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Brief #8



MINUTE MARKETER

How to Use Facebook for Lead Generation and Engagement

12 tactics for connecting with
Facebook users



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30-Minute Marketer: How to Use Facebook for Lead Generation and Engagement

12 tactics for connecting with Facebook users

Author

Bobbi Dempsey, Editor, 30-Minute Marketer

Contributors

Sergio Balegno, Director of Research

Adam T. Sutton, Senior Reporter

Editor

Daniel Burstein, Director of Editorial Content

Production Editors

Brad Bortone, Senior Copy Editor

Selena Blue, Junior Copy Editor



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TACTICS YOU CAN LEARN OVER LUNCH

Welcome to *30-Minute Marketer*—a resource from MarketingSherpa featuring bite-sized tips for busy marketers.

In this report, we focus on how you can use Facebook to generate high-quality leads (while also building connections with fans of your brand).

If you want to generate leads—and generate a high number of leads as quickly as possible—you need to go where the people are. And right now, people (a good amount of them, anyway) are on Facebook. The social media site says it has more than 800 million active users, with 50% of active users logging in each day. The average user has 130 friends.

Marketers have taken notice. Facebook is the top social media platform used by marketers. According to the [MarketingSherpa 2011 Social Marketing Benchmark Report](#), 84% of social marketers use Facebook in some way. Most likely, you already have some sort of Facebook profile. But there are some simple strategies that can help you get the most out of your Facebook page.

In this report, we'll show you:

- Why Facebook is such an important marketing venue
- What defines a "hyper-social" user, and why they're so powerful
- Ways to use tabs to boost your Facebook page
- Tips for using free analytics to measure your Facebook results

We know you're in a hurry, so we won't make you wait any longer. Enjoy these Facebook lead generation tips!

Bobbi Dempsey
Editor, *30-Minute Marketer*

About *30-Minute Marketer*

MarketingSherpa's *30-Minute Marketer* is designed with you, the busy marketer, in mind. We know you have a lot to do and not a lot of time in which to do it. You need quick, simple tips that you can put into action right away.

For each *30-Minute Marketer*, we scour the vast MECLABS library of marketing research, from MarketingSherpa case studies and benchmark reports, to MarketingExperiments optimization tests, and edit the research down into an actionable piece for helping you improve your marketing performance right now...or at least by the time you're done with lunch.

When it comes to social media marketing, Facebook has established itself as the current “king of the hill”... at least for the time being. It seems as if every business uses it, and most companies—from large corporations to small neighborhood shops—have some sort of Facebook page or profile.

But, if you simply post a basic, bland profile, and don't put much effort into making it interesting and interactive, you are missing out on a valuable opportunity to connect with the millions of users who spend time on Facebook each day.

Tip: Your Facebook page can also have valuable SEO benefits. Be sure to include some strategically placed keywords in the content to optimize your page's search results.

Tactic #1: Realize the importance of Facebook connections

People who connect with you through social media, particularly through Facebook, have the potential to become high-value leads. These people will actively engage with you in a variety of ways, such as when they “like” your company's Facebook page, or participate in discussions posted there.

In Daniel Burstein's MarketingSherpa blog post, [“Social Media Marketing: How to optimize the customer experience to benefit from word-of-mouth advertising,”](#) Joe Chernov, VP of Content Marketing, Eloqua, says, “All customers are not created equal. Those who engage with you on social channels are far more likely to be your brand advocates. In fact, at Eloqua, a client who engages with us on any social network is 450% more likely to be a brand promoter than our baseline client. This self-selecting group is a collection of ambassadors-in-waiting. The key to unlocking their word-of-mouth is as simple as connecting with them on a personal level on their social channel of choice. That’s really all it takes.”

Tip: Facebook recently added the “subscribe” button, which allows people to get updates from other users' profiles, even if they aren't on their friends list. If you enlist some staff members and high-profile brand ambassadors to post updates and links to company content, their subscribers can then become potential leads.

Tactic #2: Start with concrete goals—and metrics to measure them

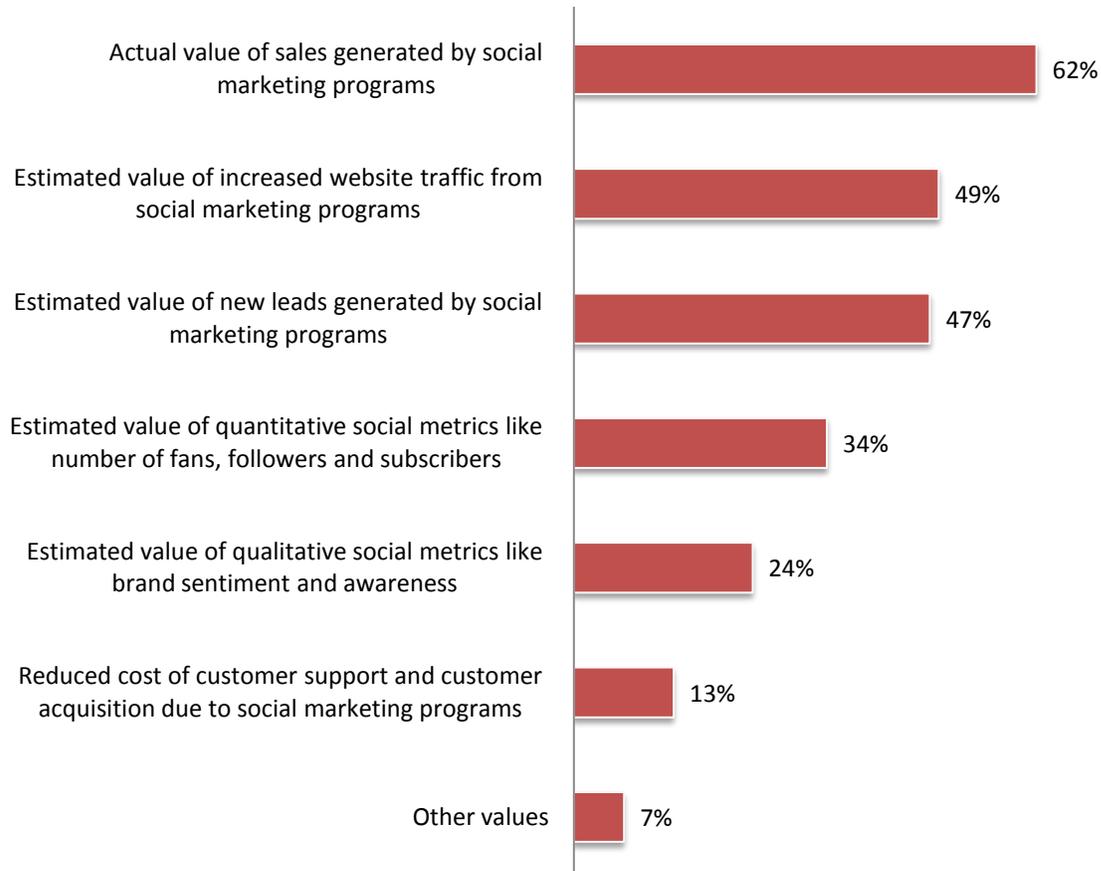
You must clearly identify your goals, so you know exactly what you need to measure. For example, if your goal is to increase leads and sales, then you should measure the number of leads generated through Facebook, their conversion rates, and their total value. If you want to increase e-commerce sales, then you should measure the sales generated from people who found you on Facebook.

Note: Be aware of your timeline. If you have a long sales cycle, then the impact of your Facebook marketing might not be immediately visible. You might need to monitor several indirect metrics before realizing your overall impact, says Boris Grinkot, former Associate Director, Product Development at MECLABS.

“For example, if your Facebook-driven visitors convert after more than six months, then the correlation of your sales to your Facebook marketing is going to be statistically tenuous -- at least at first,” Grinkot says. “On the other hand, if you are looking at traffic metrics, then you don't have that latency problem and traffic metrics are typically

easier to track. This approach may not be as definitive, but it can be much more practical until your traffic volume permits a statistically valid correlation between Facebook activity and sales."

Chart: Values organizations use to calculate social marketing's return on investment



Source: ©2011 MarketingSherpa Social Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded February 2011, N=3,342

As the above chart from the [MarketingSherpa 2011 Social Marketing Benchmark Report](#) shows, increased website traffic and new lead generation are among the top values used by organizations to judge social marketing ROI.

Tactic #3: Consider your investment and ROI

Yes, putting up a Facebook page is, technically speaking, free. But most likely, you will spend a lot of man hours setting up your page and maintaining/updating it. This is why it's important to establish ways to measure your Facebook results, so you can decide if the investment of time and resources is worth it.

Measuring the ROI of social media efforts can be tricky, because it's often difficult to track a transaction in reverse, to find out where it originated, especially if you are active on several different social media channels. Directing

visitors to specific custom landing pages, or incorporating a sign-up function right in your Facebook profile (more on both of those later in this report) will make it easier to pinpoint Facebook-generated leads.

If you want to compare the ability of Facebook to generate leads compared to your other channels, then establish average lead-gen benchmarks for each of your marketing channels by calculating their averages over a set period or investment level. You can then compare your results on Facebook to your average results elsewhere.

Tactic #4: Connect Facebook users to a dedicated webpage

According to research gathered in the [MarketingSherpa 2011 Social Marketing Benchmark Report](#), 56% of marketers named "increasing website traffic through social media integration" as one of their most important objectives for social media use in 2011.

Guiding Facebook visitors to a custom webpage—ideally, one that has a similar feel to your Facebook page—is a well-known way to increase conversion rates, but it is also an effective way to track your Facebook marketing.

In the MarketingSherpa article, "[Social Media Marketing: 8 tactics to measure and improve Facebook results](#)," the team from SteelMaster, a steel building manufacturer, discussed how they direct fans from their Facebook page (which has more than 9,500 "likes") to custom landing pages. This helps SteelMaster measure traffic from its efforts on the network.

"We control our website and landing pages," says Michelle Wickum, Director, Marketing, SteelMaster Buildings. "So, we direct everything through a specific path and naming structure so when it goes into our CRM database, it's very specifically tagged to how that interaction occurred."

Using dedicated custom landing pages to receive visitors from Facebook will help you monitor the amount of traffic you're generating and the behavior of visitors arriving from the network.

This approach can also apply to marketing channels beyond websites. You can offer dedicated, custom phone numbers and coupon codes on Facebook to monitor responses to your offers.

Tactic #5: Zero in on hyper-social consumers

Hyper-social consumers are the rock stars of the social media world. These are people whose lives revolve around social media, and who are constantly plugged in and logged on. They also have very extensive social networks—and since they frequently (and often passionately) share their opinions, they are very influential. These people can serve as important ambassadors for your brand.

How do you connect with these virtual VIPs? Here are some tips, based on the MarketingSherpa article, "[Social Media Marketing: 4 Tactics for finding and winning hyper-social consumers](#)":

1. Find out where they are and what they're talking about. Use social media monitoring tools to track discussions of your brand and your products/industry. This can help you find out what the hot topics are—and, more importantly, who the most visible or influential people are.

2. Add the human touch. These consumers are all about being "friends" and "fans." They want to feel a connection to your company, so you need to give your brand a personality—one that's likeable and relatable.
3. Have a well-planned strategy. Do enough research so you know what these consumers want and how to best engage with them. Study the types of content that sparks passionate and enthusiastic conversations.
4. Integrate your website and brand as seamlessly as possible with the social networks. For hyper-social consumers, the social media environment is like their natural habitat. Making them venture onto your website takes them out of their comfort zone, and could be an immediate turnoff if the transition is jarring, or if your site lacks the some of the personality you expressed on the social media site. One solution: try to incorporate action elements (say, a shopping cart or "tell-a-friend" button) directly into your social media profiles or pages.

Tactic #6: Take advantage of free analytics

In the MarketingSherpa blog post, "[Social Media Marketing: Analytics are free and plentiful, so use them](#)," Adam T. Sutton shares an interesting revelation: while many marketers realize it's important to measure social media metrics, not all of them are actually doing it. That's especially surprising considering that these days it's relatively easy—and, in many cases free or inexpensive—to track these analytics.

As described in the blog post, here are three of the main things you want to measure—and free tools to help you do that.

Brand sentiment: this was the measurement marketers rated the most important to measure. Use [Social Mention](#) to gather quite a bit of data, including a sentiment analysis of your online mentions. Bonus: not only will it count the mentions of your brand, but it will also rank the keywords, hashtags, sources and top users around them.

Volume (and source) of social media traffic: segmenting incoming traffic by source will show you which visitors are coming from social media sites. [Google Analytics](#) works well for this.

Engagement with Facebook page: If you have a Facebook page, you already have access to lots of detailed analytics via the free [Facebook Insights](#) platform. This can tell you things about your page's traffic, sharing activity and visitor demographics.

Tactic #7: Use "Page Tabs" to target specific goals

Marketers can also create "tabs" on their Facebook pages that act as mini-pages. These tabs can feature content such as buttons to visit websites, embedded videos, and forms to collect user information.

By creating tabs that connect with your overall Facebook goals, you can measure the channel's performance. For example, if your goal is to increase email subscribers, you can create a tab to register users and tag them in your database as coming from the network.

Facebook does not offer metrics on interactions within your page's tabs. However, you can use custom landing pages on your website, database tagging, custom phone numbers, custom promo codes and other tactics to measure the response to offers in your tabs.

Tactic #8: Add an email sign-up widget

In the MarketingSherpa article, "Growing Email Lists with Social Media: KFC's Facebook tool adds subscribers," the team from KFC noticed that compared to their other subscribers, its social influencers engage far more often with the company's emails. Their overall response metrics—such as open rate and clickthrough rate—are much higher.

"Over the last five campaigns, it has averaged out to about 70% higher," says Scott Geiser, Senior Digital Analyst, KFC. Geiser's team considers subscribers "social influencers" if they have ever clicked a social-sharing button in a KFC email.

To make it easier for these social influencers to subscribe, Geiser's team decided to add an email registration function right into its Facebook page. The team was able to create theirs and include the email form in less than half a day, he says.

EXAMPLE: KFC EMAIL REGISTRATION IN FACEBOOK PAGE

The image is a screenshot of the KFC Facebook page. At the top, the Facebook navigation bar is visible with the 'facebook' logo and a search box. Below this, the KFC profile header shows the KFC logo on the left, the text 'KFC - Kentucky Fried Chicken' in the center, and a 'Like' button on the right. A horizontal menu below the header includes 'Wall', 'Info', 'Causes', 'Photos', 'U.S. Jobs', and 'E-mail Club'. The main content area features a large promotional banner for the 'Colonel's E-mail Club'. The banner has a black background with the text 'Join the Colonel's E-mail Club' in white and red. Below the text is a sign-up form with four input fields: 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'E-mail', and 'Zip Code'. A 'Join the Club' button is positioned to the right of the 'Zip Code' field. The banner also includes an image of a KFC bucket of fried chicken and a bowl of coleslaw. At the bottom of the banner, there are links for 'shoutlet', 'privacy policy', and 'share'. On the left side of the page, there is an 'Information' section with details about KFC's founding in 1952, its website (www.kfc.com), and a Twitter link. Below the information is a '1 Friend Likes This' section showing a profile picture of Taber Ashley.

Note: When adding special features such as signup pages to your page, it's a good idea to first review the Facebook terms of service to make sure you aren't violating any of their rules. You must be careful to handle user information responsibly and within Facebook's guidelines. Also, keep in mind that Facebook users are worldwide, so be sure to specify if you have a promotion or registration form that is limited to U.S. registrants (or has other geographic limitations).

Tactic #9: Understand EdgeRank

As Adam T. Sutton discussed in the MarketingSherpa blog post, "[Social Media Marketing: Facebook news feed optimization](#)," Facebook uses a system to determine which updates get higher priority in a news feed. This system is based on a calculation called the EdgeRank formula.

EdgeRank works along the same lines as search engine optimization. The higher your posts are ranked, the more likely they are to appear higher on a user's news feed. Rankings are determined by interactions (called "edges") with each item in a news feed. Each edge—such as a comment, tag or "like"—raises the value of that post.

So how do you earn a higher ranking? While there's no simple formula, you are more likely to have a priority spot on a user's feed if you have a track record of interactions with them. In other words, they've responded to your posts and you have engaged with them in return. It is to your benefit to have an ongoing relationship with high-value users, such as by engaging them in a dialogue via their news feed, or, at the very least, thanking them for leaving feedback.

Tactic #10: Don't request too much information

Social influencers are accustomed to communicating in snippets and sound bites, therefore forms that appear too cumbersome (or invasive) will be a quick turnoff. Limit the requested information to a few critical items. Think about which demographic information might be most valuable to you. For example, the KFC team in Tactic #8 considered it important to be able to segment and target their list by location, so they requested subscribers' ZIP codes on the signup form that appeared on their Facebook page.

Tactic #11: Add fun and interactive elements

Adding fun elements to your profile will encourage users to engage with you on a repeated basis. In the MarketingSherpa article, "[Improve Your Facebook Profile to Increase Customer Interaction: 4 Tactics](#)," the team from Ace Hardware explained how they made Facebook a central part of a recent marketing campaign. The team created an interactive Facebook experience for visitors. The top of their profile page featured additional navigational tabs, such as "Helpful Place" and "Spring Guide," which brought visitors to different subpages within Facebook.

- "Helpful Place" tab

- On arrival, visitors saw the "Helpful Place" tab by default, which included:
- Graphic interface

- Links to the team's seasonal content
- Links to locate an Ace store and view a weekly ad
- Links to learn more about Ace's rewards program, mobile offerings and contests

- "I Will" Facebook application

The team's seasonal content included a link to the "I Will" application, which allowed visitors to personalize a sentence and declare their summer plans. The application used a "fill-in-the-blanks" approach, with entry fields embedded in a standard sentence. For example, users could type in "I will [mow the lawn], and then I will [hit golf balls into the lake]."

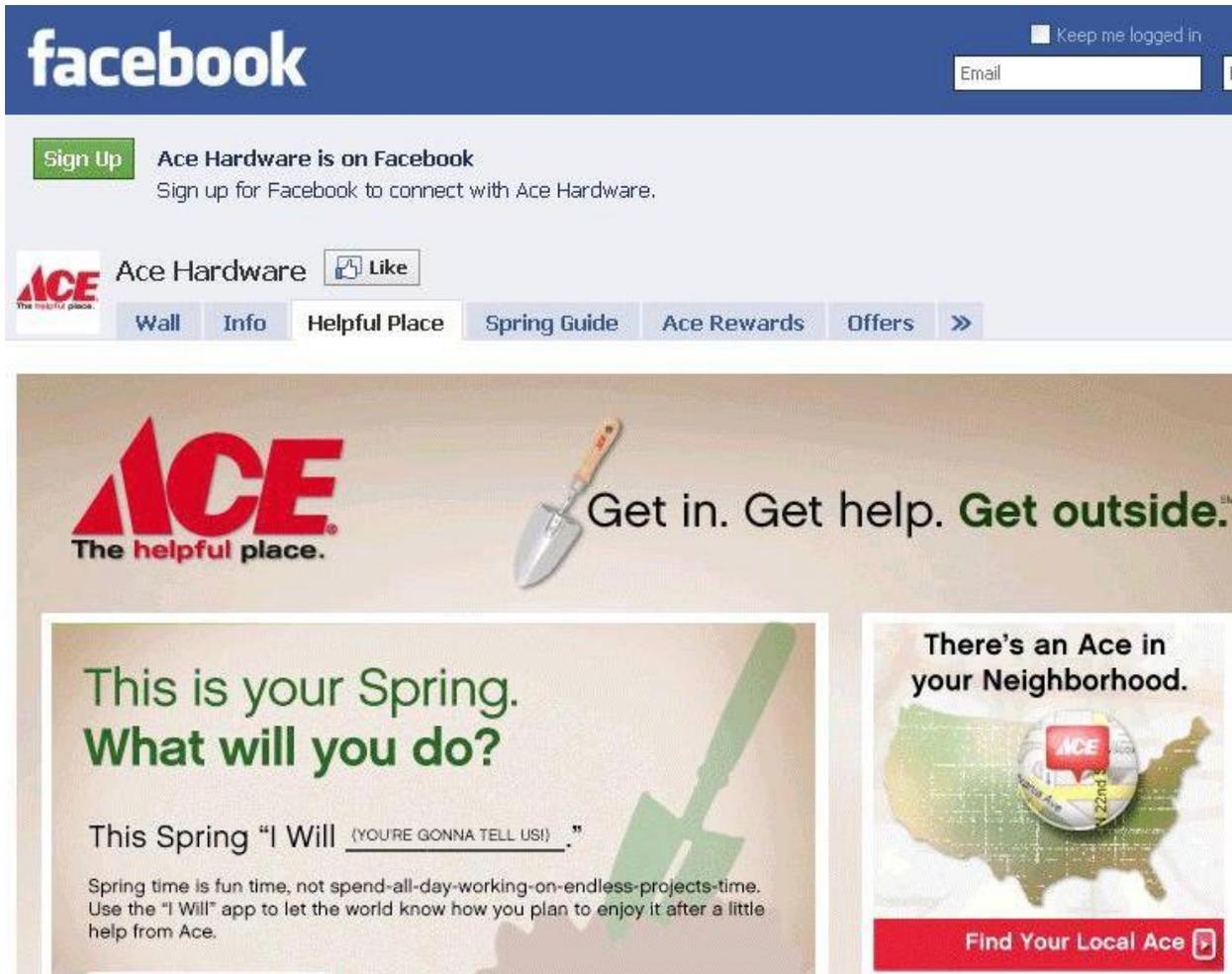
Users could then click the "update my status" button to add the sentence to their Facebook profiles. The update included the message "'I Will' powered by Ace Hardware."

- Relevant updates

Each Friday, the team sent a status update dubbed "Long Live Spring" to followers. The updates included a link to a Facebook page with tips on seasonal topics and related videos. The team used the same page each week, adding new content to the page each Friday.

The team sent relevant status updates to their followers throughout the campaign, informing them of sales and other helpful information. They also made sure to respond to audience comments in a casual, but professional manner.

EXAMPLE: ACE HARDWARD FACEBOOK PAGE WITH TABS



Note: Keep in mind that interactive elements may require additional technical expertise. Static pages, or pages that simply link to other websites, should not be a problem to create for most developers. However, pages that require interaction with visitor profiles or other interactive features will likely require much more time for an inexperienced developer to create and test.

If you're planning an effort like this, talk to your IT team to get a better sense of their capabilities, and what your plans might require. If you're pressed for time, look for an experienced agency with a proven track record.

Tactic #12: Use metrics to target and tweak your Facebook strategy

Measuring results on Facebook can help you improve performance and shift your goals when necessary. Here are two examples from SteelMaster, (from the same [MarketingSherpa article](#) mentioned in Tactic #4):

- *Segmenting the audience*

Using Insights data, SteelMaster's team noticed a significant portion of its Facebook audience preferred Spanish to English. "If you had asked me beforehand how many of them spoke a language other than English, I probably would have given you a completely opposite response," says Michelle Wickum, Director, Marketing, SteelMaster Buildings.

In response, Wickum's team started posting links to content written in Spanish, and targeted them to SteelMaster's Spanish-speaking audience on the network (Facebook allows marketers to target updates based on preferred language and location). This adjustment has helped the team increase post views and feedback.

- *Shifting the overall goal*

Wickum's team ran a "pretty significant" investment in Facebook Ads, but did not see a high enough return. "We could clearly see where leads were coming from and where sales were coming from ... [But] we weren't able to tie that investment straight back to profitability," Wickum says.

In response, her team scaled back investment in the ads, and shifted their strategy from acquisition to engagement. The team now focuses on interacting with customers and highlighting their stories, controlling investment by limiting the amount of time spent on Facebook each day.

Useful Links and Resources:

[Special Report: Social Media's Impact on SEO – 5 Trends to Guide an Integrated Strategy](#)

[Lead Gen with Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Blogging - 6 Key Takeaways](#)

[8 Tips to Add a Facebook App & Attract Millions of New Users](#)

[Social Media Marketing Toolkit](#)

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