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CREATIONS

FACEBOOK ~ 50+ TOPICS TO KEEP YOUR TIMELINE BURSTING WITH NEWS

Use this document as a guide to kick off foray into Facebook social media.

When I first started using Facebook a few years ago I felt like every last cell in my brain went dead each time I logged in. (I'm supposed to be a creative marketing person with lots of ideas, right? This wasn't a good sign!) I struggled to get into the mindset. (And there really is one!)

You must develop and nurture this mindset over time to get the juices flowing at a good tempo where ideas about what to put in Status Updates will flow quickly and easily.

If you find yourself scratching your head as you struggle to get your business page looking and feeling active as well as reflective of your unique brand, don't beat yourself up. And don't get discouraged. Developing new skills (and social media is definitely a skill!) puts (good) stress on your little gray cells. Remember it will get easier the more you practice it.

Your Options for Status Updates

First, let's take a quick look at the basic parameters of what you can do in the Status Update dialog box:

- Comment on the first thing that crosses your mind, from the weather, to a project you're working on to how your kid did in yesterday's soccer game.
- Comment on photo or video you upload or link to on another site.
- Ask a question of your fans and friends (aka – a poll).
- [Fan Pages in Timeline format only] Post a Milestone for your business.*

In addition to posting the original content above in the box at the top of your screen, you can Share something posted by another Fan or Friend in your Timeline/Wall that you want to comment about. Remember, your fans may not see a friend's post (if they're not a fan/friend of your friend), so this is a form of formal gossiping --- passing the word along to your friends and fans...and so on, and so on.

- Share a link, article, music, review, video from someone else's post.
- Remember that when you Share a post Facebook provides a lot of options about who can see your Share. On personal pages you can narrow it down to as little as one person who sees your share. But it could be the greater public, a group, list, or custom selection of fans or friends.
- If you Share to a page or a group, Facebook will ask you which page to share it to if you operate more than one (e.g. personal, Page- Business, Page – Non-Profit, Page – Community).
- Liking and Commenting on other's posts and comments is another form of communicating your views to your audience. But these have less impact than Sharing on your own Timeline.
- You may also search out others' Timelines and comment and post there in order to reach out to others who may not otherwise see your own posts. But I wouldn't start with, "Come see all my posts over here on my page!" Think: Drop breadcrumbs and slowly lead followers back to your page by starting on their pages.

What Content Should I Put On My Page?

For every business or professional you'll need to discover for yourself what is the right balance of news about you, your company, your community and so on. A general rule to go by is that no one wants to be sold to all the time. If you start by blasting out 'this week's special offer' most of the time you'll lose the fans you have quickly and have a hard time acquiring new ones.

On the other hand, if you take the time to observe what's going on amongst your fans, friends and other business pages, you'll likely find a wide mix of personal news, industry news, helping hands, humor, support and the occasional 'here's what I had for lunch-isn't that cool?!

As a general rule, actual sales promotions should be kept to 5%-20% of your total Status Updates. This is not to say that you can't mention a new product or service is now available, but good manners and polite social media etiquette are always in order.

If you're a restaurant, by all means, post a photo of the day's special on your chalkboard every day. But this message needs to be intermixed with other posts about your community, how you select the fresh ingredients used, recipes, mission statements and a host of other types of updates. Simply put: Your fans may be bored if all you post is the daily menu. Variety is the spice of life!

The All-Intimidating Grand Strategy for Facebook Marketing

Lots of professional marketers want you to map out an elaborate strategy for your goals on Facebook. That's great. But if brainstorming, white-boarding and mind-mapping out all your elaborate objectives for launching a Facebook fan page all take longer than today to get your account kicked off, you're wasting time.

Jump into the deep end of the pool. Everyone dog paddles in the beginning. The important part is to begin joining in on the conversation. Fine tune as you go.

Here are three super-simple objectives to keep in the back of your head while you improve your skills in Facebook:

- Add value.
- Create great experiences for your fans.
- Be unique from everyone else out there.

Without further ado, here are at least 50 (who's counting!?) ideas on the type of content you can provide to your fans. Amend and revise to suit your own business at will:

Be Human! Share About Your Life

1. Your passions: Why do you love what you do?
2. Personal Recommendations: In your neighborhood, local products and services, about your favorite charities (humane society, literacy programs, environment clean up....)
3. Favorite Books: Great reading? Magazine stories you loved? New authors you found.
4. Personal Opinion: It's okay to talk family from time to time. Little league win? Post it. Kids with great grades? Sure, put it up there. It's all human! Just keep it infrequent.
5. Your Photo Travel Log: Use the photo gallery to show off where you went on vacation. Post pics of your store's neighbors, parades, events.
6. Your Recipes: Everyone loves great recipes. Even if you manufacture or sell hex-head galvanized steel bolts (listed on your page), recipes are a human element. Your fans will appreciate the human factor.

What's Going on at Your Company? What Problems Do You Solve?

7. Talk about the big issues: What is your greatest challenge, who would you like to reach that you haven't yet? (You never know when a friend of a fan or another friend may now be the one person you want to connect with.)
8. Milestones*: New to Business Fan Pages. Facebook now allows you to build your business' milestones in history back to 1800. This reverse extension of the Timeline was built, in large part, to accommodate some large companies and institutions with venerable histories (i.e. branches of the U.S. military). Ford Motor Co. has already made good use of the Milestone feature, marking major Timeline events in their own history with new inventions and auto models.
9. Announce new markets you're entering: If you get distribution in a new channel or geo-location, make a big announcement!
10. Announce new products or services (or new speaking engagements and publications).

11. **Announce:** Did you win something in a competition? Did you receive a national or local award?
12. **Changes to your website:** Announce upgrades, makeover, additional features and enhancements to your fans. And tell them **WHY** you made these changes.
13. **Behind-the-scenes work going on at your company:** Show photos of office or store remodeling. Take pictures and post them from strategy sessions. Post photos of haywire whiteboarding sessions. It all shows your staff feverishly at work to make your company better.
14. **Comment AS YOUR PAGE:** on related pages, personal pages. Help out with solutions to folks' problems when applicable. (If you're not familiar with changing your persona between You and Your Company, this will make a huge difference.)
15. **Comment on big news in your industry** (as well as proposed legislation, regulations...)
16. **Educate your fans:** Create a series about a specific service or product – a **HOW TO**. This could event be built via one thread with many comments. A 'how to' assemble your product; its many uses; this can be done with photos, text, links to other documents or posts on your site.
17. **Explain:** Why you added a specific product or service. (Can use multiple posts to do so.)
18. **Job Openings:** Always let fans know when you have a job opening. Maybe the perfect candidate is already a fan!
19. **Last Call:** Let fans know when a specific product or service is about to sell out. They will appreciate it if it's something they've been waiting to buy.
20. **Post:** Links to articles about your company, about competitors or similar services.
21. **About New Staff:** Post pictures and profiles of the new folks at your company.
22. **Photo Ideas:** Products, office, showroom, interactions with customers therein, screen captures of eBooks, white papers, blog posts, the mess on your desk! Show staff unpacking newly arrived inventory.
23. **Policy changes:** Make an announcement, explain Q&A style, or run new FAQs about why policy has changed. Be transparent. Link to your newsletter that explains your policy changes in detail.
24. **Promote:** Your upcoming events! After creating your Event, be sure to include links to greater details; photo of the event (icon); add continued comments leading up to the event to broaden reach.
25. **Recap a recent event you held;** thank everyone for attending; ask fans to tag photos of the attendees; and thank them again for going to the trouble of tagging the images.
26. **Sales Trends:** Have you noticed interesting patterns in your sales (or competitors' or colleagues')? Comment if you're about to sell the "1000th unit of ____" or "we're just about to pass 5000 units sold of ____" Or "Help us get our 1000th fan! Share our page with your friends and fans."
27. **Special Offer:** Promote a time-limited sale offer / discount. Be sure to provide a countdown to it over several days or hours.
28. **Video:** How to's of your products; intro to your business video; new product intro; customer testimonials; interviews with colleagues; and tips and tricks.
29. **Opinion:** Your thoughts on current product releases vs. past ones.

Actions to Acquire Raving Fans and Friends:

30. Ask fans: What is your favorite ____ product (service, store, magazine) and why?
31. Ask fans: To add you to their related Interest Lists
32. Ask fans: To upload pictures of themselves using your products (and offer a prize for the best use).
33. Ask fans: What type of posts/comments do you like best? (quotes, info, pets, links...)?
34. Contest: Ask fans to Like you and comment. Give a prize to the 1000th new fan or for the best comments on your site. Ask them to create a collage of photos using your product. Best collage wins! Ask fans for their ideas on what would improve their customer experience. Give a prize for the best idea.
35. Contest: Unusual uses of your product or service? Include photos! Remember: If you construct the contest based around which photo/item gets the most votes from the public/fans and friends, you'll get your fans to promote their entry on their own pages and Timelines, asking their friends and fans to vote for them on YOUR page. This will grow your fan base virally!
36. Feedback: Ask fans for feedback on your content, questions, comments, contests.
37. Create a Game: Make a treasure hunt. Fans must Like others' pages you promote and find clues on those pages to win.
38. Writing Game: Make up a limerick that fans must finish about your business. Give a great prize for the best one!
39. Promote: a fan's comment or action. Provide a digital pat-on-the-back, at -a-girl!
40. Testimonials: Repeat customer testimonials from your website (or new ones!) Create a photo displaying the testimonial.
41. Thank You: Always thank you fans, influencers, commenters. Use their names, link to their pages, recommend them to friends and fans.

Promoting the Community Where You Live and Do Business

42. Share Fans' Announcements: Be a good neighbor! Promote your neighboring stores and businesses. Share them on your Timeline.
43. Charities and Causes: If you or your company support worthy causes, why not let your fans know about it?
44. State of Affairs: How current economic trends in your town (or across the country) are affecting your business. (Careful not to be negative. Focus on your creative strategy to manage your business in changing economic times.)
45. Review: Competitors' products. Be polite and honest. Never deride them!
46. Reviews of neighborhood businesses, helpful staff, restaurants.
47. Tourism: What are great B&Bs in your area? Great destinations/exhibits/museums and activities in your area?
48. Weather: Great? Terrible? Frozen fingers?

Miscellaneous Attention Grabbers

49. Profile Picture: When possible give your picture and/or logo a holiday treatment. Think: Google logo for Halloween or the 4th of July. Changing out your picture just enough to recognize the holiday event will grab viewers' attention.
50. Holiday Promotions and Comments: Plan ahead and comment accordingly to promote your own holiday sales and features. Map out strategies for how far in advance to announce teasers. Be sure to promote those of your neighbors' and fans' as

well. Search out quotes, pictures and inspiration for special days such as Veterans Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day and so on. Be respectful and use good etiquette surrounding these special days.

51. Call To Action: Ask fans and friends to LIKE your page periodically and fwd to their friends or share. Remind folks when you're approaching milestone fan counts or number of posts. Use your Insights tool for ideas.
52. General Tips & Tricks: Create a poll – on your products, services, a quiz.
53. Tips & Tricks: Promote a Daily/Weekly Quiz
54. Tips & Tricks: Post favorite quotes or those that reflex your company philosophy or mission statement.
55. Tips & Tricks: Get technical! Tips on using Facebook better and more efficiently. There are always changes and always new discoveries. Share them! Your fans will appreciate the news.
56. Tips & Tricks: Do you know what happened this day in history? Mark important days in history. Provide a recap and links to other sites or pages with details on the event.

There you have it: more ideas for valuable content than you can shake a stick at. If you're in the wine industry, I strongly recommend Tom Wark's brilliant [50 Ways of Updating Facebook for Wineries](#). There are many ideas specific to wineries in his detailed post as well.

Mashable also offers a host of original ideas it has uncovered on Facebook in [10 Innovative Uses of Facebook Timeline for Brands](#).