

DAVID HAYDEN

BUILDING YOUR BRAND WITH FACEBOOK



REVEALED

SECRETS REVEALED

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**A Facebook Strategy That
Will Grow Your Business**

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Building Your Brand With Facebook



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Introduction

A great deal has been written about the power of Facebook for helping small businesses grow. A majority of these articles, books, websites, blogs, training manuals, etc. go into great depths about how Facebook can be a valuable tool for your business. They often result in a great deal of excitement, but leave the reader unclear about how to proceed. This is not one of those books.

Other books and programs offer you a “guaranteed” system to convert fans into customers. These often rely on questionably ethical tactics. The only guarantee with most of these systems is that Facebook will shut down your fan page if they catch you using these tactics. Tricks like these only last until the next Facebook terms of service update. Then you are back to square one with your Facebook marketing efforts.

This book is different. The philosophy taught in this book works because it gives your fans what they want. It will never result in your page being punished because you are giving Facebook what it wants. This book is not about beating the system. This book teaches you to fully utilize the system as it was designed.

This book will do more than excite you about the opportunities on Facebook for your business. By the end of this book, you will have a clear game plan for how to proceed. You will understand what Facebook values and have an easy to follow plan for providing it. This will ensure that you are building your fan page on a solid foundation. Following the principles outlined in this book will create a bond with your fans, build your brand, and improve the results you see from your efforts on Facebook.

Stop chasing new fans. Stop trying to create bigger and better promotions. Stop listening to each new expert that comes along. Stop trying different versions of the same methods of marketing on Facebook that have frustrated you in the past. Take the time to learn and digest this very short book. Then you can start seeing results from your efforts on Facebook.

What Facebook Is and Is Not

Maximizing the utilization of social networks to propel sales has been an apex of frustration for companies since the advent of social networks. “Social Network Experts” (SNE) were created to demonstrate how a company could reach millions of people through a single advertisement on a social networking site. Wouldn’t you want your message to be placed where hundreds of millions of people go? This caused many companies to jump on the SNE bandwagon and attempt to harness the power of social networks.

The media fed the belief that Facebook was the advertising platform of the future. Millions of dollars were invested trying to determine how to put free advertisements in front of potential customers. Even small businesses tried their luck at the opportunity to reach new audiences with their message. Almost all walked away disappointed in the return on investment. Their messages were not reaching the target audience and lacked the ability to convert visitors into customers.

This failure was a result of an insufficient understanding of social networking. As much as companies sought to use social networks as free advertising platforms, this was not the intended purpose. Social networks were designed to be a person’s ability to interact with friends and family. Facebook and other services provide the platform for this interaction at no charge to the user. In turn, Facebook sells advertising to companies wishing to reach this audience. Over time, the users have learned to block out most marketing and Facebook has made it more difficult for businesses to publicize for free.

This does not mean the value of Facebook to companies has diminished. In fact, innovative companies have found great success by adopting a different model for using Facebook. Facebook is not a free advertising platform, but it offers a tremendous opportunity for building your brand. The greatest successes in Facebook marketing have been achieved by those businesses that were able to shift their focus and successfully introduce their trademark to the public.

Building Your Brand vs. Advertising

Some readers will be disappointed at this discovery. They are so wrapped up in the sales mentality that they fail to realize the potential of building a brand. You might even be one of them. Do not give up yet. The result of building a brand is to increase sales. In sales terminology, Facebook is a targeted prospecting tool. By building your brand, you enable others to prospect for you. This section will explain how this works.

People do not log onto Facebook because they need your product. If someone is looking for your product or service, he/she most likely will go to Google instead. The attraction of Facebook is updates from friends and entertainment. People are turned off by advertisements. Some advertisements are seen as a necessary evil, but most are ignored. In fact, companies who use Facebook solely for advertising will be quickly punished by the Facebook algorithm and will rarely appear on user's newsfeeds. The result is no one sees your message.

Utilizing a Facebook page as a brand building tool has the opposite effect. You are seen as a friend introducing yourself. By focusing on brand building, your customers will see you as a welcomed friend rather than an obnoxious disturbance. People will discover that you have common interests and are multidimensional. They will begin to appreciate your contributions to their newsfeed and will even interact with you. This means that when the time comes that they do need your service, they will seek you out.

For those that do come onto Facebook needing your service, you will have a huge advantage. Most people looking for your service are not already your Facebook fan. People often ask for recommendations from their friends when looking for goods and services. Let your fans recommend you to their friends by using Facebook as a brand building tool. Instead of posting advertisements that are ignored, build an army of fans to spot prospective customers and receive free referrals. This is the power of using Facebook for brand building as opposed to a free advertising platform.

How to Build Your Brand

Hopefully you are now seeing the value of building a brand. The next step is determining what your brand is and what it is not. “Branding” has become a hot corporate buzzword. Many of the former “Social Networking Experts” have reinvented themselves as “Branding Experts”. Small businesses should not have to hire either to gain the benefits of Facebook. There is a far simpler method for understanding your brand and representing it to others.

It is important to establish what your brand is not. Your brand is not an advertising machine. Your brand is not discounted prices. Most of all, your brand is not self-obsessed. Attempting to build your brand using traditional strategies will yield this perception. Consider your personal Facebook page friends. Those that use it solely to advertise their business or promote themselves are probably not the friends you spend most of your time paying attention to. They made it onto your page because of the relationship you have outside of Facebook, but they squandered that relationship by only using it to promote their business. With the new timeline format of Facebook, these people will rarely show up on your newsfeed, if at all. The algorithm punishes them by not posting anything that causes you to interact.

If you treat your Facebook fan page this way, you too will be ignored by your fans until you disappear from their newsfeeds entirely. Building your brand means introducing yourself to your fans as someone they want to interact with. In order to do this, you should first identify what your brand is. How? Imagine your brand as a person. If your brand had a personality, what would it be? What type of music would it listen to? What kinds of jokes would it laugh at? What kind of websites would it enjoy? The more you think about your brand, the more you will be able to define the brand as a person. After characterizing the person who reflects your brand, give it a voice. That voice is your Facebook fan page.

Building Your Brand With Facebook

This means that instead of posting to the fan page as yourself, post to the fan page as the person who represents your brand. The brand should not be you. Even if the person you imagine as the brand is similar, they should be a better version of you. Your brand should be smarter, make better jokes, and even be a bit better looking. Posts should be determined by the preferences of the person that represents the brand. If you stay consistent with this personality, you will find that people will begin to feel that they know your brand. The better you know your brand, the more likable it will become. This will lead to more interactions and more fans.

The Value of Brand Building

When you establish your brand as a person, your fans will interact with the brand as a person. This builds a more even relationship. You are not constantly asking them for their business, but instead providing a value to them when they check their Facebook newsfeed. This sort of interaction is highly rewarded by Facebook. By providing content that entertains your fans, you are creating a bond with them. This bond is something that traditional advertising has always strived for. Building your brand through Facebook allows you to create several very powerful beliefs in the minds of your fans. These beliefs include:

1. "This brand shares my values and cares about things that matter to me."
2. "I enjoy hearing from this brand."
3. "I know this brand and what they are about."
4. "I think my friends would enjoy learning about this brand too."
5. "I would recommend this brand to my friends."
6. "If I ever need this brand's product, I know who to contact."
7. "This brand is like me."

Many of those exact thoughts and beliefs are considered the holy grail of traditional advertising. Companies spend millions of dollars trying to convince people to believe those ideas. These beliefs transcend sales because they make potential guests eager to use your service and recommend you to their friends. This is the true value of brand building through Facebook. You can build a relationship with your fans and they will help spread your message. In the long run, this is far more valuable than simply advertising and hoping someone needs your product before you fall completely off their newsfeed.

Now that you understand the power of brand building, we can focus on how to implement these strategies most effectively. This requires a deeper understanding of how Facebook works. To achieve success in brand building through Facebook, you must understand what Facebook rewards and punishes.

The Evolution of the Algorithm

At Facebook's inception, your newsfeed worked on a very basic premise. When one of your friends posted something it showed up on your newsfeed. This became a bit more cumbersome when people began to have hundreds, and even thousands, of friends. Soon newsfeeds were overwhelmed with Aunt Millie carrying on entire conversations with her friends as status updates and your 13 year-old niece sharing the entire Jonas Brothers anthology one YouTube video at a time. Facebook saw the potential of users becoming overwhelmed and leaving the site. In response, they began categorizing posts as "top stories." This placed an emphasis on the posts of the people you are most interested in. Facebook deduced the stories that would most interest you through the use of an algorithm.

An algorithm is a highly advanced formula that calculates a number of weighted factors to determine an outcome. The exact algorithm that Facebook uses is a proprietary secret that is closely guarded. No one can tell you the exact formula that Facebook uses. In fact, the algorithm is routinely renovated to provide you with the updates and stories you will find most interesting.

With the most recent Facebook changes and the conversion to the "timeline" format, Facebook gives users more control over who they see in their newsfeed. A friend can now be individually added as a "close friend" or "acquaintance." By setting someone as a "close friend" you opt to read everything that person posts. Identifying someone as an "acquaintance" will limit their updates on your newsfeed to changes in relationship or employment status. Since changing the settings would require a user to make an individual decision on each of their friends, most newsfeeds are still determined by the algorithm.

Understanding the Algorithm

With a name like “the algorithm” it is understandable if the term inspires some math-phobias. In actuality, it is a very simple idea. Facebook wants to provide you, the user, with the best experience possible. They know that if your newsfeed is cluttered with stories you don’t care about, then you won’t stay on the site as long. This means that you won’t view as many of the advertisements that they profit from. To extend your time on their site, Facebook tries to provide content they feel you will enjoy. Instead of causing you to “defriend” or “unlike” a friend or business, they simply reduce their impact on your newsfeed.

How exactly they determine what information they show in your newsfeed is impossible to know since Facebook keeps the algorithm a closely held secret. This does not mean that marketing on Facebook is a shot in the dark. There are clues given and general rules that can be determined by looking at the information provided by Facebook. Here is a breakdown of four key components of the algorithm.

1. **Who you interact with:** The number of times you “like”, “comment”, or “share” someone’s posts is directly correlated with often they will show up on your newsfeed. For the purposes of this book these three things will be lumped together as the term “interactions”. This is the primary way that Facebook determines that you are interested in someone. If you add a new friend or “like” a new business, they will appear on your feed for a trial period. Interactions will increase the updates appearing in your newsfeed. Failing to interact with them will keep them off your newsfeed with a few limited exceptions that are discussed below.

2. ***What others have interacted with:*** Even with limited interaction, updates may still appear on your newsfeed because many other people have interacted with that post. If a particular status from a friend has been “liked” many times by others, the algorithm will determine that it is of greater importance. This will cause the status to appear on far more newsfeeds than a status that has received no interactions.
3. ***What do your mutual friends/fans think:*** The number of mutual friends you have with an individual directly correlates with how frequently he/she appears in your news feed. This is another way Facebook attempts to determine what is more relevant to you. The threshold mentioned in the previous point is lowered when the interactions are coming from mutual friends. This is considered a weighted endorsement of the status since it is coming from one of your friends.
4. ***What everyone is talking about:*** With the newest Facebook update, there is now additional weight given to “hot” or “trending” topics. When a holiday, sporting event, or major news story occurs, Facebook now will lump these posts together. They often lump these into a single update. These updates may say something like “David Hayden and 12 other friends posted about The University of Missouri Tigers.” The most recent post (regardless of interactions with that person) will appear on top with the option to see the similar posts of the 12 other friends.

You can see that there are multiple ways to end up on someone’s newsfeed. While determining what will show up on a newsfeed has become far more complicated than it was when Facebook began, it is still based on some simple logic. In order to provide the highest quality of experience for a user, Facebook filters out information that it feels the user will not find interesting.

Making the Algorithm Work for You

As you shift your perspective from a Facebook user to a business owner trying to find potential customers on Facebook, you need to take away the following from this explanation:

1. ***The goal is interaction:*** Whether you are trying to advertise a service or make your fans salivate for their favorite meal, the only way to success is to show up on their newsfeed. This is achieved by their interaction with you. Posting advertisements that do not encourage interaction will cause your stories to stop appearing on your fans' newsfeed. Interaction should be your first goal and advertising should be secondary. This ensures that when you do post an advertising message, people will see it.
2. ***More interaction equals more message visibility:*** The power of interaction is exponential. Each person that interacts with a story you post increases the likelihood that others will see it. Every interaction makes it more probable that your update will reach the threshold necessary to show up in the newsfeeds of your other fans. This is amplified if the person doing the interacting has several friends that are also your fans. For this reason, posts that cause interaction are successes and those that do not are failures, regardless of the message.
3. ***Cross-promotion yields dividends:*** Sharing the status of a business with which you share many mutual fans will result in you on a greater number of newsfeeds. Likewise when you interact with posts made on your fan page's timeline. This is a very important type of synergy that you need to take advantage of. Do not fear promoting other pages or letting your fans know about events happening in town. This is actually a very effective method for increasing interaction and therefore your perceived importance in the eyes of the algorithm.

4. ***Being on-topic is a back door:*** Even if you rarely show up on a fan's newsfeed, you still have the potential to do so by being on topic. Commenting on a topic that others are talking about (see #4 from Understanding the Algorithm) allows the chance to break back into their newsfeed. This is one more opportunity for them to interact with you. Remember: more interactions equal more newsfeed visibility. Take advantage of this opportunity when it presents itself.

Examples of the Power of Interaction

Below is a screen capture from a client's Facebook insights to demonstrate the power of interaction.

Date ?	Post ?	Reach ?	Engaged Users ?	Talking About This ?
3/3/12		746	27	14
3/2/12		575	5	3
3/2/12		614	4	3
3/2/12		550	10	7
3/1/12		546	4	2
3/1/12		1,389	88	25
2/29/12		632	15	7

All of the actual posts have been eliminated to prove a point. “Reach” is how many different people had a post displayed on their newsfeed. “Engaged Users” are those who clicked on a post to expand it or to see the comments that others have left. “Talking About This” measures the number of actual interactions (likes, comments, and shares) that a post has. You can see that the “reach” of a given post is increased by the number of “engaged users” and users “talking about this”. You can notice that the reach of a post rises as more people interact with a post. It should be noted that increasing the interactions of a post will have a residual effect on the reach of the following post.

Now that there is a firm understanding of the importance of interaction on expanding the reach of your posts, we can move on to how to encourage this interaction.

How to Increase Interaction

With a proper understanding of the importance of interaction, you can develop a game plan for building a Facebook page to encourage it. This is easier said than done. Most posts on personal Facebook pages will not cause any interaction and these cater to actual friends of the person making the post. As a company trying to find customers, it can be even more difficult to get others to interact with your posts. In order to attain the desired interactions, you need a strategy that keeps you visible on potential customers' newsfeeds. This is achieved by providing value to your fans.

You might read that last sentence and interpret it as offering a discount on your goods and services. Quite the contrary: value on Facebook is measured differently. The reason people log onto Facebook is not to learn more about your product or service. Similarly, people do not turn on the television to watch advertisements. Advertisements are seen if people enjoy the content on the channel. The content (show, movie, documentary, etc.) is the value. The cost of enjoying anything of value for free is the occasional advertisement. Companies invest in advertisements because a portion of the people watching will buy the product they are advertising.

Your Facebook efforts will fail if you believe that your advertisements are “value” or “content”. That may be your concern, but advertisements do not interest your fans. Companies that fail to understand this will find no return on investment from Facebook. No plethora of fans will ever see the advertisements because there are no interactions. The algorithm is not designed to punish these companies, but rather to reward those that have fans interacting often. The goal is to have your fans interact because *increased interactions equal increased message visibility*.

The 75/25 Rule

The 75/25 rule is one of the most commonly advocated techniques for increasing interactions with your posts. It should not be confused with the 80/20 rule (The Pareto Principle). The 75/25 rule states that 75 percent of your posts should contain content fans will interact with. The other 25 percent of your posts should be dedicated to promoting your business. This relates directly back to the television analogy I used earlier. A television show has frequent commercial breaks, but because the entertainment dominates, people continue to watch. This is a very effective guideline for promoting your business.

Earlier, the power of interaction was discussed at length. The 75/25 rule allows you to utilize this power. As noted earlier, increasing the interactions of a post will escalate the reach of the following post. Utilizing three interactive posts will cause more people to see a fourth post that contains an advertisement. This idea has been used with incredible success by celebrities on Twitter. These celebrities receive large sums of money for endorsing companies with their tweets. They can charge these rates because their fans are actively engaged on their non-paid posts. The value of your advertising posts is based on how engaged your fans are with your non-advertising posts.

If you have considered using Facebook for your business, you have probably already considered what to highlight in the 25% of posts promoting your business. There should be special offers and promotions. The real value of promoting on social networks goes beyond the immediacy of those offers. Build a bond with your fans by providing content that relate to them. By providing value to them, you are gaining their recommendation whether they are customers or not. Most of your fans did not log on to Facebook looking for your service. Establishing this bond with your fans will yield customers or recommendations when they or their friends are looking for your services.

Increase Interaction by Content

Creativity is paramount for the 75% of posts that are not advertisements for your business. This does not mean that you need to reinvent the wheel. There are tried and true methods to gaining interaction with your fans. Post ideas are provided in a list below. I recommend taking time to brainstorm and come up with many ideas at once. If one brainstorming session yields 20 post ideas, posts may be covered for a week or more. Take advantage of any employees or co-workers in this task. They can be invaluable resources for brainstorming. There are also many lists of status ideas to be found online. If you did not receive a set of ideas from me along with this report, email me at David@HospitalityFormula.com and I will send you my most current list of suggestions that you can use on your page.

Here are some types of posts that have been shown to be very effective in increasing fan interaction:

1. **Questions:** Facebook is much like real life in this regard. If you ask someone a question, they are more likely to reply. The better the question, the more answers you will receive. These can be quick “either/or” questions (Chocolate or Vanilla?) or open ended (How are you enjoying this beautiful weather?). You can also make your questions show up in the “on-topic” groupings by asking specific questions (Who will win the big game, the Missouri Tigers or the Kansas Jayhawks?). The more strongly your fans feel about their answer, the more likely they are to reply.

2. **Quotes:** Can't think of anything funny, poetic, or inspiring? Don't worry about it. Interesting thoughts of contemporary or historical people are in abundance. Find a relatable quote from a famous person and use that as a status. You will increase the bond with your fans that are also fans of the person you quote. You also stand a high chance of others sharing your status. Choose someone that your fans might feel passionate about, but are not likely to be offended by.

3. **Pictures:** Pictures posted on Facebook are great for capturing attention. This is the basis of more recent social networks like Tumblr or Pinterest. Pictures have the propensity to be shared more often than text. These pictures can be inspiring or humorous. Consider posting a picture of your staff members, customers, vendors, etc. Utilize the added benefit of reaching a larger audience as people tag themselves and share with others. Again, avoid controversy in your pictures and always credit the owner of the pictures.

4. **Articles:** If you find an article interesting, your fans might as well. This is effective for public service announcements and local human interest stories. The best articles are ones that are relevant, but do not reflect a potentially controversial opinion. Stories from your local paper are great, but also consider posts from blogs. The drawback of sharing articles is that your fans will likely not take the time to visit the site and read the article. For this reason, select articles with positive headlines that your guests may like at first glance alone.

5. **Events:** Throughout your city there are events happening nearly every night. They could be a concert by a local band or a fundraiser for a local charity. Promoting these events by sharing them on your page will help them spread the word with a limited budget. This a good way to make loyal and grateful fans out of the people hosting the event and their supporters. Help yourself by helping others.

6. **Blog Posts:** If your company has a blog (and it should), sharing any new posts on your fan page should be a top priority. This will give your most loyal fans greater insight into your company. It will demonstrate to your other fans that you are enough of an expert to have a blog on the topic, even if they don't read it. This has the additional benefit of providing a strong recommendation to Google about your blog. According to Google's algorithm, Facebook links are given the highest level of credibility.

7. **Charities:** There are a number of great organizations around the country who try to meet the needs of others. Taking time to promote these groups will show that your company is about more than profits. This will help build the bond with, and gain attention of, your fans that support the same causes and groups.

8. **Videos:** Funny videos are one of the most commonly shared pieces of information on the internet. Posting a funny video that your fans have not viewed before is one of the quickest ways to get them sharing with their friends and promoting your brand. This is also easy to do with music videos. Videos for songs with nostalgia value can circulate through Facebook quickly as people enjoy the fond memories and share them with others.

9. **Answering Questions:** This is an incredibly powerful way to gain interactions. It does take a little more time, but can increase your credibility significantly. Ask others what question they have for you. For example a restaurant could ask, “What have you always wanted to know about owning a restaurant?” You would be surprised how many questions people have about your business. Answer honestly, but in a way that reflects well upon your business. This can result in an educational post for you and your fans.

10. **Writing about others:** When you write positive posts about other people, they tend to respond favorably. Consider posting about a staff member or supplier. Not only will they like it, but they will probably share it with their family and friends who will do the same. This creates a stronger bond with the person you are writing about and gains a strong endorsement to others who like that person. They will view it as a sign of your ability to be an exceptional judge of character.

As seen from this list, you can determine that most any post can gather the attention of your fans. There is no excuse for not having a status update that is not advertising. You now have a great list to help you brainstorm. You also have the entire internet to help you come up with other ideas. If that does not provide you with inspiration, you can always share someone else’s status.

Increase Interaction by Contacts

In the previous section I discussed how you can increase interactions by providing quality content. This is the most effective way to set Facebook ablaze with your status updates. Every great fire needs a bit of kindling though. Since interaction is iterative you often need someone to get the ball rolling. Once you have a few fans interacting, the reach of your posts will grow significantly. For that reason it is important to have a handful of fans you can turn into an army of “like-ers.”

So the real question is, “Where do you find the people who are ready to assist you by liking your updates?” The short answer is to look at those people who are closest to you. Friends and family are great options. So are any employees or co-workers. Anyone with a vested interest in the success of your business should be the first you consider. If you sign their paychecks, they should be enlisted in your “like-er army”. They are not the only options. Here is a list of groups you can use to brainstorm for loyal fans.

1. **Employees:** Your employees have a vested interest in seeing your company thrive. For this reason they are a natural choice to interact with your updates, but do not force them to do so. You can, however, explain the importance and ask them to help out. This should be amplified where the employees are able to check Facebook at work. Helping the company in return seems like a very fair trade.
2. **Satisfied customers:** After building a relationship with a satisfied customer, mention the value of interaction on your Facebook efforts. If they are highly satisfied customers, then they will often want others to have the same experience. These customers are also your best referral tool because they can pass along their positive experience to friends they have personal credibility with.

3. ***Vendors and suppliers:*** This group also has a vested interest in the success of your company because you use their products. Ask them to help themselves by helping you. Share their more interesting posts and ask them to do the same. It is a prime example of the saying, “A rising tide lifts all ships.” This sort of mutually beneficial relationship can be especially powerful in social networking.
4. ***Those whose posts you share:*** When you share a post, article, or event from someone else, they will often send a message to thank you. Respond graciously, but ask them to do the same if they find any of your upcoming posts interesting. You will often find them doing the same out of gratitude. Respond by keeping an eye out for something to share from them again. This can create a powerful alliance to expose your brand to more people.

As you can see, there are many ways to increase interaction. This list is not inclusive of every idea, but is instead meant to help you brainstorm the groups that are right for your business. Take time after reading this list to jot down notes about who can help you achieve your social network marketing goals. There is tremendous opportunity for partnerships in this medium. Find a way to build your army of “like-ers” and you can conquer your social network marketing goals.

Building a Fan Base

All of the advice I can give in this book is useless if your page has no fans. If no one becomes a fan of your page, you are talking to an empty room. Your posts will just end up as that proverbial tree falling in the woods. There are several methods for gaining fans for your page, the best one being organic. Fans who find your page naturally, or through the recommendation of friends, will most likely be in your target demographic. In order to get the process started, you need some fans. In other words, the best way to get fans is to have fans. Here are some ideas to get those initial fans to start the process in motion.

- 1. *Your friends and family:*** The first step is to get our friends and family signed up as fans. Post a link to your fan page and invite your personal Facebook friends to like it. Then ask them to do the same. Try to reach those with whom you have personal and professional credibility. These are the people most likely to become fans as a favor to you. Those who join right away will become some of your most loyal supporters.
- 2. *Your employees and co-workers:*** These are people who have a vested interest in the success of your company. Ask them to become fans and work to recruit other fans. Find a way to reward those who bring you a large number of fans. This spreads your reach out to a “second generation” of fans who have a connection to your business.
- 3. *Satisfied customers:*** If you keep a mailing list or some other method of contacting your previous customers, utilize it to let them know about your fan page. These people will often do so gladly out of a desire to thank you for the service you have provided in the past. Some will also share this information voluntarily with their friends and family providing you with free recommendations.

- 4. *Vendors and suppliers:*** Ask your vendors and suppliers to become your fans. They may be limited in the ways in which they can share your page with others due to a fear of alienating other customers. This does not mean they cannot be your fan and interact with your page. Be sure and return the favor by becoming a fan of their pages as well.
- 5. *Become a fan of others:*** It has been said that the best way to have a friend is to be a friend. It is also true that the best way to have fans is to be a fan. Become a fan of community organizations, business, sporting teams, and other fan pages. These often have large established fan bases. They may become your fan in return. Even if they do not, potential fans will see that you “like” several of the pages that they do and will be more likely to become a fan of your page.
- 6. *Email signature line:*** This is a brilliant and free idea. Change the signature line of your email account to ask the recipient to become your fan on Facebook. This may not be your most effective method, but you will find many recipients are happy to help. This is especially effective for those people looking to make a positive impression on you during the email correspondence.
- 7. *QR codes:*** If your customers come to you, it is beneficial to have QR codes available for them. QR codes are boxes of squares that can be read by smart phones. All a customer would have to do is scan this box and they will be lead to your Facebook page. Post these in waiting areas or on your counter. If the guest has any reason to wait, they will often scan the box to pass the time. This is a free and effective way to turn customers into fans.

Building Your Brand With Facebook

As you can see, there are a number of ways to organically increase your fan base. Once you have a core of fans, your focus can turn to interaction and building your brand. Having a substantial base of fans will help you in a number of ways. The more fans you have, the higher you will show up in search results on Facebook. A larger number of fans will also increase the likelihood that you will have a friend or fan page in common with a prospective customer who looks for your business on Facebook. This will lift you even higher in the search results than a large number of fans alone. It is beneficial for you to gain fans right away. The best way to do this is through natural methods like those described above. Many services offer the opportunity to “buy” fans. I recommend avoiding them. Not only are they a violation of Facebook’s terms of service, but they will rarely interact and harm your statistics. Building a fan base organically may take longer, but it is vital to long term success.

Bringing It All Together

Now that you have this knowledge, it is time to put it to work in building your brand and your fan base. Understanding the principles discussed in this report will make your efforts far more successful. Your first instinct might be to close this report and start posting to Facebook. Many people who started this report were so excited that they didn't make it this far. Thank you for reading through to the end. As a reward for your time, the following outline will walk you step by step through implementing the strategies discussed in this report.

As you proceed through this list, do not move past a step until you have fully completed it. Each step builds upon the previous steps and the early steps create the foundation that the later steps are built upon. Skipping any of them will cause you to risk missing out on the power of this philosophy. Proceed through this list and you will have a firm foundation for building your fan base and building your brand.

- Commit to using your Facebook page to build your brand instead of simply posting advertising messages.
- Define your brand. Imagine them as a person. Know their likes and dislikes. Commit to giving this person a voice on your fan page.
- Determine that your success in building your brand is best measured by interactions.
- Develop a list of potential posts and status updates. Use a large notepad or word document. If you keep this list on your computer, keep it on your desktop. Commit to adding to this list frequently.
- Set a schedule for updating your fan page.

Building Your Brand With Facebook

- Design a system for keeping track of how many updates are designed to create interaction and how many are about promoting your product. Stay within the parameters of the 75/25 rule.
- Create a list of contacts that you want to have in your army of “like-ers.” This should be your first priority when you start actually working with your fan page.
- Create QR codes and change your email signature line, if applicable.
- Become a fan of as many non-controversial groups and organizations with ties to your community as you can.
- Launch your new page. Get others excited. You are now harnessing the power of Facebook as the ultimate brand building tool.
- Stop reading this report and get to work. You have a brand to build.

About The Author

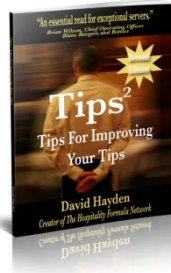


David Hayden is an award winning blogger, author, and social media consultant based out of Kansas City, MO. His primary focus has been on helping independent restaurants compete with large restaurant corporations. His passion for helping the restaurants compete led him to study the methods employed by those seeing success in the social media.

The second edition of his first book, [*Tips²: Tips For Improving Your Tips*](#), has recently been released. He continues to provide great content to his readers through his network of award-winning blogs that are collectively known as “The Hospitality Formula Network.” This includes The Manager’s Office which provides great insight on motivation, leadership, and marketing to small business owners.

Mr. Hayden is available to help with solutions to any social networking and online marketing problems. You can reach him to discuss any issues you might encounter at David@HospitalityFormula.com

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