



Facebook's Real Value

Don't ponder how much Facebook is worth, ponder how you can use Facebook to grow your business.

We've all been waiting with bated breath for the Facebook IPO. Well, it came and went. Regardless of all the speculation and media hype, shares ended right near their offering price. Is that a bad thing? Not necessarily. Facebook set its final IPO price at \$38 a share. When the stock began trading at 11:30 a.m. ET on that fated day, the first trade came in at \$42.05 per share -- a gain of nearly 11%, according to CNN Money.

But the stock quickly reversed course, dropping down to hover right around the \$38 IPO price for much of midday trading. Though shares rose modestly for short bursts of time throughout the day, they ended the session at \$38.23.

While the price itself didn't move much, trading was fast and intense. More than 80 million shares changed hands in the first 30 seconds of trading. By the end of the day, volume had spiked to around 567 million shares. That activity easily set a new volume record for IPOs, smashing the previous record that automaker General Motors set in 2010 with trading of around 450 million shares.

At the \$38 IPO price, Facebook is on track to raise \$16 billion, making it the largest tech IPO in history. It's the third largest U.S. IPO ever, trailing only the \$19.7 billion raised by Visa in March 2008 and the \$18.1 billion raised by GM in November 2010, according to rankings by Thomson Reuters.

Underwriters have the option to purchase an extra 63.2 million shares to cover any so-called over-allotments for excess demand. If that happens, Facebook will sell 484.4 million shares in total. That would bring the amount raised to \$18.4 billion.

What's the bottom line? The company is worth a lot of money regardless of what happens with the stock price. For me though, I don't worry or wonder how much Facebook is worth. I think that's the wrong question. If you want to buy Facebook go buy it, but regardless of whether you're a Facebook owner or not, you should be worrying and wondering how you can use Facebook to grow your business. That's the question that you should be asking.

In a white paper that I read called "Social Media Tune Up" the author (SYNECORETECH.COM) rightfully said that social media is an efficient and inexpensive tool for business promotion that allows you to engage with customers, amplify your message, expand your reach, drive traffic to your website, create brand awareness, and generate leads. With the viral ability of social media, your message can be heard by thousands of people at once.

Simply put, social media amplifies your message, content, website and brand. It allows you to establish and foster deeper personal relationships with potential customers. When done correctly, social media can generate website traffic, inbound links and quality leads. Social media should be a major aspect of your business.

Now, back to Facebook.

How does Facebook work for business? People have profiles; brands have pages

>>> Transparency is the goal.

>>> Choose a cover photo for your page that best represents your brand.

Social media is an efficient and **inexpensive tool** for business promotion that allows you **to engage** with customers.

>> >Set up your profile picture. This is the image shown on each of the updates on your wall and in users' news feeds.

Although Facebook's Timeline layout has made it easier to build a business page, there are still some necessary steps you can overlook. It is important to understand that while Facebook is a great platform to engage with your customers and prospects, it can also be an ideal place to generate leads. Here's what you need to do:

>> >Share company info through pictures and videos.

>> >Interact and engage with customers.

>> >Use your business logo or other image that represents your brand.

>> >Choose an image that is representative of your brand

What not to do:

>> >No calls-to-action

>> >No contact information

>> >No references to Facebook features/actions

>> >No price or purchase information

Highlight your best content/offers by pinning them to the top of your timeline. Enable the new personal messages feature. If you are a single location business, set up a "places" page. Add useful applications such as Discussion Boards and a YouTube Video Box. Measure your Facebook ROI with website analytics. Create milestones to show off your company's best accomplishments. Re-pin your best content every seven days (pins expire weekly). Software such as Google Analytics and HubSpot are great for tracking visitors and social reach.

With the addition of Timeline, your Facebook page must be as visually appealing as possible. Think of your Facebook page as an interactive blog that tells your story and encourages user engagement. It should be formatted to create an interactive environment for your fans that also helps you to gather more information about them. Be as creative as possible, and determine which activities or apps will best supplement your company's brand messaging.

Some businesses will merely set up a Facebook page and then leave fans to their own devices. It is essential for you to distribute remarkable content they will want to share. Turning

your fans into brand evangelists will attract more visitors to your Facebook page. In this way, Facebook can serve as a powerful tool for business promotion.

To increase your Facebook exposure, you need to design offers and content that will motivate people to "like" or "share" your page. Posts containing the word "video" in them are shared 30% more on Facebook. Posts that use buzzwords or business jargon like "optimize" significantly decrease the number of fans for a Facebook page. Posts with digits in the title tend to be shared more often. Lists using words like "top" make tremendously successful Facebook posts. For your customers and prospects to find your Facebook page engaging, you will need enticing content and regular posts.

Your Facebook page should strengthen existing relationships and also forge new ones. To do this, you need to perfect the timing and composition of posting original content, and learn how to cater to the needs of your target audience. You will need to closely monitor your Facebook page to understand what your fans

want, or hire a team of professionals to do it.

When crafting your Facebook strategy, here are some things to consider:

>> >Know your target audience

>> >The most frequently-used activity for young Facebook users is wall posts

>> >The older Facebook demographics are more interested in using Facebook for themselves

>> >Share original content

>> >Put "like" or "recommend" buttons at the top of each blog article

>> >Post articles on the weekend

>> >Focus on social aspect (invites, graffiti, etc.)

>> >Fans will build up a reputation for your blog article by "liking" its content

What's the takeaway from all this? Your Facebook page should be a launching point to your business website, blog and conversion offers. By encouraging discussions on your Facebook wall, you will be fostering a community in which your newest visitors interact with your most dedicated and loyal customers. ❖

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