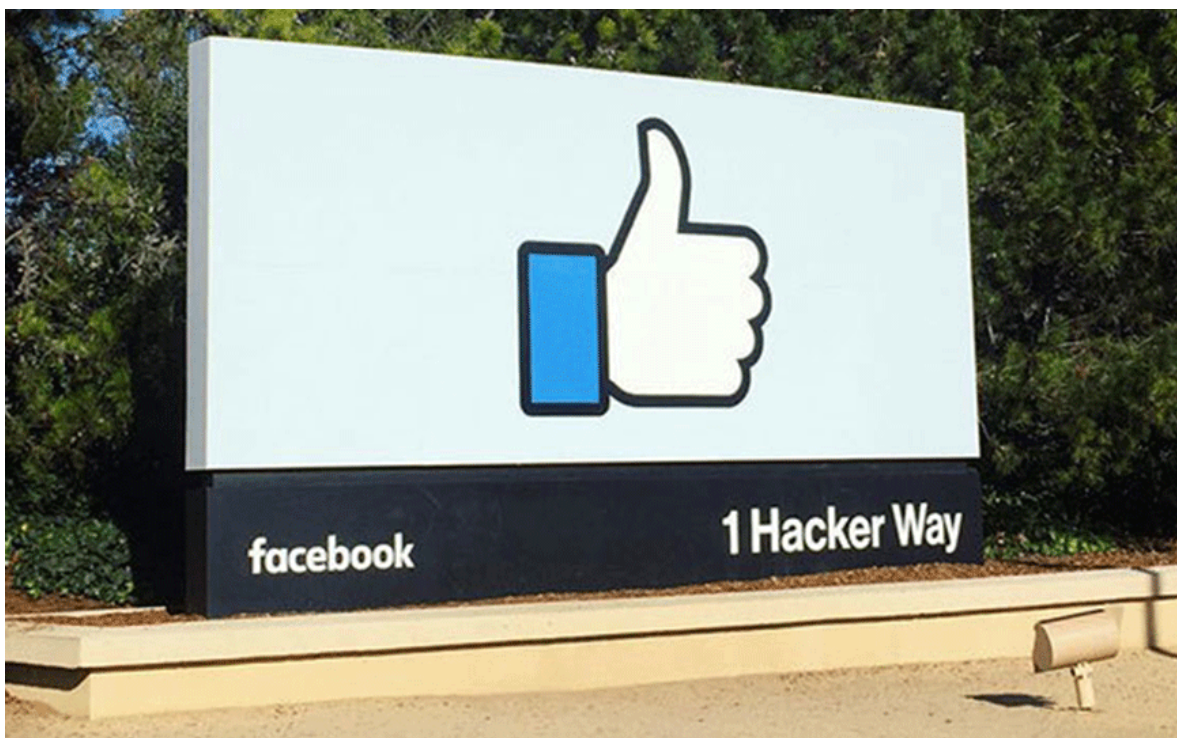


Driving Facebook Engagement to Help Build Your Brand



No one likes an attention seeker.

If you stop and think about it, the kid at recess yelling, “pick me, pick me,” was most always chosen last for kickball. The guy who sent his high school crush *way* too many love notes likely never went to prom. The brown-noser at work probably didn’t get the promotion.

The company or brand that asks for likes, comments and shares on Facebook typically doesn’t get much engagement, and – if they do – that engagement is not likely to be very sincere.

The point: if a company or brand wants to succeed in a social setting (which is the crux of *social media*, after all), the company/brand cannot ask to be liked. Instead, it needs to be “likeable.”

Though this concept is pretty intuitive, it's one that can be easy for marketers to forget. After all, Facebook's algorithm is always changing, and it's much simpler to push out a Facebook ad or request that audiences comment on a post.

However, Facebook's algorithm is set up so that the more organic (i.e., unprompted) engagement a post receives, the more it is rewarded. And, that's a good thing because it results in genuine engagement with positive brand awareness.

A Valuable Asset

As a professional in the design-build space, you may wonder if you really need to have a Facebook strategy when marketing building materials. Short answer: yes. Having a presence on Facebook has the potential to bring many opportunities to the table. Builders, contractors and architects, no matter what the organization's size, can "join the conversation" with a minimal investment of time. In addition, it affords your company or brand the opportunity to be seen as an organization that cares what's happening in the lives of its followers – whether those are customers, other industry professionals or prospects.

When you set up a Facebook business page, Facebook visitors can view your contact information, engage with your posts and articles, ask questions, interact with other industry professionals who follow your page, and invite you to follow their feeds as well. You also have the option of running ads, which can be highly targeted to help ensure you reach the audiences with which your products, services and messages will resonate.

If you want your company or brand to be more *engaging* on Facebook, check out the tips below:

Leverage Available Tools

First of all, make sure your Facebook page is verified! It's easy to do, and adds credibility.

Once verified, take advantage of Facebook Insights. This tool will allow you to segment your audiences and more effectively tailor your messages. It can also help to guide the quantity and timing of your posts. One thing to keep in mind: more posts don't necessarily equate to higher engagement. Posting 3-4 times per week is often adequate and will help to avoid audience "fatigue."

You can also use Facebook groups to fine tune your messages. People who join Facebook groups have more than a passing interest in a particular topic and are more likely to be responsive to messaging specifically tailored for that subject.

Of course, once you have your messaging and strategy planned, test it out for a couple of weeks. If the results aren't where you want them, rethink your approach and try again. That's the beauty of social media. If at first you don't succeed...

Use High-Quality Content and Visuals

The internet is so saturated with content these days that audiences have pretty high expectations when it comes to the quality of the content that they interact with online. To encourage repeat visits to your company or brand page, make sure your posts are conversational, relevant and add something of value to your audience. Think about what visitors to your page might want to hear rather than focusing only on what you want to say.

It's also important to use crisp (non-pixelated) images along with high definition (HD) video, whenever possible. Facebook's data shows that people scrolling through the News Feed on their mobile devices spend a mere 1.7 seconds viewing any one item. So, make sure your visuals are eye-catching and will grab your audience's attention. Candid images or images showing products in use usually garner more interest than static product shots.

Videos get the best engagement on Facebook and hold the viewer's attention even longer than images do. To take advantage of this trend, consider editing and repurposing older video content into a new video – or even using still images to develop a PowerPoint-style slide show.

If creating or repurposing videos isn't feasible, try using Facebook Stories. Audiences understand that videos for Facebook Stories are usually taken with a phone and, therefore, aren't expecting 1080p quality.

Be Social

Don't forget that Facebook is a *social* network. So be social! If you produce passive content, then your audience will passively engage with your brand. Show an active interest in visitors to your page. Ask a question within a post or include a poll. After all, people turn to social media for community, not ads. So, don't just try to sell to them. Make them laugh, smile, think, or improve their lives in some way. They'll remember your page and likely return.

And, finally, it's important to always apply the same etiquette you use in daily conversation: keep posts on the shorter side, be thoughtful, "listen" and respond promptly when someone asks you a question.

If you apply these concepts, you can be on your way to having the most *likeable* brand around.

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