

Facebook

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Facebook is a social network site that as of the middle of 2011, there were approximately 750 million active users worldwide. Numbers like that are hard to ignore especially for market reach. It is these numbers that has marketing professionals so enthusiastic! The value of Facebook comes from the millions of people who are connected and the rich information sources they provide.

Businesses are rushing to have a Facebook page. Some say it is a highly valuable business tool, great for marketing products or services. Potential benefits for business include generating brand awareness, customer engagement and feedback, and lead generation. However, before diving in and creating a Facebook page, it is important to strategically plan your approach. It takes time to manage your profile, to connect, to share with others and to update business news and information. That is why it is important that you devise a strategy in respect to what you want to achieve from using the Facebook page. Here are a few tips to get you started.

1. Set Goals

Before you can tackle your strategy, it is vital to determine what you want to accomplish. What are your goals? What is it that you want to achieve by having a presence and connecting and sharing? If you haven't got your goals intact, then your strategy will not work, as you won't know what you are trying to create. It is not necessary to have complex goals. Your objectives could be as straightforward as sourcing new ideas, using it as a recruiting tool, growing the customer database or merely listening to the conversation that is occurring. Different goals may require diverse approaches so you need to be clear what it is you want to gain. Once you understand what goals you want to achieve, you can plan your strategy and decide how to best tackle the approach.

2. Plan your Strategy

Taking the time to plan and think this through will in the long run serve you well. Giving thought to how your business objectives merge with social media is important in understanding how to develop your approach. Although the aim is to determine an

overall long-term strategy, it is also important to break this into shorter term achievable objectives. It will allow you to monitor what is happening and revise if necessary. For example, you might decide that your initial goal might be to increase brand awareness of your business. The first step here would be to conduct research and find out what consumers are already saying. You will be surprised how much chatter is already out there. This intelligence will provide information about how your business is perceived so it is a great starting point in understanding how consumers are thinking.

3. Listen to Your Audience is Saying

A lot of the time businesses will actively spend time updating information without giving much time or thought to what the consumers are saying. Once you have spent time listening to conversations, it is important to understand what consumers are saying. These conversations hold valuable information that could be of great use to your business. You can use it to resolve consumer issues and satisfy their needs, be one step ahead of your competitors or use it for planning your next set of goals.

These tips are a great starting point when putting together a plan. It may take time, however, without this kind of thought, it is unlikely that your Facebook presence will do much for your business unless you are a well know brand. There has to be some consideration and attention to what you are trying to attain, otherwise nothing will be achieved.