

Creating community on Facebook Groups

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Facebook Groups are very popular, and chances are high that you probably host or are a member of one or more Groups. They can range from the good, the bad and the indifferent, with members that can be put into the same categories! Ultimately the goal is to create a group that hosts an enthusiastic and engaged community, whether this is around your business or a common interest. Here are a few insights to do just that.



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Set group goals

Be very clear on the purpose and goals of your group. Be sure to have answers to the following questions:

- Why do you want people to come to your group? Discussion, advice, sharing, common interests and cause-related reasons are all good options.
- What can people expect from the group?
- How can people engage in the group?
- What are the rules of engagement including what they can and can't do and the result of breaking these rules?
- Who is your primary target audience?

People want to know the group will be a safe environment for expression and participation.

One of the fastest and most engaging ways to welcome members is with an intro video or you can pin a welcoming post.

Focus on leadership

You'll be happy to hear that engaging your members is not your job alone. Rather concentrate on setting the general tone and culture of the Group and let the members find their voice. Lead by example and allow others to be creative. Focus on what you care about and how you want to support others in the group. Others will follow.

Engage regularly

Consistently post on the group. People check Facebook throughout the day to keep the group interesting by posting regularly. Use photos to grab members' attention. Remember that colours can also set the mood e.g. blue is professional,

yellow in fun and happy.

Another great way to build engagement is to literally ask your group members to post. For example, post a question on your Group and, instead of asking people to comment on your post, rather have them post their answer in their own post. You can also ask a new member to post an introduction post about themselves.

Engagement will also increase as your group size increases. A Facebook group with at least 500 members is often considered to have reached “critical mass” and will start growing by itself.

Use the group to help with decision making

Community Groups are about two-way communication between host and members and between members themselves. People also love to engage with questions. Everyone has an opinion! Do informal market research by questioning your Group to find out what they like and want to see more of in the group, for example:

- Is the content meeting their needs?
- What other types of content they would like to see?
- Are the posts relevant and frequent enough?
- How can things be improved?

Remember too that members will also have their own questions within the context of the Group. Encourage them to ask their own relevant questions

Celebrate successes

Celebration posts are a really fun way of acknowledging milestones or accomplishments within the context of the group’s purpose. These posts generate lots of engagement and we all love a pat on the back. This can also include milestones reached by the Group itself e.g. membership numbers.

Know how to prime posts

When you have something important to post, post-priming is a very effective tool. Every week for six weeks prior to posting your important post, post a question that you know people will feel compelled to answer.

Make it simple e.g. “Do you like cats or dogs”? Or post something about your day that others will identify with. Six weeks later when you post your important item, Facebook’s algorithms will think you’re popular and will show your post to more people organically. Clever!

Monetise your group

Now that you have a fabulous and fully functioning Facebook group, you may be asking, “How do I sell my product through this?” Well, the subject matter you’ve based your group around should be quite closely associated with your product or service.

If your group lacks specificity, you won't have an interested audience. And if you don't have an interested audience, no one will want to purchase your product. Your product needs to be relevant to the group's purpose.

If you've ticked that box, leads, inquiries and sales will organically come flowing in.

So, there you have it. Try these few ideas and watch your group grow and thrive.

Until next time....

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