



facebook®

Unit 9 Facebook for Business

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Open a Facebook account for business purposes and personalise their profile
- ✓ Publish a variety of different types of posts on Facebook
- ✓ Use Facebook to find new customers and boost brand awareness

Unit 9

Facebook for Business

Before we get started on the mechanics of using Facebook for business, here are just a few facts and figures to put the platform as a whole into context:

- More than 2.6 billion monthly active users
- Over 1.73 billion daily users from around the world
- Used by more than 60% of all Internet users
- 80 million small business pages set up to date
- 58.5 minutes average daily use time per visitor
- 78% of consumers discover products and services via Facebook
- \$17.4 billion in advertising revenues in Q1 2020

Whichever way you look at it, Facebook is a leviathan of a social network. Not to mention, an extraordinary marketing and promotional platform for small and large businesses spanning all sectors.

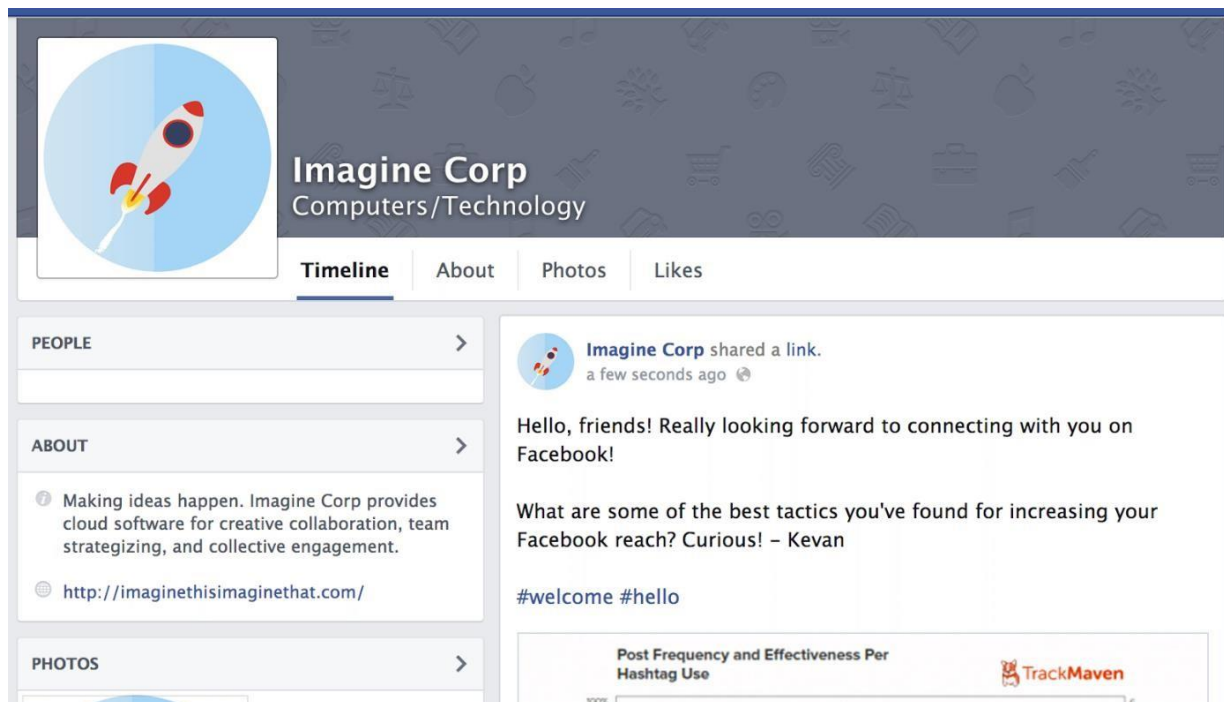
Of course, knowing where to get started when dealing with figures like these isn't easy. Over the following sections, we'll be taking a summarised look at Facebook's various points of appeal for business users, along with how to get your own social media strategy up and running.

What is Facebook?

The story of Facebook is well documented, having started life in 2004 as a simple closed community platform for college students. Little did Mark Zuckerberg realise at the time that almost a third of the world's entire population would one day be using his software. The vast majority of whom remain connected to their accounts on a 24/7 basis, browsing Facebook for an average of approximately 1 hour each day.

Facebook has evolved into a remarkable multipurpose platform, which is now used by tens of millions of businesses worldwide. From product and service advertising to reputation management to customer relationship development, Facebook can be used for almost anything. Nevertheless, it's essential to have clear goals and objectives in mind at the earliest possible stage – if your Facebook campaign is to succeed.

Why Use Facebook for Business Purposes?



Once you've got to grips with the basics of Facebook for business, you'll wonder how you ever got by without it. The benefits of Facebook for business are as extensive as they are dynamic, including but not limited to the following:

- ***An affordable marketing platform***

Marketing strategies and campaigns that would normally cost a small fortune can be launched and managed on Facebook for exponentially less. In fact, the vast majority of basic Facebook features for businesses and private users alike are 100% free of charge.

- ***A straightforward summary of your business***

Facebook also provides the perfect opportunity to give new and existing customers a summarised and concise overview of who you are, what you do and where they can find you. Your Facebook Business Page is essentially a condensed version of your primary website.

- ***The opportunity to share videos, pictures and other content***

One of the most appealing aspects of a good Facebook Business Page is how it gives you the opportunity to show your target audience the people and the personality behind the brand. Take them behind the scenes by sharing photos, video clips and interesting information about your business.

- ***The power to reach an enormous global audience***

Quite simply, there isn't another platform in existence that provides businesses with the opportunity to reach a global audience of 2.6 billion active monthly users, without paying a penny for the privilege. Get it right on Facebook and your success story writes itself.

- ***Superior customer support***

Increasingly, consumers and B2B buyers alike are demonstrating strong preferences to businesses that offer customer support via social media. From a business perspective, this approach to customer service is significantly more convenient and cost-effective than traditional customer care.

- ***Drive traffic to your website***

Each and every person you engage and appeal to on Facebook is a potential lead you can drive directly to your website. Funnel fans and followers directly to specific product and service pages, or the primary landing pages of your choosing.

- ***Limitless targeted advertising potential***

With Facebook's paid advertising engine, you can target just about any audience worldwide with remarkable pinpoint precision. This can help generate a much healthier and more consistent ROI when allocating your advertising budget.

What do Businesses Use Facebook for?

As mentioned above, Facebook can be used for a wide variety of purposes. Nevertheless, the vast majority of businesses primarily use Facebook (and other social networks) with the following objectives in mind:

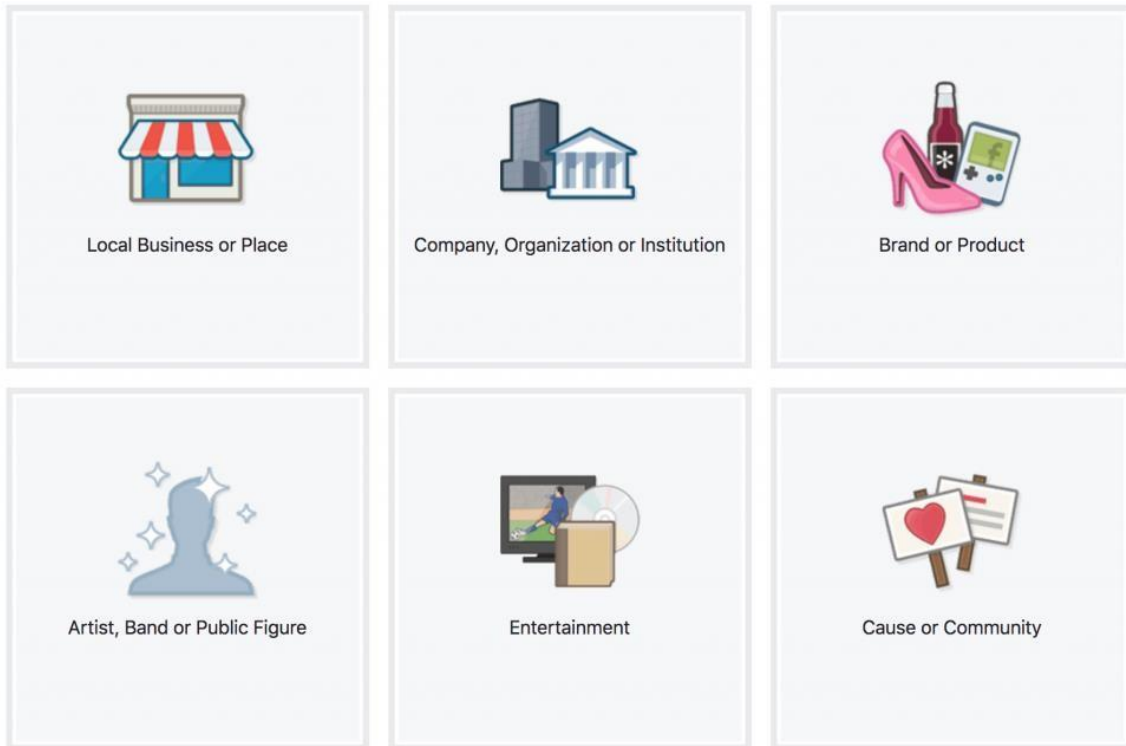
- To generate leads for their businesses
- To attract people looking for specific products and services
- To connect and engage with a target audience
- To create an active and engaged community
- To promote products, services and events
- To establish trust, credibility and authority
- To boost PR and reputation management activities

The objectives you establish will ultimately determine the appropriate course of action you should take when launching a Facebook business campaign. Though across the board, there are certain good practice guidelines that apply in all instances.

Setting up Your Facebook Account

Create a Page

Give your brand, business or cause a voice on Facebook and connect with the people who matter to you. It's free to set up. Just choose a Page type to get started.



Signing up for an account with Facebook is easy – just head over to www.facebook.com/pages/create.php and follow the brief tutorial. While doing so, you'll have the option of choosing between a Personal Profile and a Facebook Business Page.

Important note: *under no circumstances should you create a personal profile for your business. Personal profiles are designed for individuals, while business pages are (unsurprisingly) designed for businesses.*

The key differences between Personal Profiles and Business Pages being as follows:

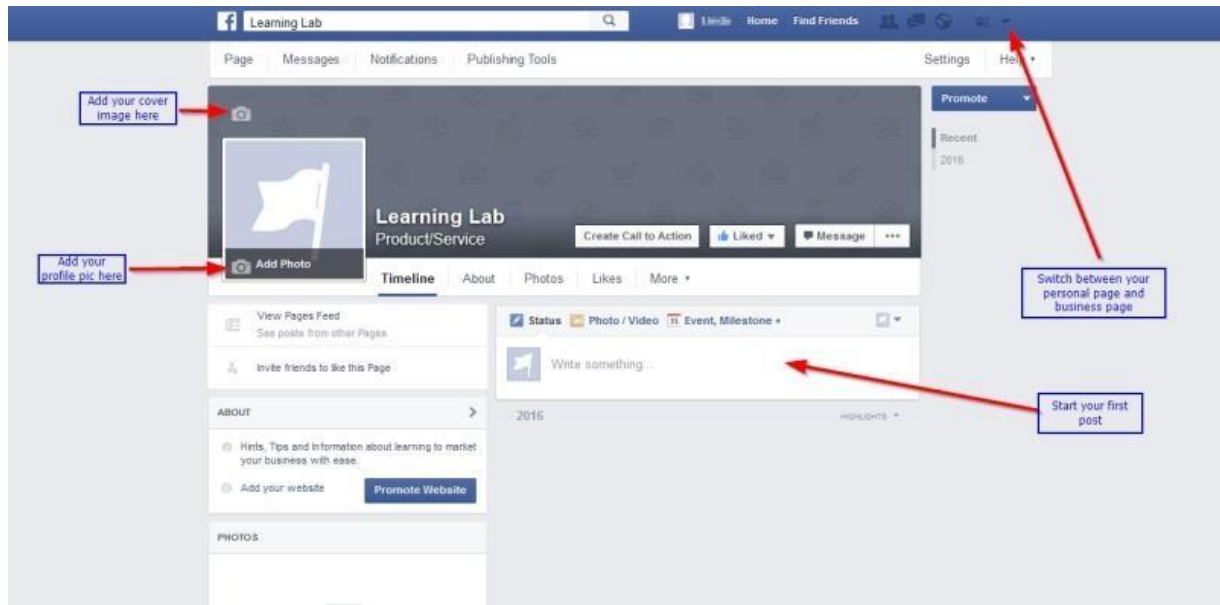
- With a Facebook Business Page, you can designate multiple administrators to help manage your account.
- Mutual acceptance is required for friends to be added to Personal Profiles, whereas or anyone can become a fan of your Facebook Business Page.
- Business Pages are categorised by way of business type, making it significantly easier for people to find your page.
- Your Facebook Business Page enables you to display important information that would not be displayed on a comparable Personal Profile.

Personal Profiles used for business purposes also come across as amateurish and unprofessional, therefore should not be used to represent your business.

Editing and personalising your profile is as easy as following the on-screen instructions, during which you will have the opportunity to choose a profile picture, provide detailed information about your business and assign administrators.

Don't worry if you make a mistake along the way or aren't happy with the look of your page – you can always go back and edit it at a later stage.

Facebook Business Page Sections



When creating your Facebook Business Page, you will have the opportunity to add information across a variety of sections. Some of which will be more or less suitable for your business than others, though in all instances should be used to provide your customers with relevant information.

Several examples of these sections include the following:

About: By far one of the most important elements of your Facebook Business Page, which will display information such as your contact details, opening hours, business address and a link to your main website. For obvious reasons, all of the information displayed should be 100% accurate and up to date.

Community: This is the section where the posts and content submitted by your customers will be displayed. It's also where information of people 'checking in' at your business address will be displayed, providing the perfect opportunity to interact with your audience.

Events: Creating and promoting important events can be a great way of generating interest and engaging members of your audience. Events can be anything from major gatherings and music festivals right through to virtual meet-ups and new product launches.

Home: Your home section is the first thing anyone will see when they visit your Facebook Business Page, therefore must be well-presented and professional. This is also where all of the posts and content you publish will be displayed and archived.

Photos: Self-explanatory – this is the tab where all of the images you upload will be stored and showcased, separated into albums for convenience.

Reviews: One of the 'make or break' sections of your Facebook Business Page, where people will be able to submit honest reviews and assign you a star rating. It's possible to hide the reviews tab, but doing so sends entirely the wrong message to current and prospective customers.

Offers: Incentivising Facebook users with exclusive deals and discounts can be a great way of getting them to take an interest in your Facebook Business Page and your brand.

Services: This tab provides you with the opportunity to showcase your services and provide detailed descriptions of what it is you do. You can also add photographs, video clips and pricing information.

Shop: It's also now possible to sell products directly via Facebook, for which the proceeds are transferred directly into your bank account.

Promoting your Facebook Page

A Facebook page with no fans or followers is of no value whatsoever to your business. With your Business Page up and running, the next step in the process is to attract some fans.

Here are a few tips to help you get things off the ground:

1. **Post Interesting Content.** Don't simply use your Business Page to display basic information about your organisation. Create an engaging and informative resource for your target audience, by posting quality content on a regular basis.
2. **Leverage Your Existing Network.** Chances are, you already have a relatively established network of subscribers, readers and customers elsewhere. All of whom should be invited to sign up as fans of your Facebook Business Page and informed of its existence.
3. **Promote Your Page Elsewhere.** Aggressively promote your Facebook Page via as many other online and offline channels as possible. Always feature clear links to your Facebook business page on your website, your emails and your promotional materials.
4. **Consider Facebook Ads.** Facebook Ads is a paid promotional programme that enables you to promote your products, your services and your business to a potentially huge audience. An effective Facebook Ads strategy can deliver an outstanding ROI.
5. **Interact with Your Audience.** One of the best ways of encouraging people to take an interest in your business is to take an interest in them. Make the effort to interact with your audience and you'll be rewarded with their trust and loyalty.

Facebook Ads campaigns are quick and easy to set up – simply head to www.facebook.com/advertising and you'll be guided through the process, step by step.

No payment is necessary until your campaign is finalised and launched, so it's worth going through the process to familiarise yourself with how it works.

Best Practice Guidelines for Business Users



Making the most of Facebook as a business platform means acknowledging how it differs from other sales and marketing channels. Ads and promotional materials appropriate for other mediums could have the *opposite* of the intended effect, if ported directly to Facebook.

Whatever your objectives and priorities, the following best practice guidelines apply to *all* businesses looking to get the best out of Facebook:

1. Never use Facebook for the 'hard sell'

Most people are sick and tired of being bombarded with aggressive marketing messages at every turn. Likewise, most people head to Facebook for an enjoyable social experience – not to be annoyed and irritated by businesses interested in their money.

This is why avoiding the 'hard sell' at all costs is an absolute must. Make it easy for your target audience to check out your products and services if they want to, but don't attempt to *force* them to do so.

2. Have a clear objective in mind

The key to successful social media marketing lies in establishing clear, measurable and realistic objectives at the earliest possible stage. Facebook can be used to achieve just about anything, but you cannot and will not achieve *everything* at the same time.

For example, you could set about a campaign to boost traffic to your primary website by 25% within three months. Or perhaps, sell 10% more of a specific product or service within the next six weeks. You need something concrete to work towards, with clear KPIs and a define roadmap to ensure they're achieved.

3. Focus on personality and humanity

Facebook is not the place to communicate with your target audience in a manner that comes across as formal or stuffy. Quite the contrary, you need to do everything you can to show them the personality of your business and the human side of your brand.

Complex terminology, unnecessary jargon and business talk should all be eliminated from the equation entirely. You should communicate with your target audience socially and informally – just as you would when talking to a friend or colleague sitting next to you at the time.

4. Post regularly and consistently

While posting simply for the sake of it really isn't the way to go, posting regularly and consistency is essential. A recent study from Australia found that the average Facebook user checks their account at least 25 times per day. Hence, they expect regular updates of value from those they subscribe to.

It's generally recommended that all businesses post at least *once* per day, but ideally, you should be looking at multiple daily posts. Though again, only when you have something of genuine value and relevance to say.

5. Encourage comments and always reply

Successful social media campaigns for business purposes are all about engagement and interaction. Rather than taking a passive approach to the whole thing, actively encourage your fans and subscribers to share their own comments and opinions.

More importantly, ensure that you reply promptly and appropriately to every comment you receive. This not only shows the person who wrote the comments that you are listening, but demonstrates to your entire audience that you are engaged with your community.

6. Use a variety of content types

Facebook business pages that contain nothing but block after block of text are uninspiring and unattractive. Irrespective of what it is you do, it's essential to ensure you mix things up with a variety of different content types. Pictures and video clips in particular having proven to boost engagement and nurture loyalty.

However, it's essential to ensure that all of the media you post is relevant, unique and of value to your target audience. Don't make the mistake or to simply regurgitating what they can already find elsewhere.

7. Reach out to important customers directly

Whether it's a new subscriber or someone who does a lot of business with your brand, there's much to be said for sending personal messages of gratitude and appreciation directly to key individuals. Even if it's just to thank them for their loyalty, simple gestures like these can go a long way.

Of course, reaching out to them with exclusive discounts and special offers can be even more effective.

8. Keep an eye on your competitors

There will always be things your competitors are doing better than you, and vice-versa. Hence, the only realistic way of taking the lead and holding onto it is by keeping a close eye on what they're doing.

Identify their strengths, note their weaknesses and think carefully about what you could be doing to outperform them. There's also no harm in asking your audience directly for their own thoughts and opinions on how you can improve whatever it is you do.

Bonus Tips to Turbocharge Your Facebook Campaign



Each of the best practice guidelines outlined above will help you get to grips with the basics of Facebook for business. After which, it's a case of taking things a step or two further, with more advanced tactics and techniques to turbocharge your campaign.

Again, the appropriateness of these tips and guidelines will vary significantly from one business to the next. Though it's safe to say that your business and your social media strategy could benefit from at least a few of the following:

1. Consider collaborations with other businesses

Standing out from the crowd and making a name for yourself on Facebook is all about the numbers. The more people you can reach within your niche, the better. This is why it is worth reaching out to other businesses and influential individuals of relevance to your brand, in order to discuss potential collaboration opportunities.

It could be as simple as sharing one another's content and posting links to each other's product pages. Or perhaps, you recommend their products to your audience and they do the same for your products. Strength in numbers really can make all the difference – a much easier approach than going it alone.

2. Leverage the power of influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is a strategy that involves persuading (or paying) influential individuals to recommend your products and services to their fans and followers. This can be a great way of sending a powerful message to thousands or even hundreds of thousands of targeted prospects at the same time, via a proxy with far more influence than you personally.

Celebrities and famous faces may seem like the obvious choice, but micro-influencers often hold the key to much higher engagement and conversion rates. Think carefully about who might be able to send a positive message about your products and services, before reaching out to them with your proposal.

3. Use insights to determine the success of your campaigns

Facebook has its own built-in suite of analytical tools, known as [Facebook Insights](#). This is the place to head to access invaluable information on your campaign's performance, including number of post engagements, the number of people you've reached, page views, actions taken and so on.

By monitoring this information right from the start, you'll be able to determine which aspects of your campaign are working and which could stand to be improved. You're effectively provided with all the information you'll need to remove anything that isn't working from the equation and build on the strengths of your campaign as a whole.

4. Consider a scheduling tool for future posting

Automating too much of your social strategy isn't advisable, as to do so could take away from its personality and humanity. However, using Facebook Publishing Tools can be a great way to schedule future posts for publishing, rather than attempting to write and publish all of your posts in real time.

Many businesses prefer to come up with a handful of posts every few days and have them automatically published at set times, subsequently freeing up time and resources. There also plenty of third-party social media management tools worth checking out, including [Hootsuite](#) and [Buffer](#) among others.

5. Study your target audience in-depth

There should never be a point during your campaign when you stop trying to learn as much as possible about your target audience. Not only is establishing a detailed knowledge of your target audience important, but consumer preferences and behaviours in general are shifting all the time.

As a result, some of the tactics you use towards the beginning of your campaign could be rendered ineffective at a later date. It's your job to adapt to the continuously evolving requirements and expectations of your target audience, which is again where analytical tools like Facebook Insights can help.

6. Use your real voice and personality

Far too many businesses take to social media and adopt a voice and personality they think their audience *wants* to hear. The problem being that unless you are 100% authentic and true to the personality of your brand, you'll come across as forced, fake and synthetic.

Authenticity holds the key to the development of good relationships on platforms like Facebook, where people expect you to be yourself.

7. Host competitions and giveaways

There's very little that can generate interest and engagement like the prospect of a freebie. One of the biggest bonuses of Facebook being how easy it is to run regular competitions and giveaways. You'll need to consult Facebook's terms and conditions beforehand in full, in order to ensure your competition complies with the platform's official usage guidelines.

Nevertheless, hosting a competition is a great way of getting people to take an interest in you *and* to keep them coming back for more. It doesn't even have to be particularly huge incentive – the prospect of anything up for grabs free of charge will usually do.

8. Leverage user generated content

Making the most of user generated content starts with encouraging your target audience to contribute. The most common examples of users generated content include pictures of satisfied customers using your products, video reviews and simple written reviews/recommendations.

Along with adding interesting and varied content to your Facebook Business Page, user generated content also serves as invaluable social proof. By getting others to sing the praises of your products and services on your behalf, you don't have to.

9. Curate relevant content from elsewhere

Not every post that appears on your feed needs to be 100% unique. When you think about it, there isn't a magazine or newspaper in the world that can stake claim to 100% unique content – they simply put their own spin on the same stories.

Hence, there's nothing to stop you curating relevant content from other sources and publishing it on your feed. In fact, it's a recommended tactic – inform the original source what you're doing, and they may be happy to publish your content on their feed in return.

10. Show the people behind the brand

Last but not least, human interest stories carry a huge amount of weight on platforms like Facebook. So too does showing the people and the personality behind the brand. This is why it's also worth considering using your Facebook Business Page to introduce your staff, celebrate their achievements and give your fans the opportunity to get to know your team.

You can also invite your staff members to contribute with their own content, bringing welcome diversity and variety to your Facebook Business Page. The more representatives of your business involved in the project, the better your Facebook Page becomes a true representation of your business.

In Summary...

Facebook has the potential to be one of the most powerful marketing platforms and general communication tools for businesses worldwide. However, it takes a significant and ongoing commitment of time and effort to launch and run an effective Facebook campaign.

Social media provides businesses with the opportunity to become part of an engaged and connected community of like-minded individuals. It's simply a case of outlining your objectives ahead of time and producing a viable roadmap to ensure you accomplish them.