facebook for Non-Profits: A Community Managers Guide to Getting Started

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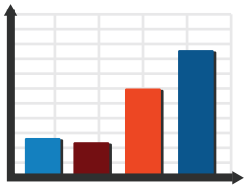
MediaCause

“Facebook is really about communicating and telling stories...” - Mark Zuckerberg

Are you ready to join the social network? The following pages will prepare you with the basics for success. Beyond the basic anatomy of a Facebook Page, you will learn how to effectively tell your organization’s story and manage your online community. This guide is by no means an exhaustive handbook of everything you need to know - Rather, this will provide a foundation for getting your non-profit started. As you will quickly learn, Facebook as a technology, and as a social platform, morphs and changes without regard for the learning curve. It is important to ground yourself in the basics of this guide and then continue your learning as an active member of the Facebook community. Now...deep breath and welcome to Facebook.

In addition to definitions and examples from non-profits crushing it, you’ll find the following resources to help make Facebook most effective for your organization:

Tips & Tricks



Facts & Stats

Design Best Practices

Things To Note

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PART 1

FACEBOOK 101: THE BASICS

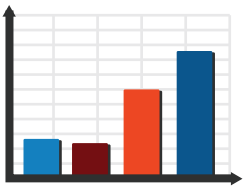
Start at the beginning - Learn what Facebook is all about and how non-profits are using this platform to benefit their organization.

Welcome to facebook.

What is facebook?

Facebook was founded in 2004 with a mission to "make the world more open and connected." Every day, millions of people are using the social network as a tool to "stay connected with friends and family, to discover what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them."*

Facebook has grown into a social utility for not only friends and family to connect, but for organizations to form deeper relationships with their supporters. **Facebook is the place your organization's mission becomes a community.** It allows people to connect with your organization's messaging, but also to relay information back to you and among other supporters.



- **More that a billion monthly active users as of December 2012.**
- **Approximately 82% of monthly active users are outside the U.S. and Canada.**
- **618 million daily active users on average in December 2012.**

Source: http://newsroom.fb.com/Key-Facts

Non-profits on facebook

Many non-profits are effectively leveraging Facebook to raise awareness, increase donations, gain new volunteers, encourage action, and boost support for their cause.

HOW TO: Use Facebook To Your Advantage

Tell your story in your own unique voice to build awareness and get people excited about your organization.

Share content that inspires, engages, and educates. Tell your organization's story. Be sure to include a good mix of photos, videos, and links.

Create a dialogue through posts and tools that bring your community together. This type of engagement helps spread your message and deepens the relationship with your supporters.

Amplify messages that resonate with your community with higher engagement through a Facebook promoted product.

Measure and optimize your message by using Facebook Insights to understand your audience.

facebook glossary

Facebook Pages:

- Pages look similar to personal timelines, but they offer unique tools for connecting people to a topic you care about, like a business, brand, organization or celebrity.
- Pages are managed by admins who have personal timelines. Pages are not separate Facebook accounts and do not have separate login information from your timeline.
- Pages provide insights to help admins understand how people are interacting with the Page.

Admin Panel: Provides a quick snapshot of the page activity, insights, and any messages that you have received. *Note: This is only visible to page administrators.*

Cover Photo: A cover photo is the larger photo at the top of your timeline, right above your profile picture. Use an image that captures the essence of your brand or highlights your current campaign.

Profile Picture: Use your logo. You want something with the most brand recognition so that users immediately connect your Facebook account to your organization.

Facebook Apps: Applications integrate Facebook's News Feed, Notifications, various social channels, and other features to generate awareness and interest in the app by Facebook users. Up to 4 applications will display along the top of your Page - the Photos app is always the first app on the left, you are able to choose the other 3 that will appear here. If you have more than 4 apps the remaining apps are accessed via a drop down menu (up to a total of 12).

Messages: Messages allow users to send you a private message directly. We suggest enabling this feature, as it offers your community a way to get in touch without posting on your wall for all to see.

Friends Who Like This: When people visit your page they will be shown any of their friends who already like you here.

Posts By Others: All of the recent posts from fans are collected into a single box on your Timeline.

Likes: If your page likes other pages then they are displayed here. This can be a great way to network with your supporters and like-minded organizations.

Page Stats: Displays the number of likes, people talking about you, and the people who have checked-in at your organization.

About: Make sure to write a short description about your organization that both captures people's attention, as well as sums up your mission.

Pinned Posts: When you pin a post it stays at the top of your Timeline for 7 days. This means that it will not be pushed down by any subsequent updates that you make, and will get significantly more views and engagement. Use this to promote special offers or important announcements.

Regular Posts: Regular posts (not milestones, pinned, or starred) show up on either side of your Timeline. If there is an image or (images) associated with them then this will be displayed underneath the post. You can choose to hide posts that you no longer wish to display.

Highlighted Posts: These posts highlight content by displaying it across both the columns in your Timeline. Use this feature on great visual content to get more encouragement.

Milestones: Milestones are a great way to show off important dates in your company history. Use these to show off the date you were founded, when you launched new products, or any other important dates. These are displayed with an image which is 843 px by 403 px.

Tagging: A tag links a person, Page, or place to something you post, like a status update or a photo. For example, you can tag a photo to say who's in the photo or post a status update and say who you're with. *Note: Facebook Page's can only tag other pages and places, not individuals.*

Edgerank: Facebook's algorithm used to determine which content is shown in users News Feeds.

Fan: A fan is a Facebook users who chooses to "Like" your organization's Facebook page.

Likes: You can like a page on Facebook, as well as individual comments and posts. Clicking Like is a way to give positive feedback and connect with things you care about.

PART 2

GETTING STARTED

Learn how to create a customized Facebook page that effectively attracts fans and further promotes your branding.

The 5 Steps

When your Facebook Page is set up properly, people who are **searching** for your organization or mission **find you,** and people who are **interested** in what you have to say **like and recommend you.**

Follow these 5 steps to set up your Facebook page for success.

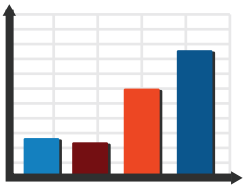
Step 1: Secure your Facebook vanity URL. *Get a username*

Step 2: Create strong profile & cover photos. *See the guidelines*

Step 3: Complete your basic info. *Learn Page Basics*

Step 4: Review your page for brand cohesiveness. *Timeline details & tips*

Step 5: Tell your story. *About Milestones*



68% of people said they'd learn about a charity if a friend posted about it on a social media site*

*Source: http://www.mdgadvertising.com/blog/2012-it-was-a-very-good-year-for-social-giving/

Step 1: Secure your Facebook vanity URL.

What is a vanity URL? It is your specific web address on Facebook. Ideally, this address should be your brand name and be consistent across all social media channels (Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, etc...). This will not only help brand your digital presence, but will also **makes it easier for people to find you** online.

BEFORE: .facebook.com/pages/mediacause/14560640014

AFTER: facebook.com/mediacause

Note: *You need* ***at least 25 fans*** *to get a vanity URL and you can only change your Page's URL* ***ONCE!***

To change your username:
· Click at the top right of any Facebook page and choose Account Settings
· Click General in the left-hand column
· Look for the setting Username and click Edit to the far right
· Type your new username in the open field and click Save Changes

Step 2: Create strong profile & cover photos.

Visuals are an extremely important element of Facebook. Your profile and cover photo are the first things people will notice when they visit your page, so you want to **make a strong impact to compel them to stay on your Page** and interact with you. These images are a chance to reinforce your brand identity and capture the attention of viewers.

***Minimum upload size 180 x 180 px**

Use a logo as your **profile picture**. You want something with the most brand recognition so that users immediately connect your Facebook profile to your organization.

Upload a **cover photo** that ***captures the essence*** of your brand and highlights your current campaign.

Use a consistent and branded profile picture that scales well from 180x180 to 32x32 pixels. Your profile picture follows your organization on Facebook as a thumbnail image in news feed stories, ads, and sponsored stories.

You cover photo is like your organization's billboard - You can use it to build brand awareness, reinforce your brand identity, or highlight a specific campaign.

Here are some examples to consider, depending on your communication goal:

Objective: Reinforce brand identity by highlighting Media Cause's volunteer platform.

Objective: Highlight current campaign by drawing attention to Facebook app.

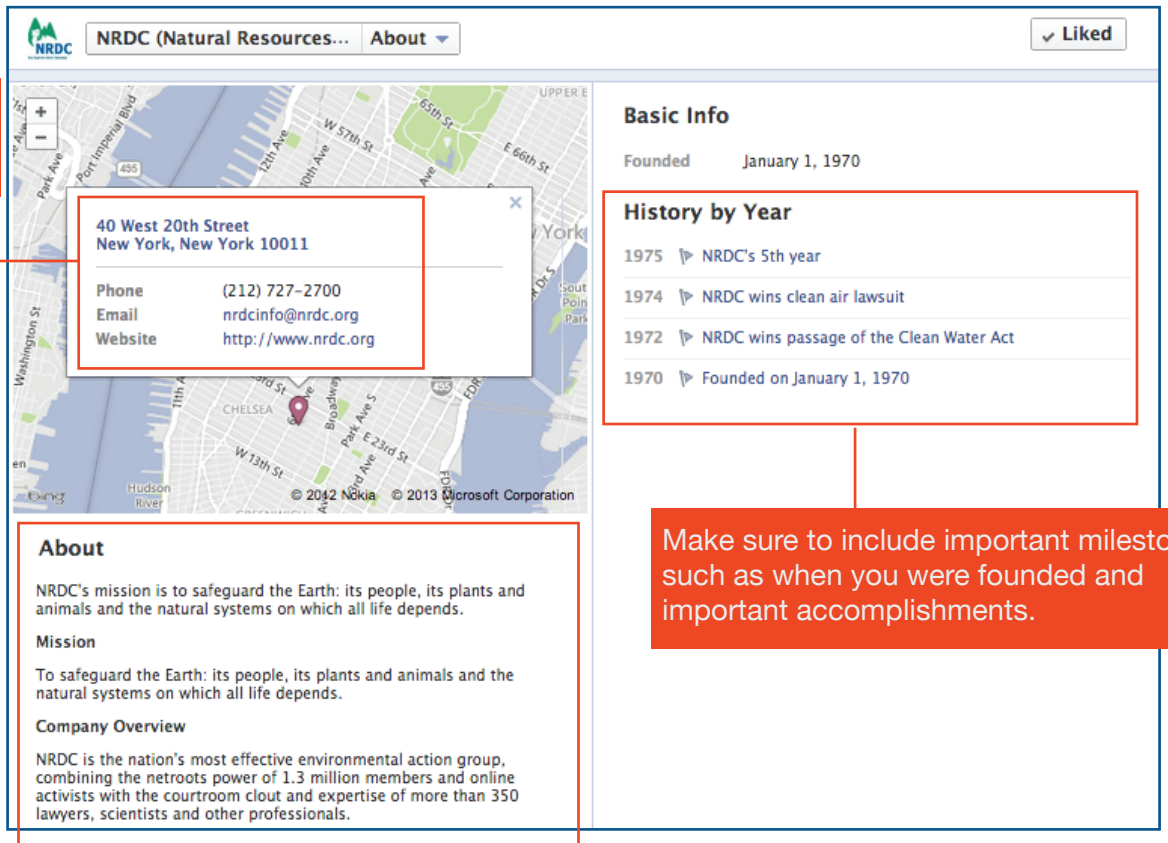
Make sure your cover photo adheres to Facebook's Page Guidelines - Failure to comply runs the risk of getting your Page suspended by Facebook.

Cover Photo Guidelines:

- Covers can't be deceptive, misleading, or infringe on anyone else's copyright
- You may not encourage people to upload your cover to their personal timelines
- Covers may not include images with more than 20% text

Step 3. Complete all the basic info.

Your **About** section on your Facebook Page is an opportunity to let users learn about your organization and it is an important element in connecting with new supporters and building awareness for your organization's mission.



Include contact info, location, and your website.

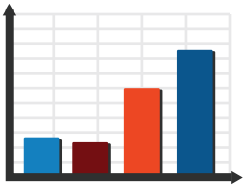
Make sure to include important milestones, such as when you were founded and important accomplishments.

About - Keep it short and simple. Allow a user to understand your organization's mission and goals by reading this one page. It also gives users an idea of what type of content to expect from you.

Step 4. Review your Page.

Navigating through your newly created page, consider the following questions:

· Does this reflect your organization?
· Are there enough brand elements?
· Facebook is a visual medium - Do your visuals reflect your organization's mission?
· Is your Page facilitating dialogue? Your page should articulate community, not just broadcasting.
· Lastly, does it simply look good?

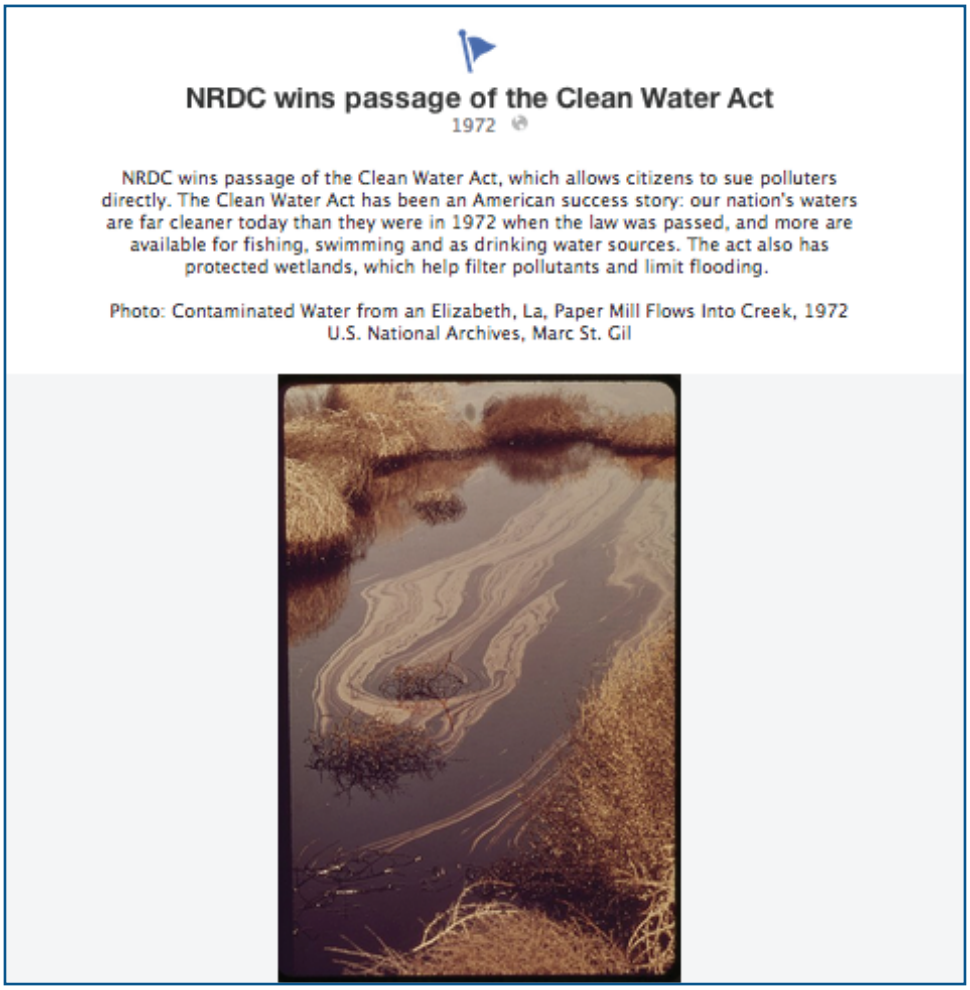


Rich media tends to draw attention more than simple text. According to Facebook, posts including a photo album, a picture or a video generate about 180%, 120%, and 100% more engagement than the average post, respectively.

Step 5. Tell your story.

Your Facebook Page is never done - You should be constantly updating your community on your work, your goals, your accomplishments, and your challenges. These sort of details help to **humanize your organization** and **bring context to your cause.**

· Have you added ***milestones*** so people can see your organization's history, accomplishments and progress?
· Are you using ***pinned posts*** and ***highlighted posts*** to emphasize important stories on your page and encourage engagement from your community? (And don't forget to add photos to help bring these big moments to life for your fans!)
· Are you ***updating your Cover Photo*** monthly to keep users interested and to highlight new campaigns?
· Are you ***adding new photo albums*** and visual content to keep your Page up-to-date and to engage with your community?
· Have you created a ***content calendar?***



PART 3

STRATEGY & PLANNING

Discover how to create an effective Facebook strategy and share interesting and compelling content that encourages engagement.

Knowing Your Strategy

Success on Facebook requires strategy and planning, just like any other communication platform. Before you start posting to Facebook, you need to know what story you want to tell, understand who your audience is, and set clear goals.

Straight from Facebook's mouth...

1. KNOW YOUR STORY

What is your unique organization's voice? Are you a local volunteer organization or a global foundation? How can you bring your story to life in a compelling, authentic, and personal way?

2. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Who are your constituents? How will they want to connect with you? What content will be important to them: fundraisers or volunteer events?

3. KNOW YOUR GOALS

What kind of relationship do you want to have with the people who connect to your Page? How much time are you willing to spend updating your Page? Will you mostly be updating your page on the road via mobile? Defining and prioritizing your goals will help you create your Page posting strategy.

Content Calendar

Organize and Execute Your Content Strategy

What is a content calendar?

Content calendars are a **tool for organizing** - Your brand, your audience, and your story are the key factors in formulating a content strategy for Facebook and a content calendar helps bring this strategy to life.

Benefits of Using A Content Calendar

- Organize your ideas and plan better
- Commitment to publishing content
- Clear understanding of responsibilities

HOW TO: Create an effective Content Calendar

DO create themes and guidelines. Themes, whether weekly or monthly, are a great way to ensure you are catering to the different topics your nonprofit might cover. Nobody wants to hear about the same topic on a weekly basis.

DO select 4-5 types of posts that will recur either weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Such as: staff/volunteer highlights, "Get the Facts", quick tip, weekly blog post, etc.

DO leave a little wiggle room to account for current / unplanned events - the calendar is just a plan and should have some amount of fluidity to it.

DO experiment with post frequency. While we've allotted two posts a day, your audience may respond better to one.

DO switch it up. Although Facebook is becoming more photo-centric, be sure to incorporate the different types of posts offered: photos, videos, questions, status updates, etc.

DO think about the ultimate goal of your Facebook presence. If you want people to share specific content, incorporate that into your scheduling (one post in the week might explicitly call on followers to "SHARE this..." "LIKE this...")

DO NOT disregard weekend posts.

Here's an example of a completed Content Calendar template to help get you started. Remember, this is just one template - Play around and find what works for your organization.

February

Theme: Google / SEO

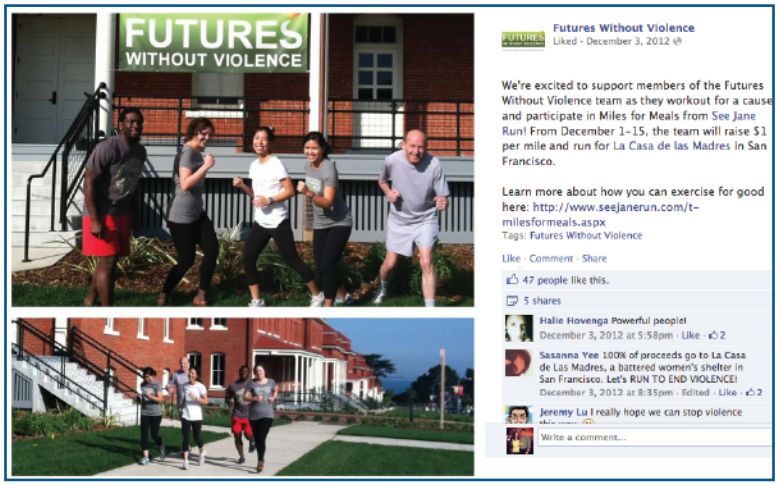
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 • Hubspot Webinar Promo • LinkedIn Inspiration	2
3	4 •Blog Post - Help us give away $100,000,000 • What is your biggest challenge with Google Grants?	5 • Google Grants Quick Tip • Questions App: How much of your organization's Google Grant do you spend each month?	6 • Hubspot Webinar Promo •	7 • Hubspot Webinar: Google Grants: The Biggest Missed Opportunity in Nonprofit Marketing •	8 • Testimonial? • Inspiration Tie In	9
10	11 • Google Grants Quick Tip • Webinar Transcript?	12 • Volunteer Network Challenge •	13 • What others are saying.. (LINK) •	14 • Tiba Testimonial • Valentine's Day	15 • Nominate a Nonprofit! •	16
17	18 • Blog Post - Getting Started with Google Grants	19 • Google Grants Quick Tip •	20 • Volunteer Network Challenge •	21 •Blog Post - 5 Keys to Building a Successful Landing Page for GG •	22 • Inspiration Tie In - CerebralPalsy.org •	23
24	25 • Google Grants Quick Tip •	26 • External blog post	27 • Blog - GG Webinar Questions	28 • Blog Post - Advanced GG Techniques	• •	
	• Google Grants 28 tips •	**Notes:** **Google Grants Tip Daily from Twitter, Hubspot Webinar 2/7, ask a few questions on Twitter leading up to the Webinar**				

Need some additional content inspiration? Set Google Alerts on topics related to your non-profit, and become a fan of like-minded organizations on Facebook to get a steady stream of articles and stories to share with your own fans.

HOW TO: Post Engaging Content

DO get a little personal. Facebook is an opportunity to build a personal relationship with community members, and for community members to build relationships with each other. Let your fans see the behind-the-scenes operations, and get an idea of who the people of your organization actually are.

DO build an online personality. Be authentic - People on Facebook want to connect with the people behind your organization. Whether the tone is witty or just the way you talk to your friends, this personality will engage your supporters.



DO post consistently. Find your sweet spot - this might be anywhere from two to four times a day, depending on both your resources and audience.

DO ask questions related to your cause. Remember to use Facebook as a two-way street - Post open-ended, fill-in-the-blank, and polls to spur conversation between you and the fans, as well as fan-to-fan.

DO respond - Facebook is a conversation. Respond to comments and questions on your news feed so your fans know that you're listening.

DO make your supporters the stars. If someone posts something great on your Page, re-post it, respond personally, and thank them by name.

DO follow the "golden rule" - Engage with your fans the way that you want to be treated on Facebook.

DO tag organizations and places when possible/relevant. This is a great way to show your support for organizations you admire and to broaden the reach of your post.

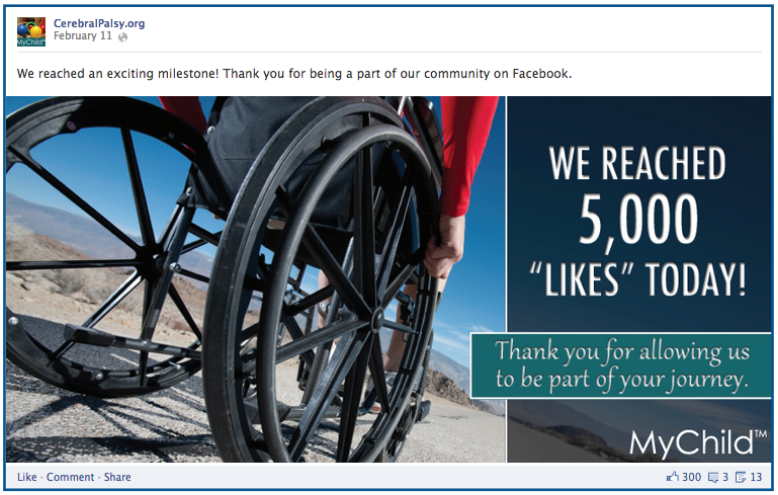
DO mix it up. Don't limit yourself to just posting text. Bring your story to life with rich content, such as photos and videos that capture your message and grab the attention of viewers.

DO create Facebook Events to highlight your organization's fundraisers, walks, and other events. Encourage supporters to attend and invite their friends.

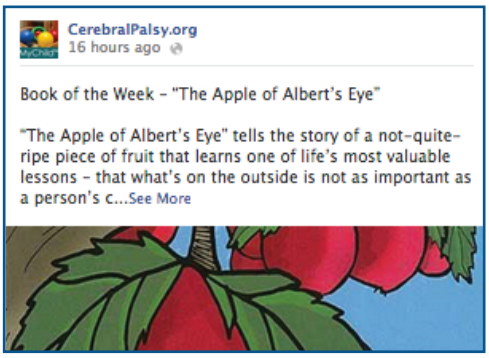
DO share links and exclusive content - Post links to breaking news articles highlighting your organization or media about your cause.

DO connect with niche groups of supporters. Use the targeted publishing feature to share relevant posts with people in a specific location or who speak a certain language.

DO celebrate your milestones. For example, thank your supporters for helping grow your Facebook community.



DO schedule regular posts on specific topics. Be creative! Come up with a weekly post - such as "volunteer of the week" - that your audience will look forward to seeing.



DO NOT post items without purpose.

DO NOT talk only about yourself. No one want to hear you promote only your own information. Highlight the good work that other like-minded organizations are doing.

DO NOT re-post press releases or use auto-posting from other sources. Take the time to post directly to your Facebook Page. Your supporters on Facebook may be different from the people following you other places across the web. Be sure to recognize them as a special group.

No one really likes press releases…However, your fans do want updates and information about your success and new campaigns. Write a post specifically for Facebook rather than copy/pasting a release.

PART 4

WRAP UP

Final questions to ask yourself before you begin and recommendations for moving forward.

5 final questions to ask before you dive in...

1. Who is responsible for maintaining your Facebook presence?

There might be multiple people maintaining your Facebook page, but it is essential to have one person in charge and making sure everyone is on the same page. Name a point person who can dedicate the time necessary to be successful.

2. How much time does staff have allocated to Facebook?

Being successful on Facebook means being active on the platform. There is no secret sauce that makes you “good” on Facebook. Everything in this guide highlights how to be effective, but it takes time. Make sure you allocate time for your staff or yourself to manage this new community.

3. How many Facebook posts are your planning a day? A week?

There is no exact answer, but creating a content calendar will help your planning and organize your ideas. Look at your data to help determine your posting schedule and gain insight into what your audience wants to hear.

4. What is the approval process for content?

If you want to see all posts before your staff sends them, be sure to plan that time into the process. The same goes for if content needs to go by Legal or any other department. Double check all copy, including correct links, before publishing to your Page. While you can hide posts, nothing is ever totally deleted on the Internet.

5. What is your expectation for Facebook?

Set a realistic expectation based on the amount of resources you can devote to the platform. Track your progress - Worry more about engagement metrics, such as sharing, than how many Facebook fans you have.

You made it!

But the conversation is never over on Facebook.

What you've learned in this guide is just the beginning - By now you have set up your Facebook Page, posted some photos, and engaged in dialogue with your fans. Your community has started to grow and your network is liking, sharing, and commenting with you and their friends. It is important to keep the momentum going and continue to follow the foundation laid out in this guide.

What did we miss? As you become more familiar with Facebook as a social communication platform, you will come across many things not included in this guide. Facebook will continue to make changes and it's our job to evolve with the platform. Ready...Set...Go!

GET TO KNOW MEDIA CAUSE

Media Cause

Media Cause is a non-profit marketing company that offers search marketing and social media support to all non-profits regardless of size or budget. We offer world-class digital marketing services to non-profits and causes with funds to invest in growing support for their organizations online.

As a non-profit ourselves, we are a mission driven organization. We believe the world would be a better place, if non-profits, large and small, were able to increase awareness for their programs, raise more money online, and better engage with supporters. The money that we make from selling our marketing services to larger non-profits is poured back into growing our team of "marketing for good" experts as well as building our community of marketing volunteers to ensure that all non-profits can take advantage of great programs, tools, and social platforms like Google Grants, Facebook, and Twitter. Learn more at www.mediacause.org.

Let's be friends! Join our online communities to check out our work and get the latest in non-profit social media news:

facebook.com/mediacause

twitter.com/mediacause