

CONTENT IS KING: 9 TIPS FOR COURTING YOUR FACEBOOK FANS

Step into a world where content is king and you're the queen of your Facebook fan page! Each day you reign over decisions about your page: "Am I continuing to grow my fan base?" "Have I been successful at retaining those I've deemed worthy?" Creating compelling content (status updates, news feeds, articles, links, photos, videos, etc.) is key to your Facebook success. We've created nine tips for courting your fans - they cover everything from building a persona for your target audience to establishing appropriate editorial guidelines.

Get all nine noble tips below!

1. Create a Persona

Think about who your page's target audience is and create a descriptive "persona" to represent it. Give him or her a name, demographics and a picture in your mind. Think about their interests and knowledge of your page's subject. Ask yourself: Would this person find your content interesting and relevant? What are the problems he or she is trying to solve? Why is this person on your page? How could he or she use the content you're sharing?

Document your thoughts and include the persona in your Facebook content editorial guidelines. Especially if have more than one content administrator, keeping the persona in mind will help you maintain consistent content.

2. Establish Editorial Guidelines

Establish some editorial guidelines for your page to retain consistent content, tone and voice. Cover topics like: your organization's advocacy viewpoints/opinions/political angles, why your organization has a Facebook page, what the goals are for your page (examples: to bring value to your fans, to build community, to obtain feedback to improve your organization), who your target audience is (the above persona exercise can help), what fan behavior is or isn't allowed (include examples) and frequency of posts (we recommend at least two or three per day) and your level of openness/transparency, etc. You can either keep your guidelines private or post them publicly, it's up to you. Here is a great example of a [private social media policy](#).



3. Re-purpose Relevant Content

Consider all your communication pieces as sources for possible Facebook page content. Web page text, annual reports, press releases, reports, blog posts, case studies, testimonials, recorded radio or podcast interviews, announcements, awards you've earned, webinars, information about upcoming events and/or speaking opportunities, headline news, photos, videos, LinkedIn recommendations, Wikipedia info and content from other social networks you belong to etc. All are all good possibilities. Just be sure to cite the original sources for your content and provide links where appropriate.

4. Cross Promote Your Communities

Promote your Facebook page in as many relevant non-Facebook locations as possible. Promotions could contain a quick call to action such as, "Follow Us" or "Become a Fan" and a your Web site, typically one of the biggest traffic generators for an organization, is a good place to start. Facebook offers a variety of widgets to make your promotional efforts a cinch. [Click here](#) to access them and then look under the "Website or Business" section. Also take a look at how your partners and competitors promote their Facebook pages. An organization's Web site, blog and/or e-newsletter are usually the best, high-traffic places to look.

5. Listen More and Don't Be Afraid to Ask Questions

Read your fan-submitted comments to see what sparks their thoughts and ideas. Study other groups with a lot of fan activity. Note popular content subjects and take into consideration the feedback your fans have about them. Artfully craft your messages by always keeping in mind what your audience would find interesting, useful and relevant – not just what you would. Share content and then ask readers open ended questions – what's your story, what are your ideas, what would you do?

6. Maintain Your Cool

Another thing to remember is to use a soft touch as a moderator when it comes to comments about your content. If you get a particularly nasty comment from a detractor, the community will usually step in on your behalf to confront the opposition. Resist the urge to immediately defend your content - someone else will usually do it for you, and these situations are the ones that typically result in the most fan engagement. Don't get argumentative – take the high ground.

7. Carefully Consider Facebook Advertising

Make your decision to advertise on Facebook carefully. You may crave high numbers of fans and advertising may bring your numbers up but the quality of your audience down. The more



unqualified the audience you have is, the higher the possibility of fan-submitted content that is either not useful or irrelevant or both - which increases the time you'd need to spend moderating your page.

If you choose to explore Facebook advertising, one way to mitigate the above risk is to consider tying the opportunity into a particular campaign with a time-sensitive call to action. You could then direct your Facebook ad to a landing page where you can further qualify your respondents and/or weed out those who wouldn't make good fans. Because Facebook's advertising model is pay-per-click, make sure your ad matches the words on your landing page. Also spend a good amount of time creating or evaluating your target audience's persona because Facebook allows you to segment your advertising based on demographics. If appropriate, use images (ideally people) in your ads because a Facebook audience is prone to respond to visual stimulants. If you choose to advertise, try some testing, for example two ads, each with a different headline. Lastly, consider a trial run first that only requires a small financial investment. Ah, the beauty of pay-per-click!

8. Become Fans of Other Pages

Create a list of other Facebook pages that target similar or complimentary audiences. Become a leader in these communities and participate by leaving supportive, useful content and comments. Over time, post comments about your own cause in a way that is relevant and beneficial to the particular page's fans.

9. Pimp Your Page

Maximize sharing capabilities and features within your Facebook page's settings. Give fans permission to: write on your page's wall; post photos, videos and links. Also, install more apps such as: social RSS or notes, polls and Flickr; post your own videos, photos and notes. Consider posting live updates from an important upcoming event where you'll have exclusive access.

Bottom-line, the more time you invest in getting to know your target audience and posting content that is relevant to them, the more likely they will take notice of your updates and feel compelled enough to tell a friend about you. Post interesting and useful content on a consistent basis, promote your page in all your ongoing communications and network with administrators from other pages and groups. Soon you will have a powerful network of interested fans who will support you and your cause.