

# Disseminating

National Dissemination Center  
for Children with Disabilities

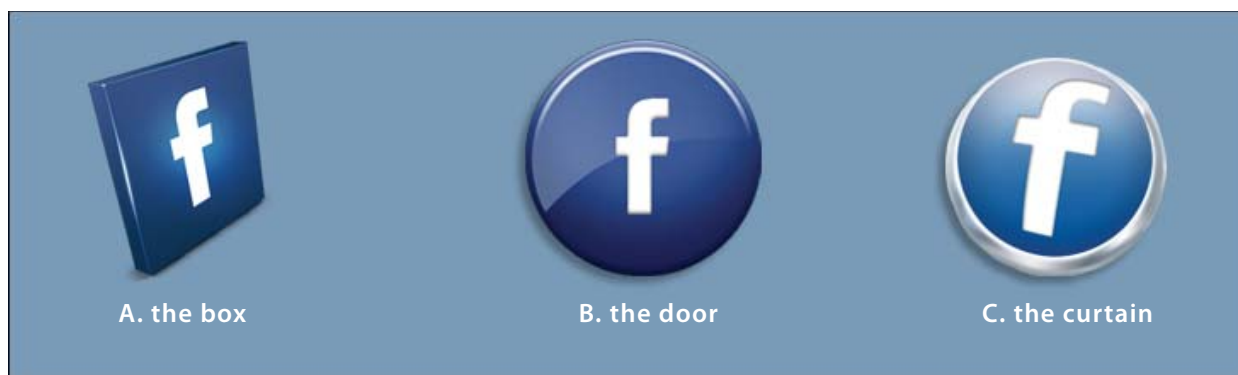
# FOR IMPACT

## Making the Deal:

Special Issue

1

Facebook



## A Guide to Using Facebook in Dissemination

So many choices! You could use Facebook in dissemination (the box?), *or* you could use Facebook in dissemination (no, no, it's behind the door), *or*—you could use Facebook in dissemination (the curtain, for sure!).

Is there really a choice anymore? Not so much, when you see the statistics and realize the reach and power that Facebook has as a disseminating tool. Consider just these two little facts:

- Facebook has **400 million active users**, half of whom logon daily <sup>1</sup>
- The average Facebook user visits four times a day. <sup>2</sup>

Four times a day! No wonder Facebook has overtaken Google as the **most visited website** in the U.S.<sup>3</sup> and as the top source of traffic to major news and entertainment portals.<sup>4</sup>

Maybe it's time to get in there—or at least *consider* getting in there. Establish a Facebook presence for your center,

we mean. This guide will help you do just that. It takes a good hard look at Facebook as a dissemination tool, offers how to's...and why to's...and describes approaches to evaluating your efforts. It doesn't matter if you come in by door, curtain, or box...in the end, it's being there that'll count.

### Table of Contents

• Flabbergasting Facts about Facebook	2
• 10 Reasons to Use Facebook in Dissemination	3
• A Skeptic's Conversion	4
• Examples of How Companies Are Using Facebook	5
• Who's Using Facebook in the TA&D?	6
• Disability Groups on Facebook	7
• 10 Step-by-Step How To's	8
• References	41



## ***FLABBERGASTING FACTS ABOUT FACEBOOK<sup>5</sup>***

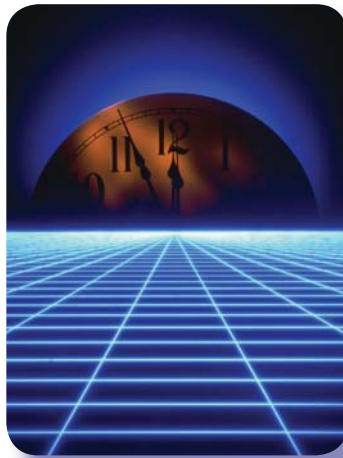
Founded in February 2004, Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family, and coworkers.

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- More than 400 million active users
- More than 20 million people become fans of pages each day
- The average Facebook user visits four times a day
- Average user is a member of 13 groups

- Average user spends more than **55 minutes per day** on Facebook



- More than **5 billion pieces of content** (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each *week*
- More than **3.5 million events** created each month




- There are more than 100 million active users currently accessing Facebook through their **mobile devices**
- People that use Facebook on their mobile devices are **twice more active on Facebook** than non-mobile users<sup>5</sup>

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*References appear at the end of this guide.*

## 10 REASONS TO USE FACEBOOK IN DISSEMINATION

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1. Nowhere else on earth can you reach so many people so readily.<sup>6</sup>
  2. Facebook is built to connect you with users.<sup>7</sup>
  3. Dissemination is more effective when you have ongoing, interactive, personal contact with intended users.<sup>8</sup>
  4. Facebook is mobile—for all those folks who surf the web on their cell phones and PDAs (personal data assistants).<sup>9</sup>
  5. It's free. All it costs is the time.<sup>10</sup>
  6. Facebook is the ultimate word-of-mouth vehicle for your info and services.<sup>11</sup>
  7. "Customers are evolving—They demand personalisation and networking."<sup>12</sup>
  8. "Companies that talk directly to their user communities are finding success through LISTENING. What a novel concept, talk to your customer and incorporate their feedback in everything you do."<sup>13</sup>
  9. "The benefit you get from being involved in Facebook is that your brand is seen as more 'human,' and you get a new way to interact with your current and potential user base in a two-way fashion, as opposed to pushing 'messaging' at them."<sup>14</sup>
  10. From October 2007 to January 2010, Facebook users in the U.S. rose from 20 million to **103 million**.<sup>15</sup>

## A SKEPTIC'S CONVERSION

by Lisa Küpper, *Director of Publications*

*National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities*

Facebook is explosive, isn't it? Four years ago, who'd heard of it? Not I, and I wouldn't have cared if I had. I still don't care—not really. Reminds me of the pet rock fad. Or, worse, when that woman got trampled trying to get a cabbage patch doll for her kid. Good grief, what next?

Now, mind you, I shouldn't be saying any of this publicly. Not as a co-facilitator of the Dissemination CoP or as Director of Publications at NICHY. But I won't pretend I haven't been dragged here kicking and complaining (by Steve Luke, to name names)—any more than I can pretend that he's not right either.

I've done a lot of reading on the subject, thanks to Steve. And there really *is* something under this lid at Facebook. In a nutshell, I'd say that Facebook holds almost unprecedented potential as a tool for reaching and serving audiences involved in disability issues and concerns.

Consider the 10 reasons just given to use Facebook in dissemination. I didn't make those up. They're based on sound research and practice in the fields of social media, dissemination, health, and technology. They go together, too, as this article will now attempt to explain.

### The Importance of User Engagement

The core of social networking sites such as Facebook is, without a doubt, *connection*. It's also the core of the phenomenon. People want to be connected, as any social scientist will tell you, and as Facebook's skyrocketing numbers of users unmistakably show. They also want to have a voice that's heard.

Interestingly, the dissemination literature is replete with the importance of knowing what your users need and want and involving them at every step along the way to tell you so.<sup>16</sup> Through honest dialogue and listening, we disseminators have a much greater chance of developing a product or service that actually fits users' needs and will be *useful* to them.

But there's more. The dissemination literature also discusses the importance of supporting users in understanding and applying what we've disseminated. The more support there is for users, the greater their *utilization* of the information provided.<sup>17</sup> And that's our bottom line, surely—utilization. That's what we're driving for, as disseminators, and we are much more likely to achieve it if we support users through



*Facebook Etiquette  
#1: It's bad form  
not to put your  
picture on your  
profile.*

interaction, email, a toll-free number they can call, or another person they can turn to.

I don't know about you, but that sure sounds like Facebook to me. It's built *expressly* to help people interact and connect with like-minded folks.

And it's outrageously popular. Did you know that the average U.S. Internet user spends more time on Facebook than on Google, Yahoo, YouTube, Microsoft, Wikipedia and Amazon *combined*?<sup>18</sup> Reason #1 was no joke. Where will we as disseminators *ever* find so many people to connect with, learn from, and share with?

### Going Mobile

I also like the fact that Facebook is available mobilely (is that even a word?). You can sit at your computer and visit Facebook, or you can go there on your cell phone or PDA. This is good, because "mobile tech" is like a gigantic wave gathering momentum off the coast of just about everything. Consider these telling stats:

- 86.9% of people in the U.S. subscribe to a mobile phone service.<sup>19</sup>
- By 2014, it's estimated that worldwide Internet access by mobile phones will represent at about 50% of the total Internet usage.<sup>20</sup>
- 80% of young adults between the ages of 18 and 29 are wireless Internet users.<sup>21</sup>
- African Americans are the most active users.<sup>22</sup>

So, my friend, I fear it's worse than just Facebook. As disseminators, we'd be real savvy to *also* ensure that our info and support were available for download to mobile tech! As John Horrigan of the Pew Internet Project writes: "Mobile access strengthens the three pillars of online engagement: connecting with others, satisfying information queries, and sharing content with others."<sup>23</sup>

But that's a topic for another day. For now, it's Facebook that's in our faces. I think it's incredibly well-named, don't you?

## EXAMPLES OF HOW COMPANIES ARE USING FACEBOOK

Examples can be instructive, so we combed through (what seemed like) a billion articles on the social media rage to find out who's doing what, what's worked well, and what hasn't. Care to go on a tour of the town?

### The Top 10 Facebook Pages

<http://www.pamorama.net/2009/12/02/top-50-companies-that-make-the-best-use-of-facebook/>

The link above takes you to *50 Companies That Make the Best Use of Facebook* and a slideshow that counts backwards from #50 to #1.<sup>24</sup> To save time, we're going to leak the secret of the Top 10. They are:

1. Coca-Cola
2. Starbucks
3. Disney
4. Victoria's Secret
5. iTunes
6. Vitaminwater
7. YouTube
8. Chick-fil-A
9. Red Bull
10. T.G.I. Friday's

Surprised by who made the list and who didn't? What's even more interesting is what the top 50 companies are doing on their Facebook pages that has garnered them so many fans and generated so much buzz. We've summarized our favorites below.

### We Wish We'd Thought of That!

Here's what the Top 50 have been up to on Facebook,<sup>25</sup> counting backwards from 50. You have to admit, some of these are downright *fun*.

**#45 Gatorade** provided an application so that fans could vote for their favorite moment in Michael Jordan's career.

**#43 Target** asked fans to vote on which charity should receive Target's donations. The winner? St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. And Target, too, apparently. Daily page views of its Facebook page jumped by 4800%.

**#42 Harley-Davidson** has a photo gallery of more than 9,000 fans with their Harleys.

**#32 Louis Vuitton** streamed a live fashion show through its Facebook page and gained 60,000 new fans.

**#22 National Geographic** shares its gorgeous images and content—and an offer of 12 issues for \$12 that's available only to Facebook fans.



*From Coke's page, contributed by a fan.*

**#17 Krispy Kreme** uses the "less spam more warm" approach to success. "Asking questions as a way to engage fans simply works."

**#12 Dunkin' Donuts** doesn't use its company logo as a profile picture. Instead, it uses the space to honor its "Fan of the Week" winner.

**#10 t.g.i. Friday** uses sounds of its dining room crowd to remind visitors how much fun it is to eat at t.g.i's.

**#3 Disney**—Fans post pictures of their Disney experience. Talk about an endless source of material for a webpage!

**#2 Starbucks** has their fans declaring their favorite drinks and wishing they could have them right now...

**#1 Coca-Cola** has the true victory here. Its page was actually created by a fan and his buddy, and it caught Coke's attention. They made it their official page, but left the fan and his buddy in charge. How cool is that?



**WHO'S USING FACEBOOK  
IN THE TA&D NETWORK?****The ALLIANCE**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Technical-Assistance-ALLIANCE-for-Parent-Centers/45390267534>

**CELL | Center for Early Literacy Learning**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Center-for-Early-Literacy-Learning-CELL/127317903000>

**CITEd | Center for Implementing Technology in Education**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Center-for-Implementing-Technology-in-Education-CITEd/75046464439>

**Equity Alliance at ASU**

[http://www.facebook.com/social\\_graph.php?node\\_id=41216038506&filter=fanned&start=20#!/pages/The-Equity-Alliance-at-ASU/41216038506](http://www.facebook.com/social_graph.php?node_id=41216038506&filter=fanned&start=20#!/pages/The-Equity-Alliance-at-ASU/41216038506)

**National Center for Technology Innovation**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Center-for-Technology-Innovation-NCTI/75760958172>

**NCRTI | National Center on Response to Intervention**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Washington-DC/The-National-Center-on-Response-to-Intervention-NCRTI/113792346349?ref=sgm>

**NICHCY | National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Dissemination-Center-for-Children-with-Disabilities-NICHCY/34938844586>

**National High School Center**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-High-School-Center/128903199252?ref=sgm>

**Partners Resource Network**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Beaumont-TX/Partners-Resource-Network/96759049162?ref=sgm>

**Personnel Improvement Center**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Personnel-Improvement-Center-for-Special-Education-and-Related-Personnel/92363577551>

**Reading Rockets**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Reading-Rockets/11840294515>

**Region 2 RPTAC**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Region-2-TA/89645677013?ref=sgm>

***That makes 12!***

## DISABILITY GROUPS ON FACEBOOK

A visit to Facebook and a search using the term “disability” yield—how shall we say?—an exciting amount of results. Here’s just the barest taste of what we found,<sup>26</sup> but it will sure give you a good idea of the potential power of reaching out through Facebook.

The next section in this guide is the “How To” of Facebook, including the all-important phase of “listening” as a first toe in the social media waters. The list in the box may come in handy then...

*This list is...*



*...the proverbial drop  
in the bucket.*

Autism Awareness | 245,139 members  
 Autism Awareness Group | 7,296 fans  
 ButYouDontLookSick.com | 10,114 fans  
 Children with Down's Syndrome | 1,616 members  
 Diabetes | 23,726 members  
 Disability and Special Needs Awareness | 1,288 fans  
 Disability Scoop | 2,221 fans  
 Dyslexia & Dyspraxia Awareness | 2,160 members  
 Facebook: Stop Allowing Groups that Mock Special Needs and Disabilities | 43,097 members  
 Fragile X Syndrome | 2,055 members  
 LRT Children's Brain Tumour Awareness | 4,650 fans  
 Mental Illness Awareness | 11,443 members  
 Parents Of Children With ADHD | 7,216 members  
 People with disabilities are people too | 3,148 fans  
 Social Security Disability Secrets | 2,292 fans  
 Supporting A.B.I. (Acquired Brain Injury) | 3,676 members  
 To Write Love on her Arms | 35,979 fans | To help kids with suicide and depression

## 10 HOW-TO'S AND DO-IT'S

### The “How-To’s”

***Ready?***



- 1 | Sign up at Facebook | *page 9*
- 2 | Set up your profile | *page 12*
- 3 | Find relevant groups | *page 15*
- 4 | Listen | *page 16*
- 5 | Define your plan | *page 19*
- 6 | Schedule time for Facebook | *page 24*
- 7 | Set up your project's Facebook page | *page 25*
- 8 | Build your page | *page 29*
- 9 | Interact with users & build your reach | *page 33*
- 10 | Measure results | *page 37*



## HOW TO... #1

### Sign Up at Facebook

If you don't already have an account at Facebook, you'll need one to start splashing in that puddle. You'll want to sign up as yourself (creating an account for your TA&D project comes later...). Go to Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com>

Here's what you'll see:



If you have a Facebook account already, skip to *How To...#3*.

Here's where you sign up.

When you click the "Sign Up" button, you'll get one of those annoying screens that requires you to type the distorted words you see in a box. This drill is to make sure that you're a real person and not a cyber-robot.

Hopefully, you'll be able to read the text and enter it, completing the drill and moving onward to...

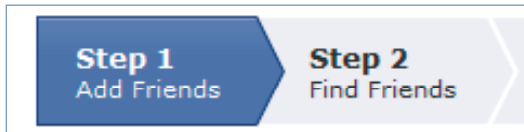


## HOW TO... #1

### Sign Up at Facebook (continued)

Here's the next two screens you'll see.

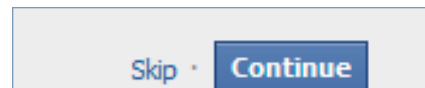
#### Step 1: Option to "add friends"



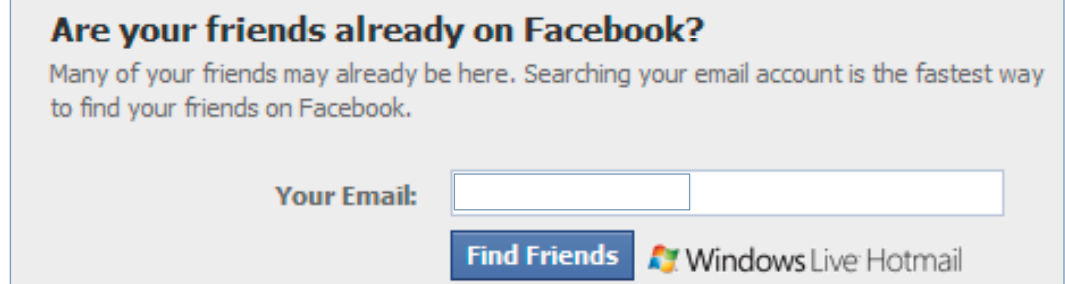
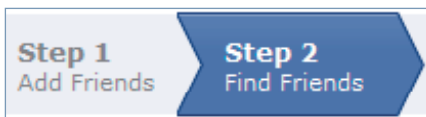
It's kind of unnerving how smart technology is—this screen may include a list of people you may know on Facebook. How Facebook knows which people you may already know on the site doesn't bear thinking about, but it's a fine reminder that Facebook is *very public*. It's designed to make it super easy to hook up with others—you haven't even filled out your profile yet, and already you can add friends (or ignore them).

If you were to click on "Add Friend," the system will send a "friend request" to that person, who can then "friend" you back (or ignore you!).

Add the friends you wish to. Or take advantage of the "Skip" and "Continue" buttons at the bottom right of the screen.



#### Step 2: Option to "find friends"

A screen titled 'Are your friends already on Facebook?'. Below the title, it says 'Many of your friends may already be here. Searching your email account is the fastest way to find your friends on Facebook.' There is a text input field labeled 'Your Email:' and a 'Find Friends' button. At the bottom right, there are logos for Windows Live and Hotmail.

What Facebook is asking to do is look inside your email contact list and see if any of the folks you have in that list are also on Facebook. Then the system can let you know they're there, so you can connect with them, if you wish. It's a bit of invasive efficiency, to be sure, but you're here to connect, right?

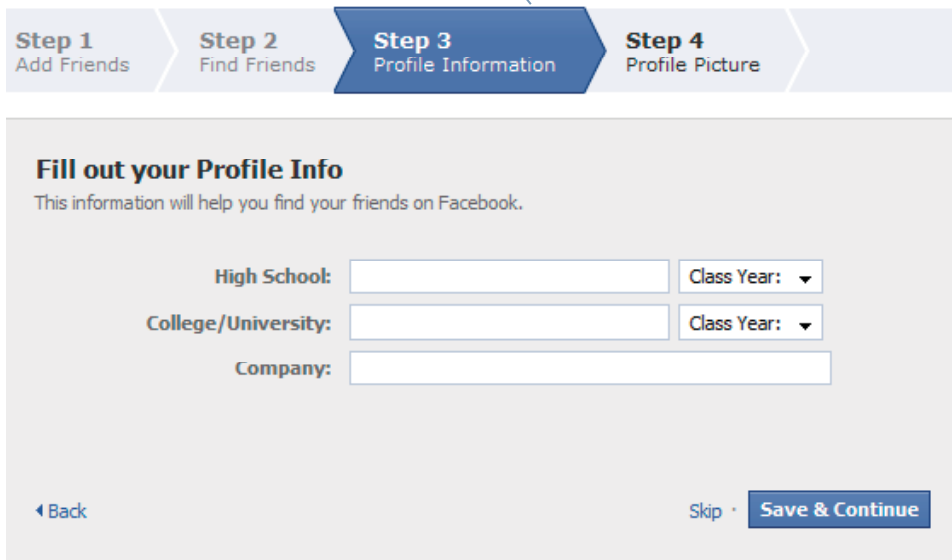
If you don't want Facebook to go through your email contacts and match them up to who might have a Facebook profile, then "Skip this step" by clicking that button.



**HOW TO...#1****Sign Up at Facebook**  
(continued)

Moving right along to Steps 3 and 4...

**Step 3:** It's time to fill in a bit of background info on yourself, as you can see below. Go ahead and fill in the blanks, as you wish, or "skip" or "Save & Continue."



The form shows a progress bar at the top with four steps: Step 1 (Add Friends), Step 2 (Find Friends), Step 3 (Profile Information - highlighted), and Step 4 (Profile Picture). Below the progress bar, the title is "Fill out your Profile Info" with a subtitle "This information will help you find your friends on Facebook." The form contains three rows of input fields: "High School:" and "Class Year:" (dropdown), "College/University:" and "Class Year:" (dropdown), and "Company:" (text). At the bottom left is a "Back" link, and at the bottom right are "Skip" and "Save & Continue" buttons.

**Step 4**—your profile picture!

Well, this screen is pretty self-explanatory, unless you're squeamish about posting a picture of yourself online. But in the words of a well-known blogger, "The profile photo is probably the single most important component for personal expression."<sup>27</sup> Do you really want to leave the blank head there? Nah. Let us see you!



The screen is divided into two main sections. On the left is a large placeholder image of a person's head and shoulders. On the right, the title is "Upload a Photo" with the subtitle "From your computer". Below this, separated by a horizontal line and the word "OR", is the option "Take a Photo" with the subtitle "With your webcam".

## HOW TO...# 2

### Set Up Your Profile

Now, it's time for a little **privacy**. See this menu bar on the top right of your screen?



If you click and hold the **Account** tab, you'll get a drop-down menu that includes **Privacy Settings**. That's the one you want! And you'll get this screen...

#### Privacy Settings

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##### Profile Information

Control who can see your profile and who can post to your Wall



##### Contact Information

Control who can contact you on Facebook and see your contact information and email



##### Applications and Websites

Control what information is available to Facebook-enhanced applications and websites



##### Search

Control who can see your search result on Facebook and in search engines



##### Block List

Control who can interact with you on Facebook

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It's through these options (and how you set them up) that you'll control who can see your profile, post to your Wall, and so on. The choices are:

Everyone

Friends of friends

Only friends



## HOW TO...# 2

### Set Up Your Profile

*(continued)*



#### From the Horse's Mouth

Here's what Facebook itself recommends:

We recommend Everyone be able to see information that will make it easier for friends to find, identify and learn about you. This includes basic information like your About Me description, Family and Relationships, Work and Education Info, and Website, as well as posts that you create, like photo albums and status updates.

Remember, any information that's visible to Everyone may be seen by everyone on the internet. It will be visible to anyone viewing your profile, and Facebook-enhanced applications and websites that you use will be able to access it. Additionally, it may be visible in search engines or through RSS feeds.

Some information is more personal, so we recommend Friends of Friends be able to see that type of info. This includes the settings for your Birthday, Religious and Political views, Hometown, and Photos and Videos of Me, which is all the photos and videos you've been tagged in.

We recommend that your contact information, like mobile phone number and email address, only be visible to Friends.

#### Control every time you share

You can select a privacy setting for every post you make. Whether you are uploading a photo or posting a status update, you control exactly who can see it at the time you create it. Whenever you share something, look for the lock icon. Clicking on it will bring up a menu that lets you choose who will be able to see your post, from Friends, to Friends of Friends, to Everyone.<sup>28</sup>

**So—pick your poison about privacy!**  
You can always adjust your settings later, as needed.

## HOW TO...# 2

### Set Up Your Profile (continued)

Now, fill out your profile.



Clicking on **Profile** will take you to the Profile page, where you have lots of info to fill in about yourself, including current city, hometown, family members, relationship status, whether you're interested in men or women, what you're looking for (friendship, dating, a relationship, networking?), and more. Be as complete as you're comfortable with. But don't be too vague or non-divulging. Remember that the system will use the info you provide to connect you with those who have like-minded interests and concerns. And vice versa.

#### Resource Corner: "How-To" Videos at YouTube

If you'd appreciate crash-course guidance on how to use Facebook and what all those icons and options mean on the screen—go to YouTube.com and search using the term "facebook." Among your results will be a series of short videos, all of which begin with the title *How To Use Facebook...* and end with what it is you might want to do on Facebook. Examples include:

- How to register & join Facebook
- How to use the "Wall" on your Facebook page
- How to use your Facebook homepage
- How to create & build a Facebook profile
- How to use the different Facebook applications
- Learn more about Facebook through its site tour





## HOW TO...# 3

### Find Relevant Groups and Pages

Now that you're a Facebook member, you can search for groups and pages that interest you. The **Search** box is right at the top of the screen, dead-center.



For the purposes of the TA&D and the Dissemination Initiative that's afoot, we'll focus in this guide on finding disability-related groups or groups that intersect in some fashion with your TA&D project's work.

But, truly, the sky's the limit on Facebook. Poke around, using its search engine, and consider the suggestions the system will probably give you about like-minded folks it thinks you might be interested in. That was the purpose of filling out all that profile info about yourself—the system can now use it to connect you with others, and others with you.

### What to Do With What You Find

With respect to groups that you identify that are work-related, we'd recommend that you **just listen for a while**. The next "how-to" in this guide is devoted to the importance of this, so you may want to take a look at that section before jumping in and writing on work-related walls...in fact, before you go out looking for groups relevant to your project's efforts...in fact, let's go there now!

## HOW TO...# 4

### Listen

Ahh, the art of listening. It truly is at the core of social media, just as it's at the core of human relationships. Guides to social media for nonprofits can't tell you strongly or loudly or often enough to "*listen*." Beth Kanter says it best in her *Listening Primer*:

Listening must be the first step in a social media strategy.

- Listening is knowing what is being said online about your organization, field, or issue area.
- Listening uses monitoring and tracking tools to identify conversations that are taking place on the social web.
- It is a prelude to engaging with your audience.

At its very basic, listening is simply naturalistic research, although more like a focus group or observation technique than a survey.<sup>29</sup>

#### Different Types of Listening

Believe it or not, there are different kinds of listening you can do. The kinds most relevant to the TA&D network include:

- listening to what your potential users are saying about the *topics of concern* to you;
- listening to what is being said *about you* (your brand, your company, or your project);
- listening to what's being said about *your competitors* and/or colleagues;

- listening to what your users are saying *to you* (complaints, questions, compliments).<sup>30</sup>



*What's the buzz? Tell me what's happening.*

#### Why is Listening Important?

If you're new to social media (and you most likely are, if you're reading this guide), then listening is a critical first step in learning how to use, participate in, and benefit from Facebook and other social media. That is to say, listening will help *you* build *your* familiarity and comfort zone with this tool for connecting with your users.

Second and most important, listening will help you build a clear and personal picture of your users' needs and concerns that you can infuse into your work and services.

As one social media strategist puts it, "Paying attention to trends on the various networks and what people are saying is incredibly beneficial because it makes it easier for your organization to be relevant. Listening helps you be less of a spammer and more of a service provider."<sup>31</sup>

How, then, do you listen? And where? And to whom?

#### Tools for Listening

Fortunately, there are many excellent articles and blogs discussing the basics of listening—or **monitoring**, as it's sometimes called. Rather than recreate the wheel, we've listed several favorites in the box on the next page.



## HOW TO...# 4

### Listen

(continued)

And now, to jumpstart *your* listening, we'd like to apply what's recommended in those articles and blogs and offer a step-by-step process to begin listening on Facebook *only* (the focus of this guide, after all!) within the TA&D network's frame of reference.

#### The Limitations of Limiting This to Facebook

There's a lot written about the art (and science) of listening. Be very aware that listening usually involves a much broader scope than just Facebook and many more tools and activities than suggested here. We've focused narrowly in this guide, in the same way you might wade into the shallow water rather than go off the high dive and into the deep end.

#### A Step-by-Step to Listening on Facebook

A broadbrush summary of steps that draws upon the solid base of info about listening would include the following aspects:

##### 1 | Define a preliminary focus for your listening.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you listening for what folks might be saying about your brand (project, center...)?
- What specific keywords and phrases are most important to you, and why? (More about keywords in a moment...)
- What are you hoping to accomplish with your social media monitoring at Facebook? Be specific—for example, “We want to involve more users in helping us plan and develop our next line of products or services.”<sup>32</sup>

This latter question is very important to answer, but it may be difficult to do so when you're just warming up to Facebook. For now, consider these most common reasons for engaging in social media:

- increasing people's awareness of your group (called *brand awareness*);

- improving how people perceive your group (called *reputation management*);
- improving your group's search engine rankings;
- increasing relevant visitor traffic to your website;
- improving sales for a product or service.<sup>33</sup>

#### Great Guidance: Taking Listening Step by Step

- **Social Media Listening Literacy for Nonprofits**  
This is Listening Bootcamp. It's a module that will tell you all, step by step, including the value of listening, how to organize your efforts, listening skills, a starter kit of tools, and a primer online.  
<http://socialmedia-listening.wikispaces.com/>
- **Listening and Engaging**  
This is a module that goes step by step through how to listen, and includes examples of how nonprofits use social media to listen; the value of listening, linking it to strategy; organizing listening tasks within your organization; the art of keywords; using a RSS reader like a rockstar; setting up a listening dashboard: tools and techniques; engagement techniques, relationship building; and advanced listening tools.  
[www.wearemedia.org/Listening+and+Engaging](http://www.wearemedia.org/Listening+and+Engaging)
- **How to Listen to Your Online Community**  
This is a 2-page PDF file that tells you how to set up a set up a Google Reader, an alert, a Twitter alert, and when and when not to respond to what you hear. Available at: [http://beth.typepad.com/files/how\\_to\\_listen\\_to\\_your\\_online\\_community.pdf](http://beth.typepad.com/files/how_to_listen_to_your_online_community.pdf)
- **Free Social Media Monitoring Tools**  
The title says it all. And what a splendid list it is!  
<http://takemetoyourleader.com/2009/03/24/free-social-media-monitoring-tools/>



## HOW TO...# 4

### Listen

(continued)

#### 2 | *Recognize the changes that using social media may bring to your center and its way of doing business.*

As with any new initiative, there may be fears and concerns expressed in your organization. Common concerns include:

- Loss of control over the organization's branding and marketing messages
- Dealing with negative comments
- Using a personal voice vs. an organizational voice
- Not being successful, fear of failure
- Perception of wasted of time and resources
- Suffering from information overload already, this will cause more <sup>34</sup>

True for your organization? Probably. We know of another big concern, cos many of you have already voiced it: *finding the time to do this* (more on that later, too!).

#### 3 | *Identify the top keywords people are using to search for info on Facebook in your focus area.*

When we search for information on the Internet, we use words and phrases to frame the hunt. On search engines such as Google and social networking sites such as Facebook, there are a *lot* of people searching for info and entering terms. What terms are they using when they're looking for info and connection in our focus area? You can find out.

And there's value in knowing. The first return on investment (ROI) is that we can then use those preferred keywords on our websites and in our social media communications. This helps the search engine in question (such as Google or Facebook's) readily find us and direct people our way. A second and not insignificant ROI is that we gain a much clearer picture of how to construct and communicate our message effectively, using the terms that a wide range of people are actually using.<sup>35</sup>

Remember that search box we mentioned, dead-center top of Facebook? It's going to come in very handy right now to see who's using words and phrases particular to your center's area of interest.

#### An Exercise in Searching at Facebook

1. Go to your Facebook page.
2. In the search box at the top of the screen, enter a term commonly used in your center's line of expertise. Click the search button.
3. Facebook will immediately show you posts that use that term. Click on the **"Posts by Everyone"** and you'll be able to read *every* post where the term is used.

These would be the kinds of people and groups with whom you could build targeted relationships when you're ready to engage. These are also the conversations helpful for listening to and learning about potential users, to see:

- What sparked the discussion and what's driving it?
- What kind of help might our project offer?
- Who's organized as a group (vs. commenting as an individual), and how many people are in the group?
- Are there other terms or topics of interest in the various posts? resources we should know about?

When you're ready to engage with potential users at Facebook, you would strategically respond to posts, join in the conversations, share helpful resources, ask a question, or join groups of your choice. If you share something useful, folks may pass it on. Then all of their "friends" will see it, too...and they might pass it on. And the ripple spreads out.

But first...you need to **develop a plan.**

Your term goes here

All Results

People

Pages

Groups

Applications

Events

Web Results

Posts by Friends

Posts by Everyone

## HOW TO...# 5

### Define Your Plan



So you've listened. You're itching to join the conversation. Oh, it's so tempting....and it would be so easy. And helpful.

But here's a brutal truth, oft-reiterated in blogs, slide-shows, primers, and how-to's.

"If you enter into social media without a plan, you will fail. Period."<sup>36</sup>

Fortunately, the social media big brains offset the bluntness of this advice with detailed guidance on how to develop said plan. Which we're going to summarize in this section, adapting the discussion to fit our TA&D reality and narrowing the focus to how we'll sail our social media ship on Facebook.

#### 1 | *Gather your team.*

Chances are, you're not running the project all by yourself. There's a team of folks separating out the duties and carrying the mission forward. Which ones will be involved in implementing and monitoring your social media activities? These are the ones to gather together to discuss ground rules, set a social media policy for your project, and determine the plan of action.

#### 2 | *Discuss how social media can complement your other methods of connecting with users.*

It's important for the team to recognize that coming up with a social media plan doesn't mean you're going to abandon your other dissemination mechanisms—especially the tried-and-true ones, like a website or newsletter. Websites have

served us all incredibly well in the last decade, making it easy for users to connect with scads of information and resources for free.

The only problem is...*users* have to find *us*—typically through a search engine such as Google, a link on someone's website, or a word-of-mouth referral.

Social media offers us a different equation, a much more proactive approach to dissemination. Rather than wait for users to find us, *we are the ones reaching out to our users, finding them where they are*. In this sense, social media has introduced disseminators to a new paradigm. But that doesn't mean we throw out everything else. A social media approach to dissemination needs to *complement* our other efforts, not replace them.<sup>37</sup>

#### 3 | *Define your goals.*

What are you hoping to achieve on Facebook? Do you want to:

- Build better relationships?
- Raise awareness about your project?
- Increase website traffic?
- Build up your base?
- Inspire people to action?
- All of the above?<sup>38</sup>



## HOW TO...# 5

### Define Your Plan

(continued)

Your actions on Facebook should be driven by your goals. And those should be as realistic as possible, given how much time you have to devote to this and how many staff (not to mention all those other duties!). We like SMART goals (you've probably hear of them). They are: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound.<sup>39</sup>

It's okay to start small. In fact, many social media bloggers out there highly recommend it, especially until you familiarize yourself with the Facebook platform and social milieu.

#### *4 | Set up ground rules and policy for your project's Facebook presence.*

Who, on your project, is going to be responsible for posting content on Facebook, engaging with others there, responding to comments, and so on? Is this going to be a shared responsibility?

This is no small decision. Not only will Facebook take up time and resources, it is also a very public forum. The person or persons responsible for posting to Facebook and interacting there will be, in essence, the voice of your project on Facebook. Do they have authority to speak for your project? To represent the project in public?

It's no wonder that many companies stiffen up in fear at the notion of turning staff loose on Facebook. That's why it's important to have a policy that sets up the "rules of engagement" for staff and that offers them guidelines on the appropriate way to engage in online conversations.<sup>40</sup>

An example, you say? OK. Have a look at Microsoft's policy for its Channel 9 initiative (it's in the box on the next page), a team of five guys at Microsoft who wanted a new level of communication between Microsoft and developers.<sup>41</sup>

What we find compelling about Channel 9's ground rules is that they fully capture what social media is all about. As ifpeople.net says in one of its slideshows:

Social media is:

- Consumer-driven
- Transparent
- Engaging
- Inclusive
- Sincere<sup>42</sup>

Social media is *not* controlled, formal, or one-sided.<sup>43</sup> And that can take some getting used to, because we have to be willing to give up control over the conversation, not an easy thing for a TA&D project to do. The giants of business haven't found it easy either. That's why it helps to have a policy that spells out how project staff will take part in your Facebook presence.

It's still hard to figure out what that policy should be, isn't it? Perhaps it would help to simply talk through some basics first, as a group, and come at your policy sideways afterwards. To spark that discussion, you might have the team go online and view the ifpeople.net slideshow we just mentioned. It's a fount of ideas expressed in the simplest, most straightforward language you can imagine. For example, how about this question?



*Facebook is friendly,  
not formal.*





## HOW TO...# 5

### Define Your Plan

(continued)

#### How would I define my organization in a single, simple phrase?

That's your message. Have all your social media content reflect it.

This will make your message:

- Focused and on point
- Have a cohesive, unifying theme
- Easily grasped by short attention spans<sup>44</sup>

Find the full slideshow at: <http://www.slideshare.net/ifPeople/developing-a-social-media-plan-1323287>

You'll find that the slideshow will help you do more than set up ground rules—it's also a great guide to follow for the process of defining your plan.

#### 5| Define how you're going to measure your efforts.

How are you going to measure progress towards your goals? This needs to be well-defined before you begin, so you can take a baseline measure against which to measure growth over time. How-To #10 (beginning on page 37) discusses some of the basic data to collect.

Your metrics should be closely tied to the goals you have established. If you set SMART goals (specific, measurable, etc.), then it becomes that much easier to define your metrics and collect what baseline data you can.

For example, let us say you set two goals:

- To increase traffic to your website
- To have more people subscribe to your newsletter

#### Channel 9 Doctrine

1. Channel 9 is all about the conversation. Channel 9 should inspire Microsoft and our customers to talk in an honest and human voice. Channel 9 is not a marketing tool, not a PR tool, not a lead generation tool.
2. Be a human being. Channel 9 is a place for us to be ourselves, to share who we are, and for us to learn who our customers are.
3. Learn by listening. When our customers speak, learn from them. Don't get defensive, don't argue for the sake of argument. Listen and take what benefits you to heart.
4. Be smart. Think before you speak, there are some conversations which have no benefit other than to reinforce stereotypes or create negative situations.
5. Marketing has no place on Channel 9. When we spend money on Channel 9 the goal is to surprise and delight, not to promote or preach.
6. Don't shock the system. Lasting change only happens in baby steps.
7. Know when to turn the mic off. There are some topics which will only result in problems when you discuss them. This has nothing to do with censorship, but with working within the reality of the system that exists in our world today. You will not change anything by taking on legal or financial issues, you will only shock the system, spook the passengers, and create a negative situation.
8. Don't be a jerk. Nobody likes mean people.
9. Commit to the conversation. Don't stop listening just because you are busy. Don't stop participating because you don't agree with someone. Relationships are not built in a day, be in it for the long haul and we will all reap the benefits as an industry.<sup>45</sup>

Continued on the next page



## HOW TO...# 5

### Define Your Plan

(continued)

For each of these goals, you'd have to define what "success" would mean and how you'll know when you've achieved it. How much of an increase are you looking for in the traffic to your website? Realistically, given your resources? 25%? 50%? How many *more* people subscribing to your newsletter would you count as "yes, we reached our target!"? 5,000? 10,000? By when?

You can see why it's sound advice to start small and be realistic about the goals you set. That goes for your time frame, too. "I'd give your social media efforts about 2-3 months to stabilize before you really start trying to decide if things are working for you," writes Lisa Barone of Outspoken Media.<sup>46</sup>

Some metrics will yield strictly quantitative data—how many new newsletter subscribers you have, the number of webpage hits you have, how many folks forward your materials to someone else, or the number of comments people make on your Facebook wall. Don't overlook the value of what's qualitative, though, like those comments. Therein lies the soul and power of social media. It's a conversation, and what people are saying to each other and to you can be as informative as what you're saying to *them*. That's why usually "a successful social media networking campaign isn't judged by the traffic sent, but by the relationships built."<sup>47</sup>

Account for your own learning, too, which can be a tremendous ROI, answering questions such as:

- Did we learn something about our customers that we didn't know before?
- Did our customers learn something about us?
- Were we able to engage our customers in new conversations?
- Do our employees have an effective new tool for external feedback and reputation management?<sup>48</sup>

#### 6 | *Define the basic tactics you'd like to use.*

There is such a variety of things you can do on Facebook that it helps to discuss which will solidify your page and help you advance your goals. For example:

- What content do you have readily available that you can adapt for your Facebook pages?
- Will you invite a guest to tackle a specific topic of interest via a blog or a podcast?
- Will you emphasize storytelling?
- Will you post new resources daily, weekly, or when you can manage to?

A lot to consider, huh? But don't worry, start small and build from there. And consider what's involved in the various tactics you could use and what benefits may be derived.

As many nonprofit early adopters have learned, the secret to social media strategy success is **careful, low-risk experimentation**. Your initial experiments will be designed around trying out the tools and techniques.

What's important is to set up some discovery questions on the front end and keep a constant eye on what works and what doesn't. Understand that you [may very well] fail in these early efforts, so don't be risk adverse. Learn from the mistakes.<sup>49</sup>

## HOW TO...# 5

### Define Your Plan

(continued)

#### 7 | *Harness the power of storytelling.*

In the TA&D network, we tend to write in professional tones that aren't very appropriate for Facebook. So, ditch that style!

Easier said than done, after all these years. But consider how the art of storytelling could prove an essential tactic in your tool chest. Why is that?

- We love listening to stories
- We learn from stories
- We love sharing stories<sup>50</sup>

The power of Facebook also allows users to tell *their* stories. So consider how you might weave storytelling into your Facebook presence—you won't find a place that's more geared to a good story, unless you go to the movie theater. What stories do you want to share about your project and its involvement in real people's lives? Is there a larger social issue, concern, or necessity that brings you and your users together? Of course there is. It's what the TA&D network is all about.

To delve into how storytelling can create magic online, just as it did when we were kids helping to turn the pages of a book, go to: <http://www.gauravonomics.com/blog/three-reasons-why-storytelling-is-the-key-to-social-media-marketing-success/>

#### To Conclude....

There are lots of other tools and tactics that can go into a social media plan—in fact, it's positively exciting how many there are. Since we're starting small, discussion of these will have to wait a while, at least until we're up and running on Facebook and are ready to branch out. If perchance you want to know more right now, though, here are two excellent resources to turn to:

#### The Social Media Tool Box

A wiki created by the WeAreMedia community.  
<http://www.wearemedia.org/Tool+Box>

#### interactive insights group (iiG)

<http://www.interactiveinsightsgroup.com/blog1/>

#### The Power of Storytelling

Given how central storytelling is to the human condition, it's not a surprise that social media is most powerful when it is used for storytelling.

These stories can be about the organization and its brands, but they are more powerful when they are stories about the role these brands play in the lives of their consumers. The most powerful stories are about what these brands stand for, if they stand for a larger social object: a lifestyle, a cause, or a passion.<sup>51</sup>



## HOW TO...# 6

### Schedule Time for Facebook

Yes, we know. The last thing any of us needs is one more thing to do. But Facebook isn't an unnecessary 'add-on' to what we're already doing to reach our audiences—it could be a very powerful tool in our disseminators' tool chest. So it'll be okay. It will even be fun. In the end, you'll probably be *glad* you set aside limited time for Facebooking, because once you get rolling, you won't want to stop.

You won't be surprised to hear that finding time for Facebook (and social media, period, which is a much bigger affair) is a topic of high engagement and strong opinion out there. For example:

The No. 1 question I'm asked...is, "How in the world do you have the time for social media?"  
The answer: **I don't. I make time.**<sup>52</sup>

Aim to build a reputation for being helpful and providing value, and most of all being a real human being...**If you do not post an article this week, so what?**<sup>53</sup>

There is no doubt the number one reason for NOT using social media is time. The fact is, you don't have to spend hours a day. **You can choose how much time to spend** on social media, and then implement a schedule that works for you. The key here is to get engaged and be consistent.<sup>54</sup>

Truth is, what comes up again and again from the so-called experts is that **scheduling time ahead** of time is the ticket. And before that, **decide how much time you'll devote** each week to social media—in our case, Facebook.

How about some observations from the experts who've struggled with the time dilemma, too? All right. See the right column for hints you may find relevant to planning (and scheduling) your time on Facebook.



#### Suggestions for Controlling the Beast

- Decide whether you will spend 15 minutes, half an hour or an hour (a day)—and stick to it. Block it out in your diary—just as you would an important meeting. And when your time is up; stop.<sup>55</sup>
- Spend your time intentionally. It's all too easy to just chit chat, browse and surf... Are you just hanging out, or do you *direct your efforts* toward a precise tactical aim or specific goal?<sup>56</sup>
- For us mere humans, the key to effective social networking is to be selective. Then listen, link, respond and give more than we take. And, hey, Rule One is still that social networking is fun.<sup>57</sup>
- Get some help... Many hands make light work. Be open to your employees contributing to aspects of your social media that interest them.<sup>58</sup>
- Consider using one of the freely available 3rd party tools that can help you better manage your time in social media. Tools such as HootSuite and Sendible can be invaluable. Through them you can sift through your email inbox on Monday morning, capture a few nuggets to share, and schedule them to appear as relevant updates on Facebook throughout the week.<sup>59</sup>
- Set a timer... for the length of the appointment you scheduled [for Facebook]. When the timer goes off, turn off Facebook...and move onto what's next on your schedule.<sup>60</sup>
- Use your calendar ruthlessly. Which are your content-generating days? Which are your social media administrative days?<sup>61</sup>
- The best line of defense against social media time suck is *you*. Know what you want to get out of social media, know how much time you can put into it, and then make your decisions wisely.<sup>62</sup>

## HOW TO...#7

### Set Up Your Project's Facebook Page

And you thought you already had! No, that was your *personal* Facebook page. Now it's time to dig into making one for your project.

Go to: <http://www.facebook.com/advertising/?pages>

Here's what you'll see:

*Check out this tidy description.*

**Facebook Pages...**Create a presence that looks and behaves like user profiles to connect and engage with your customers and amplify your voice to their friends.

**Facebook Pages**

Create a presence that looks and behaves like user profiles to connect and engage with your customers and amplify your voice to their friends.

[Create a Page](#)  
or manage your existing Pages

**Overview** **Prepare** Step By Step Find New Fans

**Create a Facebook Page**  
A Facebook Page is a public profile that enables you to share your business and products with Facebook users. Create one in a few minutes with our simple interface. For more details about Facebook Pages, [download our Product Guide](#).

**Start the Conversation**  
When your fans interact with your Facebook Page, stories linking to your Page can go to their friends via News Feed. As these friends interact with your Page, News Feed keeps driving word-of-mouth to a wider circle of friends.

**Drive Customer Awareness**  
Spread the word even further with [Facebook Ads](#). You choose your graphic, text, and target audience. We'll even add available information about their friends' interacting with your Facebook Page, if you choose.

*Click on "Prepare."*

Which will take you to a page of suggestions for how to get yourself ready and organized to create your project page.

*This intro page will give you an overview of how organizations use Facebook Pages.*

## HOW TO...# 7

### Set Up Your Project's Facebook Page

(continued)

Here's the **PREPARE** page. Take a good, long, orienting look. Decide what you need to decide before creating the page. We've marked those items with a red star, including whether you'd like to "Get Started" or "learn more about the process."

Create a Page for your project by clicking here when you're ready.

**STEP BY STEP.** Aren't you glad you'll have more guidance at your trembling fingertips?

#### Facebook Pages

Create a presence that looks and behaves like user profiles to connect and engage with your customers and amplify your voice to their friends.

Create a Page

or manage your existing Pages

Overview

Prepare

Step By Step

Find New Fans

Gathering a few items in advance will make it quick and easy to create your Facebook Page:



#### Name your Page

The name you give your Page is permanent, so make sure it's the one your fans and customers will recognize.

#### Upload photos

You'll be able to upload an unlimited number of photos. The most important is the profile picture that Facebook users will see (as a thumbnail) in News Feed when their friends interact with you. A logo, storefront, or group photo may work well. Make sure the image is still clear when reduced to thumbnail size.

#### Make it useful and engaging

What will turn your Facebook fans into paying customers, and vice versa? If you are a restaurant or bar, detailed info like address and store hours will help. If you're a band or a film, adding songs and videos is key. If you're a brand or product, photos of your offering and hyperlinks to independent reviews will make an impact. Gather what you've got handy and you can always add more later.



Get Started

or learn about the process

The screenshot shows the Facebook Page setup interface for 'My Restaurant'. The page has tabs for Wall, Info, Discussions, Events, and Reviews. A dialog box titled 'Upload a Profile Picture for My Restaurant' is open, prompting the user to 'Select an image file on your computer (4MB max):' with a 'Browse...' button. Below the dialog box, there is a section for 'Write something about My Restaurant.' and a 'Fans' section showing '1 fan' and a 'See All' link.



#### Basic Info

Location: 5248 Main St.  
Palo Alto, CA, 94301  
Mon - Sun: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm

#### Detailed Info

Website: <http://www.MyRestaurant.com>  
Attire: Casual  
Payment Options: Accepts all major credit cards  
Parking: Street  
Price Range: \$\$\$ (30-50)



## HOW TO...#7

# Set Up Your Project's Facebook Page (continued)

Time to create your project page, via the **STEP BY STEP** page. We'll let Facebook guide you through the process.

*But if you get in trouble, or aren't sure what to choose, there's a resource list on the next page, so you can quick go read other guidance to bail you out...*

### Facebook Pages

Create a presence that looks and behaves like user profiles to connect and engage with your customers and amplify your voice to their friends.

[Create a Page](#)  
or manage your existing Page

**Overview** Prepare **Step By Step** Find New Fans

**Step 1: Pick a category and name**

Pick the category that best fits what you'd like to promote on Facebook. Don't worry if you don't find a perfect fit, but pick the closest match since you won't be able to change your category.

The name of the Page should be the exact same as the name of the business, organization, product, band, or individual it represents.

Click "Create Page."

Local:

☐ Brand or Product

☐ Artist, Band, or Public Figure

**Name of Restaurant:**

**Upload a Profile Picture for My Restaurant**

Select an image file on your computer (4MB max):

[Browse...](#)

By uploading a file you certify that you have the right to distribute this picture and that it does not violate the Terms of Service.

**Step 3: Add information**

Click "Add information to this Page" underneath the profile picture and enter as much basic and detailed information as you can. The fields available will depend on your Page type. The more details you can add about who you are, what you do, and when and where customers can buy your products, the more successful you will be.

**Step 4: Make it rich and engaging**

Like user profiles, Pages have multiple tabs. By default, your Page has a Wall tab for you and your fans to share content, an Info tab for you

[Click on a profile section below to edit it.](#) [Done Editing](#)

**Basic Info**

Address:

City/Town:

Zip:

**The New York Times**

Wall Info Discussions Photos Video Boxes +

## HOW TO...# 7

### Set Up Your Project's Facebook Page (continued)

*Need more guidance?*

*Here are 5 resources to guide you through creating your project's Facebook page.*

- *HOWTO: Set Up a Winning Facebook Fan Page*  
Just the basics.  
<http://mashable.com/2009/09/22/facebook-pages-guide/>
- *How to Successfully Create a Facebook Fan Page*  
Just the basics.  
[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_5648448\\_successfully-create-facebook-fan.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_5648448_successfully-create-facebook-fan.html)
- *Create a Facebook Page For Your Business: Step-By-Step Guide*  
Has screen shots of the process with moderate guidance.  
<http://socialmediajam.com/create-a-facebook-page-for-your-business-step-by-step-guide/>
- *Facebook Fan Page—Step by Step*  
Good detail and guidance.  
<http://www.searchengineoptimizationportland.com/blog/2010/03/facebook-fan-page-step-by-step/>
- *Knowledge Base: How do I create a Facebook Fan Page/ Public Profile?*  
Nice clear screen shots, with labels.  
<http://help.wildfireapp.com/faqs/tutorials/facebook-fan-page-public-profile>
- *Fancy Facebook Fan Pages - A Step By Step Guide*  
Full-blown details! 153-slides worth.  
<http://www.slideshare.net/onitz/fancy-facebook-fan-pages-a-step-by-step-guide>



**HOW TO...# 8****Build Your Page**

Amount of free advice  
online for building your  
project's page

≈  
roughly equals

Number of stars are  
in the sky on a clear  
summer night

No joke. What's interesting about all those blogs, articles, posts, guidances, and YouTube videos is that they mostly repeat each other at varying levels of detail. Different words, maybe, different graphics and examples, but...the same basic message. And that helps us summarize the main points and suggestions for building your project's Facebook Fan Page. Which we'll do right now, in no particular order.

Before we start, though, let us say, "no pressure." Consider the suggestions that make the most sense for your project, given your resources and available time, and remember—we're starting small (we agreed to that, didn't we?). We're getting our feet under us and letting ourselves grow into this madness as sanely as we can.

*The power of pictures.* | Make sure you have engaging pictures on your space, especially the "home" page. That lead-in picture doesn't have to be your logo either (which may not be all that engaging, eh?). In fact, it could be a creatively *altered* variation of your logo, if you're really ambitious or you have a Photoshop expert in your shop. In a nutshell: "It's one of the first things users look at and it has the potential to leave a lasting impression so make it good!"<sup>63</sup>

*Content is king.* | Offer it in abundance. This is easy for TA&D projects to do, because we're in the business of giving our knowledge and resources away for free! What do you have "just lying around" that you could re-purpose? Doesn't have to be long or detailed (in fact, it's better if it isn't), and you can always link back from your Facebook post to the fuller story on your project website.

*Add new content as often as you can.* | Keep your site fresh, with new and interesting stuff for folks to find and share. Be relevant, bring value. This will draw 'em in and keep 'em coming back for more...and maybe next time they'll bring their friends.

*Create dialogue with, and between, users.* | There are lots of ways to stir up the chatter every now and again. Pose questions to users, run a poll or a contest (what's that you're muttering...*oh yeah, we really have time to orchestrate a contest!*). Create new topics in a discussion forum (if you have one), ask for photos from your users to populate your gallery, answer questions they pose.





## HOW TO...# 8

### Build Your Page

(continued)

*Post some applications for users.* | Have we mentioned there are more than 50,000 applications already developed for Facebook? Most can be readily integrated into your page, and they can greatly enhance the experience of your users. If there's stuff to do, and play with, folks won't drop in and immediately leave again. We've listed some of our favorite apps on this page. Browse the collection and pick your own favs, starting at:  
<http://www.facebook.com/apps/directory.php>

And if you don't want to use them for the project's page, then how about on *your own personal profile?*

Interview

GoodReads Books

Photo of the Day

Daily Horoscope

Music

YouTube Videos

Poll

Bumper Sticker

Lexulous

Your Say

#### All Applications

Search Apps

All Applications

Utilities

Education

Entertainment

Friends & Family

Business

Games

Sports

Lifestyle

Just For Fun

On Facebook

External Websites

Desktop

Mobile

Prototypes

Contests

Promotions

Social RSS

Fan Appz

Where I've Been

## HOW TO...# 8

### Build Your Page

(continued)

*Consider hosting an event.* | Events are a great way to attract attention and gather folks to your center's Facebook page. Facebook makes it very simple to create an event and promote it, as we've outlined below.

See this icon of a calendar? If you click on it, you'll get the Create an Event screen.



More than 2 million events are created on Facebook by users every month.<sup>64</sup> Here are some examples, to give you an idea of how diverse and creatively conceived events can be:

Free Slurpee Day from 7-11

Free Ben & Jerry's on Election Day

Victoria's Secret Fashion Show on CBS

Starbucks goes (RED) for World AIDS Day!

While the TA&D network isn't in the league of offering free ice cream or slurpees, it is very well-given to hosting interesting and relevant events for the disability and education communities. Consider the range of natural opportunities at our fingertips. We could...

- commemorate the signing of laws such as IDEA or the ADA
- raise awareness of specific disabilities in keeping with the 2010 Health Observances calendar (available online at <http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp>)

- have a back-to-school night online (or a "school's out for summer" fest) where we field questions from our users
- time an event to coincide with something else already going on in disability or education—such as Inclusive Schools Week
- host an event to explain something our users find puzzling, important, or new (how about when ESEA is reauthorized, for example)

Facebook has a streamlined system for spreading the word about an event, including what it calls **Event Ads** that allow you to target people by company, job position, interests, and more.

"I cannot emphasize how powerful Facebook advertisements can be for events. When you go to create your advertisement, select the option which says "I want to advertise something I have on Facebook". You can then select your event from the drop down which is displayed under the sub-heading "Facebook Content."<sup>65</sup>

## HOW TO...# 8

### Build Your Page

(continued)

The system also makes it easy for you to send **targeted updates** to fans, keeping them reminded of your event and you. Once a week, send an update to let them know about the current number of RSVPs, updates about the venue or content, and any information about new sponsors or hosts. These event updates will get people to RSVP “yes” that have not yet RSVPed or have replied “maybe.”<sup>66</sup> And last but not least, the system has an **Event Reminder** functionality to do just that.

Once you set up the event, “remember to monitor your event page regularly to keep track of wall postings and respond to queries,” says Josh Catone of Mashable.com.<sup>67</sup>

*Join other groups and pages at Facebook.* | You remember the groups and like-minded folk you identified during your “listening” phase at Facebook? Time to join them, if you haven’t already, this time from your center’s page. Join the dialogue taking place there, if you have something relevant to contribute.

You’ll also be able to see who created that group’s page or who serves as the administrator of the page. This is a good person to get in touch with, perhaps asking for his or her tips or just introducing yourself and your center’s presence. This spreads virally through Facebook, because the group’s fans/friends can readily see the exchange on the group’s wall (unless you message the creator privately).

*“Call to action” in your updates.* | It’s important for fans of your page to interact with you and with each other. Promote meaningful exchange by calling them to action with your updates, making sure to ask them a question. “People love to voice their opinion and share their expertise. Make sure your updates ask them to do that. Simply linking to each article you publish on your blog won’t help you much as far as growing your fan page goes.”<sup>68</sup>

*Like, comment, share.* | By now, you’ve probably noticed (and used?) the options of *like*, *comment*, and *share* that appear beneath every post at Facebook. These are great tools—use them! See something of interest or relevance to your project’s target audience? “Like” or “share” it—not only will you be letting the group or individual know that you value the info, others within your own network can also hear about it and benefit.

And...every time someone else comments on *your* page, or clicks the *like* button, clever old Facebook shows it on their feeds. This means that the friends of fans see their feed on the main page...and that “one of your fans have been commenting on or using the *like* feature on your fan page. This can create a viral effect. If the update is good enough and really thought-provoking, those users who didn’t know about your fan page might join because they saw someone they knew on Facebook actively using it.”<sup>69</sup>



**Hema Mahadevan** Do you have questions about students with disabilities? If so, visit and become a fan of CTSP!

<http://www.facebook.com/ctspcenter#!/ctspcenter?v=wall>

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)



Fri at 10:01am · Comment · Like · Share · Report



## HOW TO...#9

### Interact with Users & Build Your Reach



#### *Let the rumpus begin!*

Remember these 5 “rules of social media” and have at it!

1. *Listen.* Social media is not about you. It’s about people’s relationships with you. Listen before you speak.
2. *Get involved.* Social media is about conversation and building relationships. It takes effort. So don’t just talk about yourself. Ask questions, engage people, and link. Most of all be inspiring.
3. *Give up control.* You can’t control the conversation. If you want people to spread your message, you have to trust them. Listen, inspire, engage, let go.
4. *Be honest.* You can’t spin the truth with social media. Be open, honest, and authentic in everything you do and say.
5. *Think long term.* Don’t expect immediate, easily measurable results. It takes time to build trust and make connections.<sup>70</sup>

*Are you ready for the wild ride?*

## HOW TO...# 9

### Interact with Users & Build Your Reach

(continued)

Or, as social media blogger Paul Gillen says, play it **STRAIGHT**. In social activities, it's important to be:

- **S**uccinct
- **T**ransparent
- **R**esponsive
- **A**ccepting
- **I**nsightful
- **G**enuine
- **H**umorous
- **T**imely<sup>71</sup>

*Be social. Be a listener, too.*



#### Engage. Genuinely.

*Did you notice that “engaging in social media” is Step [9] and not Step 1? Just wanted to point that out. Carry on.*

When you finally enter the social space, your job is to listen and begin forming a platform for people to openly talk and engage with you.

- Listen to what they're saying.
- Listen to what they mean.
- Listen to what's bothering them.
- Listen to what makes them happy.

And when you have something to help lighten their load, to be helpful or to make them smile, respond. Respond with links to your resources, to other people's resources, to your competitors' resources. Your job in social media is to listen, to help and to get your message out only when appropriate. For every 10-15 messages where you help someone else, you get to include one that promotes yourself. **That's it.**<sup>73</sup>

**Get in there.** Leave comments on blogs, tweets people, on other people's comments, etc. Engage new visitors. Go out there and talk to your community and at least pretend to have fun doing it. Be social and friendly... Add value to the community, don't just talk about yourself. The more excited you are about your community, the more excited they'll be about you.<sup>72</sup>



## HOW TO...# 9

### Interact with Users & Build Your Reach

(continued)

#### *Encourage and respond to comments*

- Comment elsewhere
- Play reporter
- Serialize
- Use themes
- Give stuff away
- Complement with photos, podcasts, & video<sup>74</sup>

And here's a tidbit from WeAreMedia (as part of its wiki's Tactical Track Module 4)...

#### **What are some tips for spreading awareness or generating buzz?**

- Be a good member of the community: promote others even more than you promote yourself... Linking and promoting others is a nice way to show you care about people
- The creative material or your message should be something that people want to share—newsworthy, controversial, timeliness, immediate usefulness, and even humor all work well
- Don't spam: a good rule is to make one post of your own content for every 5-10 posts that link to other sites
- Try hard not to send too many self-promotional emails or make too many posts of just your own content. Wrap your self-promotion in something of value to others, instead.
- Sometimes, just doing really good work is worthy of others promoting you. Try it!<sup>75</sup>

*Upload relevant pictures* periodically and be sure to *encourage your fans to upload photos* anytime they wish. Each time your fans upload a photo, the thumbnail goes onto their profile wall and out into the news feeds of their friends.<sup>76</sup>

#### **What Not to Do on Facebook**

The unwritten rules are actually pretty plainly discussed on the Web. Here are a few so-called “no-no’s” we thought you’d appreciate knowing.

From the *Biggest Mistakes Made by Social Media Gurus*:

**Don't...**assume that social media doesn't exist until you arrive...Wherever you go on the Web, realize there's been a history.

**Don't...**be overly careful about everything you say online. Self-editorializing online can be a real trap. What makes social media valuable is that it's authentic, real, and unfinished. When you're too careful about what you say, it can take the edge off your online persona.<sup>77</sup>

And here's one last, solid tip:

**Don't...**write on a wall instead of communicating privately. The “Wall” is one of Facebook's most popular features. That being said, there are times when it might be a good idea to share information and converse with a user in a more private way (e.g., send a private message via Facebook or email). Remember that Facebook is *Public* with a capital *P*.<sup>78</sup>

## HOW TO...# 9

### Interact with Users & Build Your Reach

(continued)

#### *How to Respond to Negative Comments*

There's quite a lot written about how to respond to criticism on the social Web. It's an open medium, you can't control the conversation, only what you yourself say, and people can be astonishingly frank, so it's best to have a notion of how you'll address any negativity. Drawing from the active conversation out there and the expertise of others, here's some guidance that'll stand you in good stead. It reinforces what this social media experience is all about—sharing.

- Admit mistakes. "Oops" happens. Be the first to admit your wrongs and make them right. Thank those who bring mistakes to your attention.<sup>79</sup>
- Don't ignore negativity. Negative comments are chances to turn critics into supporters. Respond kindly and respectfully. Understand concerns. Answer questions.<sup>80</sup>
- What are you going to do when someone calls you a moron? Create these rules before you start. It's a lot easier to respond...when you have a system already



*Bite on a stick if you have to.*

documented on paper. You also need rules for not just what you'll say but who will be in charge of saying it and what their role is.<sup>81</sup>

- It's well known that deleting negative comments will only enrage users, so how do you combat the negativity? My recommendation: don't. Instead, embrace negativity, post open feedback and then move on.<sup>82</sup>
- Never immediately respond to a negative comment. Do not reply back or take any action if you are angry, hurt or upset. If necessary, step away from the computer and take deep breaths. There are some comments that may warrant a personal message, but sometimes there is nothing that can be said.<sup>83</sup>
- The only time I engage is if they've said something that is factually not true, and I want to make sure the correct information is out there. But, people who just use profane comments I just let the community handle, or watch them get buried.<sup>84</sup>
- The number one rule when responding to all criticism, even the negative type, is to stay positive.<sup>85</sup>



## HOW TO...#10

### Measure Results

If you thought a lot of “how-to’s” have been written to guide your flight on the social Web, you should see the wealth that’s out there to guide how you measure your results. Social media metrics is a *huge* topic, and it’s time to tackle it in more depth—while trying to stay within our narrow focus on Facebook alone. Easier said than done, simply because there are so many different tools and analytics and platforms and softwares involved in social media, it’s very hard to separate out just one.



*Given your goals,  
how goes your Facebook page?*

#### A Look at the Basics

Social media is new, so it’s not really known yet how to measure its return on investment (ROI), although lots of folks are sure trying. One of the best articles we’ve read on the subject is Aaron Uhrmacher’s blog entitled *How to Measure Social Media ROI for Business*. Aaron readily acknowledges that “Social media measurement is one of those topics about which everyone has an opinion, but nobody agrees on the solution.” He then gives extremely pragmatic advice—*not* laden with technology you’ve never heard of—about how to approach the task.<sup>86</sup>

#### Take the time right now to read Aaron’s article.

It’s posted online at Mashable, at:  
<http://mashable.com/2008/07/31/measuring-social-media-roi-for-business/>

#### What’s Your Bottom Line?

Did you find that Aaron’s observations synced well with the type of goals that a TA&D project might have established for a Facebook presence? He states upfront that how you measure your social media efforts will depend on what your goals were when you started. For-profit businesses on Facebook are likely to be looking at the ye olde bottom line—*did we spend more on this than we made from it?* TA&D projects have a different bottom line and so are likely to define (and measure) “success” differently.

#### What Were Your Goals When You Started?

How-To #5, “Define Your Plan,” discussed the importance of developing goals for your presence on Facebook, as well as

defining how you were going to measure progress toward reaching those goals. If you did this before launching into Facebook, then you’ll have already defined the metrics you’ll use as well as set an initial baseline from which to judge progress. (If you didn’t define those metrics before you started, you’ll have to define them now! )

#### Analytics Available Through Facebook

One of the wizardries available with Web technology is its associated capability to store, recall, and analyze all sorts of activities taking place on the Web. You want to know how many visitors your Facebook page received this week? How many pages they looked at there, how long they looked, where they went afterwards? This information is at your fingertips, through just about every Web analyzer known to man, but also right there at Facebook. Fancy that.

While Facebook’s analytics aren’t as nuanced and sophisticated as others you might use, they are nevertheless the first place to go for data about your presence there. The data are available to you via a built-in utility called **Facebook Insights**. Here’s what the horse itself has to say about Facebook Insights:

#### What are Insights?

Facebook Insights measures user exposure, actions, and behavior relating to your Social Ads and Facebook Page. By understanding activity and performance, fans and ad respondents, and trends and comparisons, you are better equipped to improve your business on Facebook and elsewhere. Insights is a free service for all Facebook Pages and Social Ads.

Only Page admins [administrators] can view this information, and it is displayed in the left column of the Page. To view comprehensive Insights, click “See All” in the left column.<sup>87</sup>

## HOW TO...# 10

### Measure Results

(continued)

So—as an admin, go to your project’s Facebook page, look down the left column, and you’ll see something like this:



Click here to expand the view into a more detailed analytic picture containing all sorts of information.

Check out your “Post Quality” score for a given week (which Facebook says is a measure of “how engaging your content is to Facebook users”). Higher score, more engaging content!<sup>88</sup>

Here’s your stat for “interactions this week.” Pretty self-explanatory.

On a cumulative and week-over-week basis, Insight reports will measure **reach** (e.g., impressions, clicks), **viral impact** (e.g., fan adds), **responder insights** (e.g., gender and age), and **engagement** (e.g., video plays and wall posts) of visitors to your page. One advantage of using the applications designed by Facebook is the ability to receive these free, regular, detailed updates on the growth of your page.<sup>89</sup>

Thus, you can monitor your progress as a Facebook page week by week using Facebook Insights, as well as see the relative quality of posts and interactions with users. You also received a **weekly summary** from Facebook via email. It will look and sound something like this:

Here is this week’s summary for the Facebook Page:  
National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

+38 Fans this week (1,904 total Fans)

2 Wall Posts, Comments, and Likes this week (33 last week)

1,020 visits to your page this week (1,157 visits last week)

These data, you’ll note, are purely descriptive and quantitative, allowing for comparisons over time. Data such as the number of “fans” or people who “like” your page is a validation that they like your work well enough to...well, publicly say so. That’s something that reverberates throughout their entire Facebook network of friends. The more people who “like” your page, the more people you’ll have direct access to when you post your updates.

All this is to say: Keep tabs on the data readily available on your center’s page through Facebook Insights.

#### Analytics Available Through Your Project’s Website

Your project’s website may well be an excellent source of data regarding your presence on Facebook. Using Google Analytics (it’s free), you’ll be able to see exactly how many visitors came to your website from your Facebook page (or vice versa). If one of your initial goals for Facebook was to drive traffic to your website, this will be a handy way to find out.

Visit the home page of Google Analytics, to find out more and sign up: <http://www.google.com/analytics/>



## HOW TO...# 10

### Measure Results

(continued)

#### Ask Your Users Directly

The bare facts of how many people visited your page, how many comments were left, and so on are readily available to you via Facebook and other tools. How about also using the more direct approach of asking your users what they think of your page? There are polling apps (applications) developed expressly for Facebook (see the discussion of games and apps under How-To #8, Built Your Page), and these will serve you well for eliciting user feedback and needs. Users also tend to love responding to polls if they only take a minute or two. The comments users leave can also be very informative—a good source of qualitative data on their satisfaction with, and use of, your information.

#### Shortening URLs and Tracking Clicks

In addition to knowing the pure number of fans and visits to your Facebook page, you can leverage url-shortening services such as bit.ly, tinyurl.com, and ow.ly. These services do more than make those hideously long web addresses much shorter (which is service enough!). They also count the number of clicks a certain piece of information receives. This means that, when a shortened link is clicked on your page, then passed along to someone else, and *that* person opens the link, that click gets counted, too. This provides an indicator of relevance and use and, when taken together, can provide a clearer sense of user needs. What interests them? What seems interesting enough to warrant their click and further investigation?

#### Indepth Info on Measuring Results

Beyond these basics, there's an elaborate world of possible data you might collect. In the early days of maintaining a Facebook presence, however, you probably don't want to wade into the measurement depth you could, which can get quite, quite deep and complex. Do you really need to know at this point the exact pattern of clicks a visitor made on your page, precisely how long they stayed (down to the second), and lots of other super-detailed data? We're going to guess not. It's



*Need indepth guidance on metrics? Consult the resources we've mentioned.*

enough to start, and to have basic goals to accomplish, and to measure your progress toward accomplishing them.

Be aware, though, that much more intricate metrics are available. These range from measuring the tonality of the comments users make, to measuring your share of online discussion, from tinkering with your site to drive it up in the search engine rankings, to...you get the idea. (Do you also get the notion that there will be a guide to detailed measurement of social media in our futures?) If you wish to find out more and not wait for the sequel to this guide, here are five great resources on the subject:

Beth Kanter's *PodCamp: Let's Talk About Social Media Measurement*  
<http://www.slideshare.net/kanter/podcamp-lets-talk-about-social-media-measurement>

Chris Lake's *Social Media Measurement: A 10-Step Guide*  
<http://econsultancy.com/blog/5067-social-media-measurement-a-10-step-guide>

Chris Lake's *35 Social Media KPIs to Help Measure Engagement* | <http://econsultancy.com/blog/4887-35-social-media-kpis-to-help-measure-engagement>

MetricMan's *A New Model for Social (and Traditional) Media Measurement*  
<http://metricsman.wordpress.com/2008/08/29/a-new-model-for-social-and-traditional-media-measurement/>

Rachel of The Social Organization (tagline: *How Social Media Is Changing Communication & Organizations*):  
<http://www.thesocialorganization.com/social-media-metrics.html>

## HOW TO...#10

### Measure Results

(continued)

#### Reviewing Your Data

So—when you review your data after 2-3 months of your Facebook initiative, what do you find?

- What's your progress toward achieving the goals you set?
- How well do you think your metrics have helped you answer that question?
- What other metrics might you consider adding or substituting?
- Are there goals you'd like to add, or a different direction in which you'd like to take your Facebook presence?

As a team, refine your goals and plans, as needed.

#### Final Words

We'd like to conclude this "How-To"—and indeed this guide—with an observation about measuring social media success. It seems to strike to the heart of the very endeavor and what social media can mean for users and disseminators alike.

For us, the true strength of social media is **engagement** so we also look at which discussions, posts, videos and events get the most comments and the level of detail of those posts. What we also need to do is quantify the **value of the insight we receive** about our products, services and brand through social media.<sup>90</sup>



*Facebook, here we come!*



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This guide is very much a work in progress. To make it as useful as possible to members of the CoP and to the TA&D network, we very much invite your feedback and suggestions, which will help the CoP revise and re-issue the guide in future. *Please share your comments and insights* with either of the guide's authors (listed below) or with the CoP, at: <http://tadnet.ning.com/group/dissemination>

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