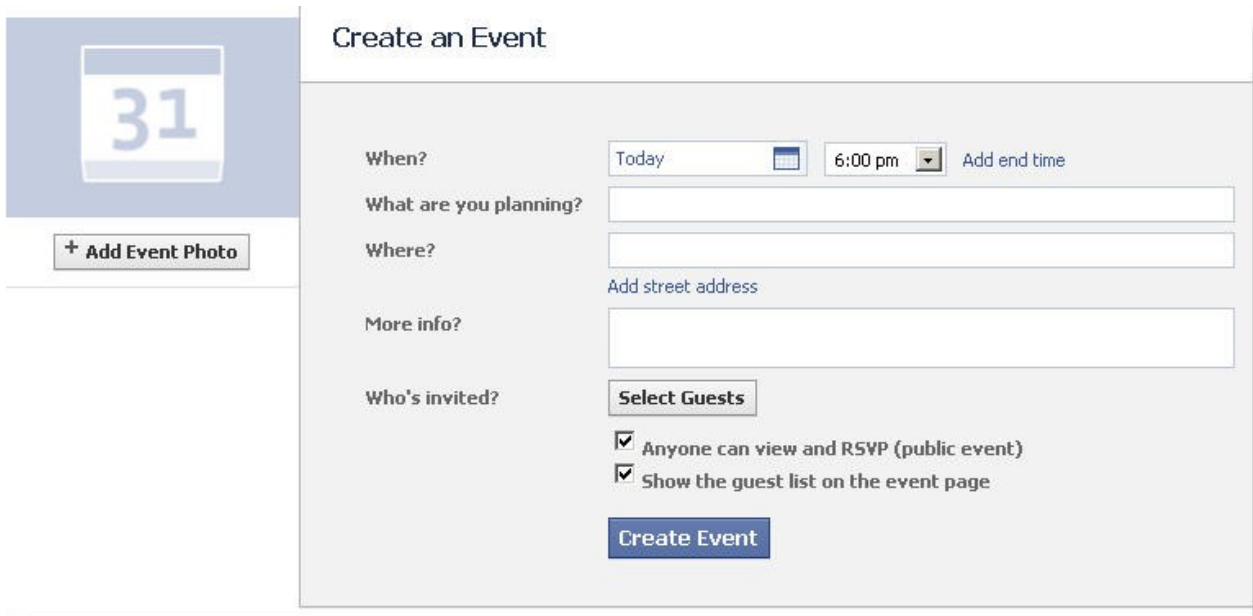
Video

The Facebook Video Application lets you upload a pre-recorded video from your computer to your account. You can also create a video directly on Facebook with a webcam.



Events

The Events application allows you to create Events and share them with your friends.



Separating Your Personal Life From Your Business Life

There are different approaches to keeping your business activities separate from your personal activities on Facebook.

Business account only

A Facebook business account lets you build Facebook pages, but it doesn't allow full interaction with the people who like your page. If you already have a personal account, this option is not available.

Personal profile for personal activities and Fan Page for business activities

If you want to be strict about the people you add as friends, you can easily add a Fan Page for your business. Fan Pages do not display any indication of who created them, nor any links to your personal profile. Posts by the Page administrator are listed with the Page name as the source, rather than your name.



If you plan to keep your business profile and personal profile strictly separate, you will also want to check your privacy settings carefully.

Personal profile for business activities and Facebook Page for business activities

You will probably get the most benefit from Facebook by using your personal profile for business, and setting up a Facebook Page for your company. One shortfall of Facebook Pages is that you can't send Friend invitations from a Page. You can only do that from a Personal profile.

Privacy On Facebook

Facebook has been in the spotlight recently because of changes to the way they manage user privacy. Many users were concerned because the privacy settings seemed very complicated, and they weren't sure what Facebook was doing with their personal information.

Some Internet security experts believe that privacy on the Internet doesn't exist. Steve Rambam, a private investigator who specializes in Internet privacy, says ["Privacy is dead- get over it."](#)

Facebook has made an effort to make privacy settings easier to control.

The default privacy settings for your profile don't actually reveal very much. Your name, profile picture, a list of networks and a list of friends are all that are shown to a non-friend.

The rule for Facebook is the same as the rule for the rest of the Internet - if you have anything you'd rather your customers, clients, employer or possible future employers didn't see, do not post them online, and try to avoid having the kind of friends who would embarrass you by posting compromising pictures or information online.

Choose Your Privacy Settings

Basic Directory Information

To help real world friends find you, some basic information is open to everyone. We also suggest setting basics like hometown and interests to everyone so friends can use those to connect with you. [View settings](#)

Sharing on Facebook

	Everyone	Friends of Friends	Friends Only
My status, photos, and posts	*		
Bio and favorite quotations	*		
Family and relationships	*		
Photos and videos I'm tagged in		*	
Religious and political views			*
Birthday	*		
Can comment on posts		*	
Email addresses and IM			*
Phone numbers and address			*

[Customize settings](#) ✔ This is your current setting.

Adding Friends

Connecting with people is the main reason for using Facebook. You probably want to build a crowd of friends who are interested in your industry, your business and your products.

You need to decide on the size of crowd that makes sense to you. Some people prefer to connect only with people they know. Others believe that the more people you connect with, the more chance there is of turning some of them into customers.

If your business is geographically restricted, like a hair salon or a pet store, you will probably want to concentrate on people in your local area. If you sell products online, you might want to connect with people all over the planet.

Your Personal profile is restricted to 5000 friends.

Finding Friends

For business purposes, you'll want to invite people who are interested in your business. There are a few ways to find people to invite.

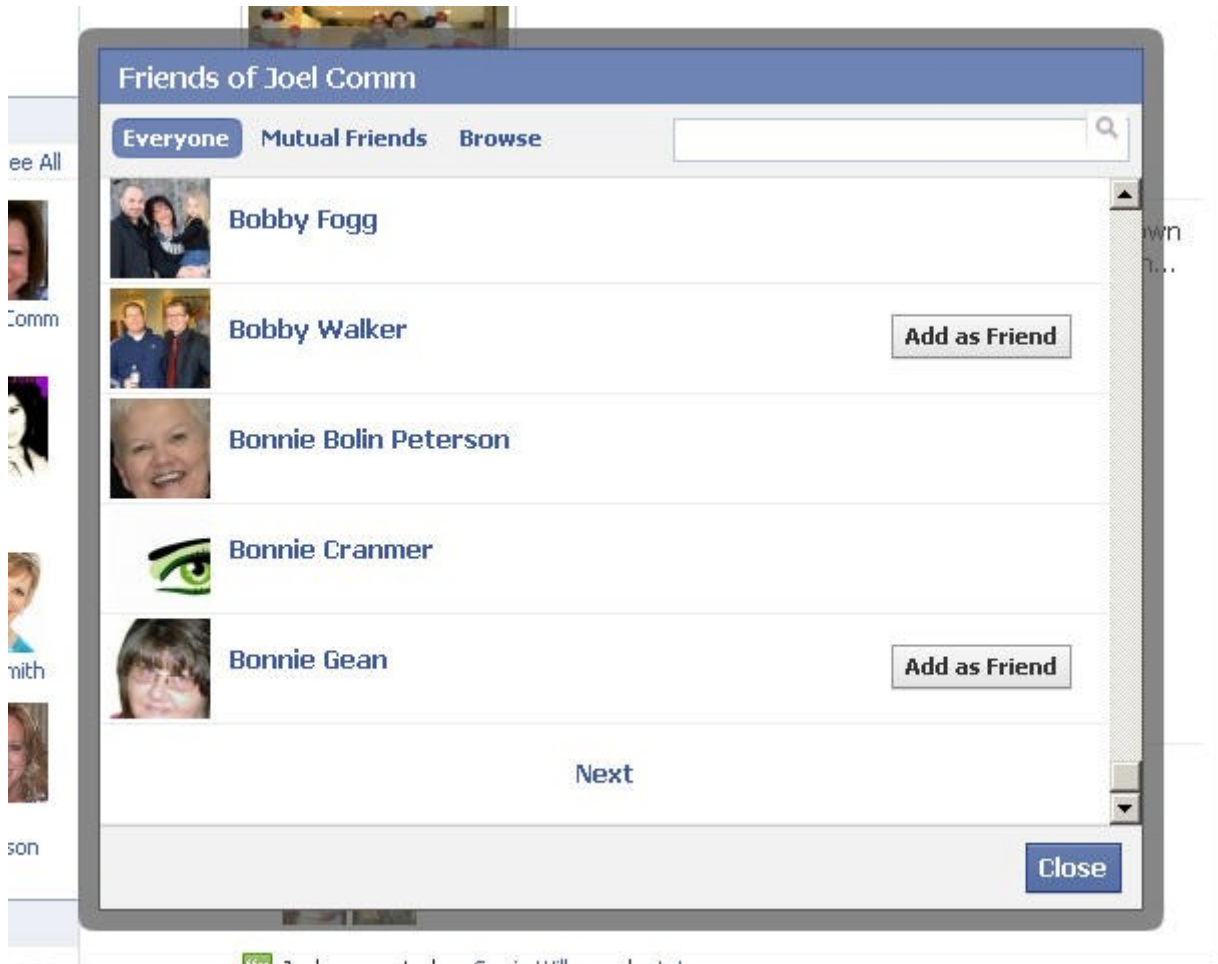
Friends of Friends

Most people allow you to see their list of friends. You can click on an image or on a link in the Friends List to see the public information for that person.



**Click on image
or on link**

If you click on **See All**, you'll get a pop-up box which lets you scroll through your friend's friends, in alphabetical order, 100 at a time.

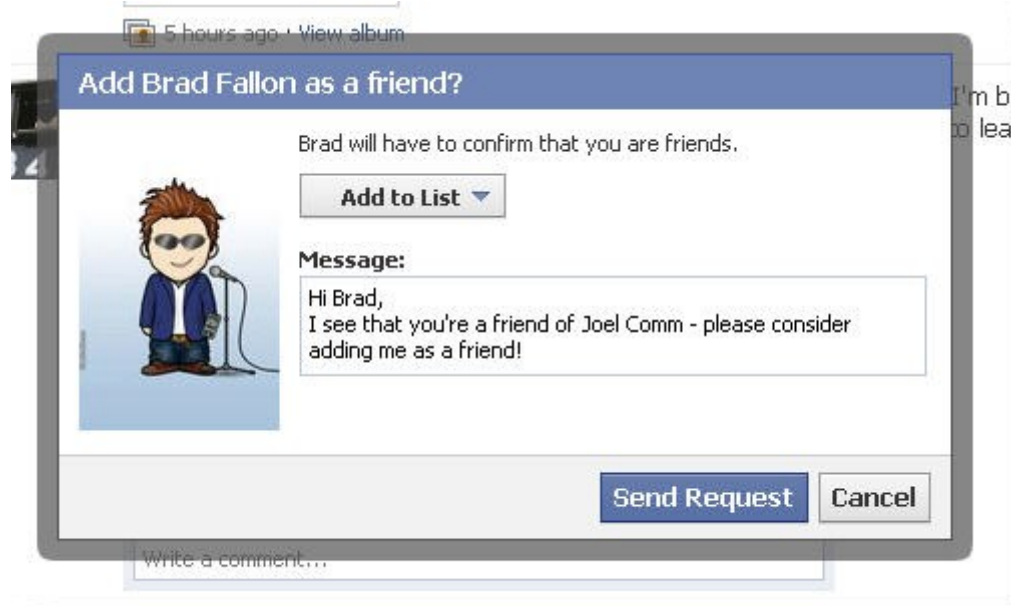


If an **Add as Friend** button appears next to someone's name, you can send them a friend request. (If there's no **Add as Friend** button, they are already your friend.)

Clicking **Add as Friend** opens the Add as Friend popup:



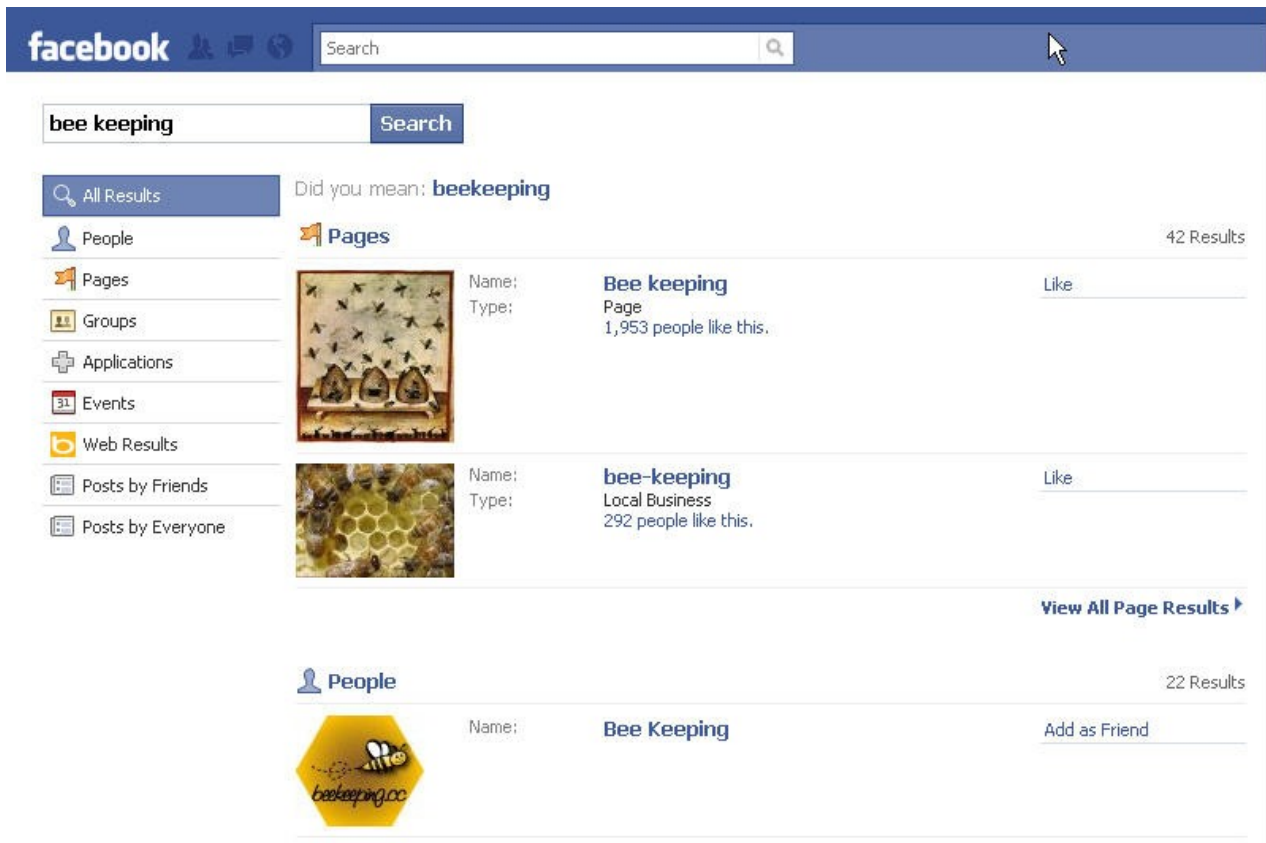
You can simply click on **Send Request** or you can add a personal message. A personal message makes it more likely that the person will add you. For instance, you might say something like this:



You can also add the person to a list before they accept your friend request, if you like.

Keyword Targeting

Another way to find people to add is by searching for people who are interested in a particular topic, by keyword. In the example below, I typed the keyword phrase **bee keeping** into the search box:



You'll notice that Facebook displays the first two Pages out of 42, followed by the first 4 People it finds. You can click on **View All Page Results** to see the other relevant pages, or **View All People Results** to see the other People.

You can also use one of the links on the left to restrict the results to People, Pages, Groups etc.

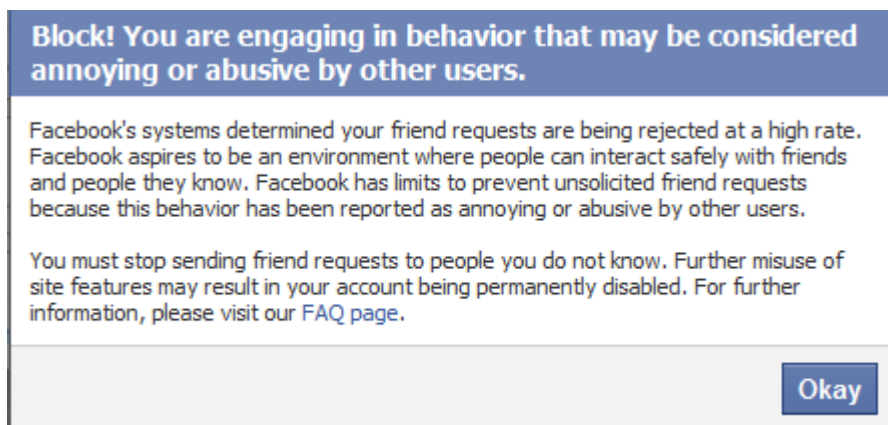
If a Page looks interesting, you can click on its link to find out more about it. In the example, there are 1,953 people who like the **Bee keeping** page. Clicking on **1,953 people like this** will open a pop-up box which lists those people, and allows you to add them as friends.

Geographical Targeting

Finding people in your local area is simple - just use a local keyword, like the name of your city or suburb. You can try adding the local keyword to your topic, but in South Africa I find that I don't get many results - it might be easier to scroll through the Groups and Pages for your local keyword and pick the ones which seem interesting.

What Happens If You Add Too Many Friends?

Facebook gets upset if you try to add too many friends at a time. The actual number of friends you can add depends on factors like the age of the account and the number of friends you already have. It's been suggested that adding more than 50 friends a day could be a problem. If Facebook decides that you're going too fast, you'll get this message:



At this point, it's a very good idea to stop doing whatever it was that you were doing. Wait at least a day before adding more friends.

You can probably avoid getting this message by simply spacing out your friends requests throughout the day.

Facebook Pages

One of the reasons Facebook introduced Facebook Pages or Fan Pages in 2007 is that many businesses were creating user profiles in the name of their business, breaking Facebook's terms of service. A Facebook Page is very much like a Profile, but there are some important differences.

A Page can have an unlimited number of Fans, as opposed to the 5000 friends limit on Profiles. The [Coca-Cola Page](#), for example, has over 5.7 million fans. However, you can't send a friend request from a Page, only from a Profile.

Because Facebook Pages are intended to be used to promote a brand, the privacy settings are limited. However, you can prevent people other than administrators from posting content on your Page.

A Facebook Page can have more than one administrator, which is very useful for business use.

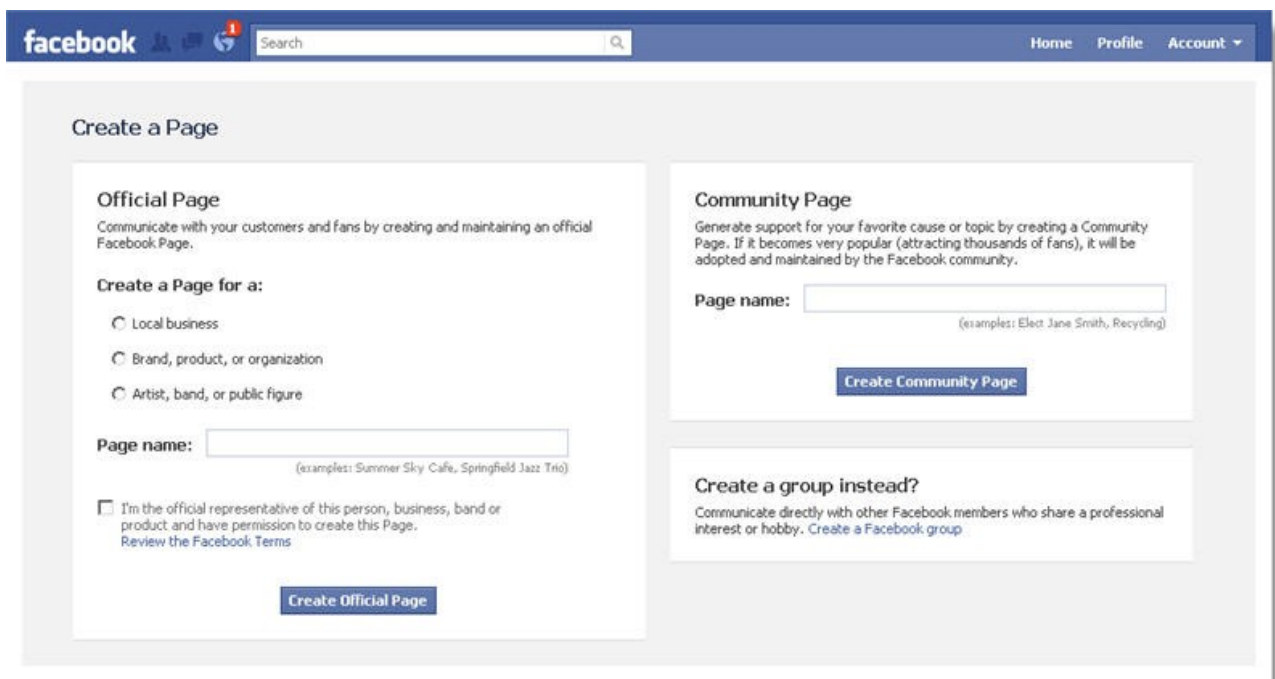
Creating A Facebook Page

Creating a Facebook Page is quite easy, but getting to the right place is a bit of a challenge!

Go to your Home page and click on ***Ads and Pages*** in the left-hand menu.

On the ***All Campaigns*** Page, click on ***Pages*** in the left-hand menu.

On the ***Pages You Admin*** page, click on + ***Create Page***.



You'll see that you need to check a box to indicate that you are the official representative of the person, business, band or product and that you have permission to create the Page.

You'll need to select one of the three top-level categories:

- **Local Business**
- **Brand, Product or Organization**
- **Artist, Band or Public Figure**

When you have selected a top-level category, a drop-down menu appears which lets you choose a subcategory.

You should be careful to choose the right category and subcategory for your Page. Once you've created the Page, there is currently no way to change the category.

The same applies to the Page name - make sure you don't make any spelling or grammatical errors.

The only way to fix these problems is by deleting the page and starting again – which may be OK as long as you don't have any fans.

The Page category and subcategory you choose have an effect on the fields which are displayed on the Info Page, as well as on the Applications that are pre-installed for the

Page - for example, a Band Page has a music player, video player, tour dates, reviews and a discussion board pre-installed.

In the tables below, you can see the subcategories and Info Page fields associated with each of the three top-level categories.

Local Business	
<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Info Fields</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Local Business – Automotive – Automotive Dealer/Vehicle Service – Banking and Financial Service – Bar – Cafe – Club – Convention Center and Sports Complex – Education – Event Planning Service – Grocery – Health and Beauty – Home Service – Hotel/Lodging – Library/Public Building – Medical Service – Museum/Attraction – Park – Pets – Professional Service – Real Estate – Religious Center – Restaurant – Store – Technology and Telecommunications Service – Travel Service 	<p>Basic Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Address – City/Town – Zip – Phone – Hours <p>Detailed Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Website – Parking – Public Transit

Brand, Product, or Organization	
<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Info Fields</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Products – Airline/Ship/Train Station – Communications – Consumer Product – Fashion – Film – Financial Service – Food and Beverage – Game – Government – Home Living – Hotel/Lodging – Non-Profit – Online Store – Pharmaceutical – Professional Service – Religious Organization – Rental Cars – Retail – Sports/Athletics – TV Show – Technology Product/Service – Travel – Website 	<p>Basic Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Founded <p>Detailed Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Website – Company Overview – Mission – Products

Artist, Band, or Public Figure	
<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Info Fields</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Other Public Figure – Actor – Athlete – Band – Comedian – Critic – Government Official – Model – Musician – Politician – Sports Team – Visual Artist – Writer 	<p>Basic Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Affiliation – Address – City/Town – Zip – Phone – Birthday <p>Detailed Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Website – Personal Information – Personal Interests <p>Contact Info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Email

It's best if your business fits neatly into a subcategory.

The fields available in the ***Local Business*** top-level category are rather limited, with no text field available to describe your business properly.

The Product category offers a useful ***Company Overview*** field as well as a ***Mission Statement*** field.

Setting Up Your Facebook Page

Setting up your Facebook page is similar to setting up your Profile. You will need a picture - something unique and engaging. This is one of the first things people see on your Page, so make it good.

After you have created your Page, you can work on it without anyone else being able to see it, until you click on the ***Publish Your Page*** link.

You can unpublish your Page at any time by going to ***Edit Page*** and then ***Settings***.

Controlling The Landing Page

A nifty feature of Facebook Pages is that you can control the landing page for non-fans. This means that the first time someone goes to your Facebook Page, they can be

directed to a page which tells them something about your business. This means that you have a way to present engaging information which is much more controllable than what happens to be on your Wall at the moment.

Facebook Page Examples

Here are some examples of Facebook Pages which make good use of the platform:

[Coca-Cola](#)

[Levis](#)

[Dunkin Donuts](#)

[Zappos](#)

[Pizza Hut](#)

Here are some examples from South African businesses:

[Savoy Cabbage Restaurant](#)

[Exclusive Books Sandton City](#)

[Taj Capetown](#)

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Sending Updates

Facebook allows you to send an Update to all your fans, or to a targeted subset of them (for example, everyone in South Africa, or only those between the ages of 18 and 30.)

To get to the ***Send an Update*** feature, click on ***Edit Page*** (just under the picture.) You'll see ***Send an Update to Fans*** in the ***Promote Your Page*** section on the right hand side.


Linking to Your Blog

Facebook makes it very easy to link your Facebook Page to your blog. There are a number of ways you can do this.


Show your blog posts on your Facebook Page

There are a number of ways to automatically display an excerpt from your most recent blog post on the Wall of your Facebook Page. One way is to use the built-in Notes application. If you click on the ***Edit Page*** link you should find an entry for the Notes application. Click on ***Edit*** and you'll be taken to a page which lets you edit existing notes, add new ones and import notes from your blog. You should see this box on the

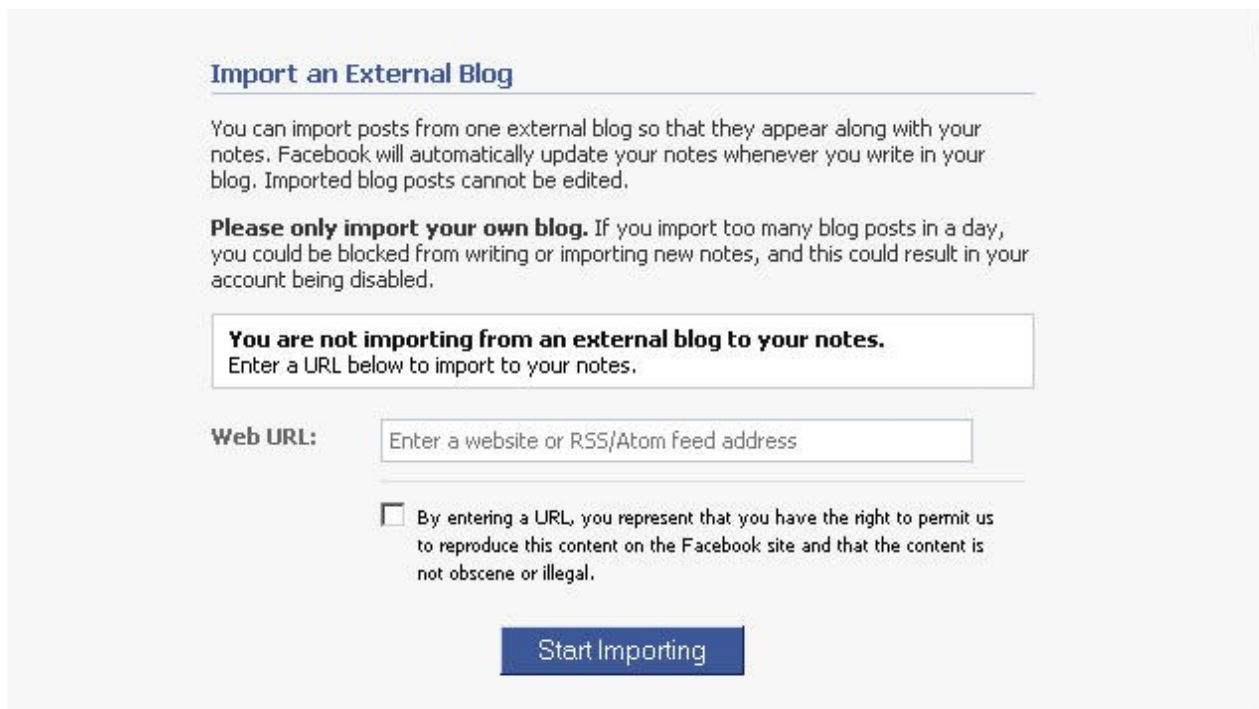
right-hand side of the page:



Notes Settings
You are not importing notes from an external blog.
[Import a blog »](#)

Subscribe to these Notes
 [Derrick Markotter's Notes](#)
[Subscription Help »](#)

Click on *Import a blog*



Import an External Blog

You can import posts from one external blog so that they appear along with your notes. Facebook will automatically update your notes whenever you write in your blog. Imported blog posts cannot be edited.

Please only import your own blog. If you import too many blog posts in a day, you could be blocked from writing or importing new notes, and this could result in your account being disabled.

You are not importing from an external blog to your notes.
Enter a URL below to import to your notes.

Web URL:

By entering a URL, you represent that you have the right to permit us to reproduce this content on the Facebook site and that the content is not obscene or illegal.

[Start Importing](#)

You can enter either the website address or the address of your RSS feed.

I've found the Notes import function a bit flaky - in my experience, sometimes it works, and sometimes it doesn't.

There are a number of RSS import applications which will do the same job. The best one I've come across is NetworkedBlogs. This application has a full-blown blog directory at <http://networkedblogs.com/>

The application adds a **Blog** tab to your Page (or Profile) and automatically adds an excerpt to your Wall.

Add a “Like” button to your blog posts

There are a number of plugins for WordPress which will add a Facebook **Like** button to each of your blog posts. They allow your blog readers easily to share your posts with their Facebook friends, which results in more blog visitors and hopefully more Facebook friends or fans.

My favorite is [Simple Facebook Connect](#), which provides a number of modules which you can use or not at your discretion.

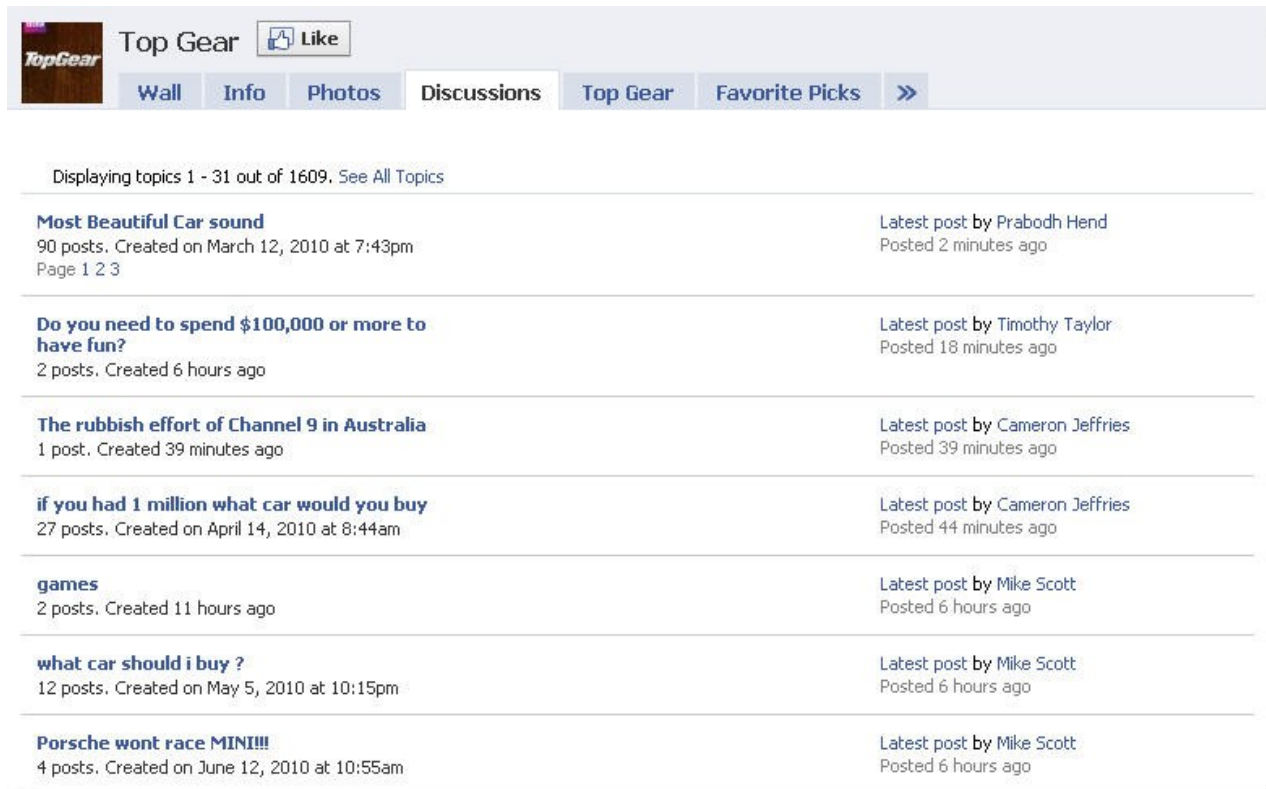
Show your Facebook Page Fans on your blog

Simple Facebook Connect lets you display a Fan Box widget in the sidebar of your (self-hosted WordPress) blog. It lets you optionally show links to posts from your Facebook Page and pictures of your fans.



Discussions

Facebook Pages and Groups both allow you to install the Discussions Application. This provides you a simple forum where you can get your fans or Group members to interact.



The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the Top Gear page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Top Gear logo, the name 'Top Gear', a 'Like' button, and tabs for 'Wall', 'Info', 'Photos', 'Discussions', 'Top Gear', and 'Favorite Picks'. Below the navigation bar, it indicates 'Displaying topics 1 - 31 out of 1609. See All Topics'. The main content area lists several discussion topics, each with a title, the number of posts, the creation date and time, and the latest post by a user with the time since posted.

Topic Title	Posts	Created	Latest Post By	Posted
Most Beautiful Car sound	90 posts	Created on March 12, 2010 at 7:43pm	Prabodh Hend	2 minutes ago
Do you need to spend \$100,000 or more to have fun?	2 posts	Created 6 hours ago	Timothy Taylor	18 minutes ago
The rubbish effort of Channel 9 in Australia	1 post	Created 39 minutes ago	Cameron Jeffries	39 minutes ago
if you had 1 million what car would you buy	27 posts	Created on April 14, 2010 at 8:44am	Cameron Jeffries	44 minutes ago
games	2 posts	Created 11 hours ago	Mike Scott	6 hours ago
what car should i buy ?	12 posts	Created on May 5, 2010 at 10:15pm	Mike Scott	6 hours ago
Porsche wont race MINI!!!	4 posts	Created on June 12, 2010 at 10:55am	Mike Scott	6 hours ago

Groups

Facebook Groups are another way to build a community on Facebook. Here's what Facebook has to say about Groups:

“Groups and Pages serve different purposes on Facebook. Groups are meant to foster group discussion around a particular topic area while Pages allow entities such as public figures and organizations to broadcast information to their fans. Only the authorized representative of the entity can run a Page.”

Page or Group?

Pages and Groups have overlapping capabilities, so it may be difficult to work out which is better for your business. Here are some pros and cons.

Pages

Pro:

- You can add Applications to a Page
- No link to the Administrators' Personal profile
- Visitor statistics are available (Page Insights)
- Vanity URLs are available, as long as your Page is liked by more than 25 people (eg. <http://www.facebook.com/DerrickMarkotter> rather than <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Derrick-Markotter/274755115061>)

Con:

- You can't send Private Messages to Fans (You can send Updates)
- Pages are designed to be public, so there's no way to make a Page private

Groups

Pro:

- You can send a Private Message to all Group members (as long as the Group has fewer than 5000 members)
- Groups can be invite-only or secret

Con:

- You can't install Applications (other than the built-in ones)
- A Group is linked to the Personal profiles of the administrators
- No visitor statistics

If you plan to use Facebook to augment the marketing for your business, a Page is probably the right way to go. You could certainly use Groups as well - maybe to discuss aspects of what you do; perhaps limited to customers or staff only.

Generally, Facebook Pages are better for long-term business use; Groups are good for quick, viral campaigns.

Using Facebook To Promote Your Business

Probably the most important thing you can do on Facebook is to publish unique, useful and interesting content on a regular basis. Your aim should be to get people to come to your page, and then to come back again. People who return to your page regularly are more likely to become paying customers.

What sort of content?

Here are some ideas for content.

Articles. Either write them yourself or have them ghostwritten.

Links to other people's content, preferably with a comment from you. Find interesting articles on PopURLs.com or AllTop.com, or use a [Feed Reader](#) to subscribe to relevant blogs.

Videos. Find interesting videos online and post links to them; create your own videos and upload them.

Don't look at Facebook as yet another marketing channel. Think about it as a community where you can add value. "In-Your-Face" advertising is unlikely to work; ideally you want your friends and fans sharing your useful information with their friends and fans because it makes them look good.