

The meteoric ascent of the Internet over the past 15 years has changed the ways in which organizations can now reach their intended audience.

Social media on the Internet has become a standard for consumers communicating and interacting with businesses online. However, it's not limited to businesses - Catholic churches, schools, missions and organizations can leverage social media to expand their membership.

Social media can be defined as web-based communities, or online networks of like-minded individuals. Social media allows individuals to express their views. An important

Each time an action is completed on Facebook, it is added to the news feed of the Facebook Administration page, a default page which displays when a person logs into their Facebook account. Individuals who befriend your organization's Facebook profile, or who are members of your organization's group, are notified when a new picture, video, or post is added on Facebook.

The key to generating interest and creating targeted traffic for your website on Facebook is simple. Keep it fun. Facebook users are looking for entertainment as well as an opportunity to socialize. Selecting



while simultaneously giving new Facebook friends something interesting to read. Be sure to always include a link to your website to pull in interested parties. Use your status box to get the word out about new

about•face

point, because people are much more likely to trust someone's opinion (even a stranger's) than traditional media such as advertising. Among social networking websites, Facebook has fast become the leader, with over 350 million users worldwide.

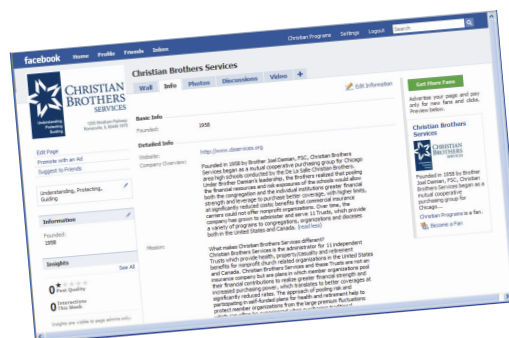
Given the opportunity to reach larger numbers of people, many organizations mistakenly rely on a Facebook presence alone, in place of a website. Yet, too few organizations see measurable growth using Facebook as their sole internet presence. The ideal choice is not one of a Facebook presence versus a professionally designed website for your organization, but of using Facebook and its tools to direct targeted traffic to your organization's website.

the right keywords when submitting a headline, story or blog post is important in this regard. Be creative with word choices while remaining aware that some of what is posted to Facebook via groups, blogs and posts can be viewed by search engines.

Generating interest for your organization's website among Facebook users will require you to reach out. Creating an event or sponsoring a contest can help promote your organization

products, services or ideas featured on your website. Provide direct links to your website, share photos and get conversations going. Each Facebook friend has a wall where you can post a quick message, comment or ask a question. You can also use the e-mail option on Facebook to communicate with friends of your organization.

Facebook offers a valuable tool with its RSS feed feature (Really Simple Syndication.) Individuals can add RSS feeds from websites, blogs, or news articles on your website to their RSS feed list. Notes and posts can be added manually or imported automatically. Facebook users can also purchase small advertisements which include up to 135



text characters and one small image. Advertisers can tailor their ad to target certain criteria - by age, gender, location, even those who share the same birthday! One can set a daily budget (minimum \$1) until the ad is exhausted by user clicks (a pay per click system.) Advertisers can also bid on ad placement and frequency. Use ads to promote a website redesign, an organization event, a contest – an affordable way to point targeted traffic back to your organization’s website.

To date, Facebook offers no way in which to measure or gauge web

traffic, hits or unique visitors. Apart from Facebook, we provide our website services customers with clear, easy to read reports which accurately measure traffic coming to your website from Facebook. A word of caution: Facebook friends and members will quickly tire of being blasted with press releases and notifications. Finding a balance between promoting your organization and meeting the daily social demands of Facebook is the key to successfully pointing traffic to your organization’s website. For more information on how to use Facebook to drive traffic to your organization’s

website, or for assistance with setting up a website for your Catholic organization, call 800.807.0200 or visit cbprograms.com.

Joe Zeirman is a digital designer in Design & Development for Information & Technology Services at Christian Brothers Services and CB Programs, Inc.

Our Design & Development team creates useful, modern and graphically appealing websites that allow members to have a web presence while also reducing administrative costs.

This article first appeared in OutReach, a Christian Brothers Services publication. Vol. 1, No. 1, 2010.
Reprinted with permission from Christian Brothers Services. All rights reserved.



CHRISTIAN
BROTHERS
SERVICES

1205 Windham Parkway
Romeoville, IL 60446
800.807.0100 cbservices.org

Health / Retirement

Property / Casualty

Consulting / Technology