



Course Summary and Action Points

Facebook as a Free Marketing Tool

Note: An AI colleague produced this summary of the course 😊

Facebook as a Free Marketing Tool

This week focused on using Facebook for marketing, with a plan to cover Instagram in the following week. The key areas covered were:

1. Facebook Fundamentals

- **Personal vs. Business:** You join Facebook as a person, not a business. People have **profiles**, while businesses have **pages**. This terminology is crucial.
- **Profiles:** When you join, you get a personal profile and a feed. Your profile contains personal information and a record of things you've posted as an individual. You connect with people by sending friend requests, and they become your "friends" or, more recently, "followers".
- **The Feed:** This is where you spend over 90% of your time on Facebook. It is **not in chronological order**.
- **The Algorithm (AI):** Facebook's AI determines what appears in your feed. It analyses your interests based on what you search for, what content you engage with, which videos you watch to the end, and what you share. The AI also learns which of your friends you are most interested in and prioritises their content in your feed. The goal is to keep your feed interesting so you see more ads.

2. Setting Up a Facebook Business Page

- **Creation:** To use Facebook for business, you must first be logged in with your personal profile and then create a Page. The process involves adding your business name, category, and a description. It is important to fill in all contact details like web address and email to make it easy for customers to reach you.
- **Branding:** You should customise your page by adding a profile picture (usually your logo) and an eye-catching cover photo that sets the tone for your business.
- **Connecting WhatsApp:** You can connect a **Business WhatsApp account** to your page, which requires a separate phone number from your personal WhatsApp. This adds a button for customers to message you directly.
- **Inviting Friends:** It is advised to **wait until your page is fully set up** and has some content before inviting your friends to follow it.

3. Navigating and Managing Your Page

- **Switching Profiles:** You can switch between using Facebook as your personal profile and using it as one of your business pages. This allows you to follow, like, comment, and share content as your business, which is a useful marketing tactic for getting on the radar of other businesses.
- **Key Settings:**
 - **Linked Accounts:** In your page settings, you can link your Instagram and WhatsApp accounts. Linking Instagram allows you to post simultaneously to both platforms from certain apps.
 - **Page Access (Admins):** It is **highly recommended to add a trusted person as an admin** with "full control" of your page. This acts as a safety net in case your personal Facebook account gets hacked and you lose access to your page. For employees or less trusted individuals, you can grant "task access," which provides limited permissions.

4. Content Strategy: What to Post

- **The Goal:** The aim is to post content that is interesting enough to make people follow your page and engage with your future posts. High engagement signals to the Facebook algorithm that your content is interesting, which in turn leads to greater reach among your followers.
- **The 80/20 Rule:** A good general ratio is **80% interesting, helpful, and informative content** and **20% hard-selling or promotional content**. Repetitive, salesy posts can become boring and cause followers to disengage.
- **The Business Spectrum:** The ideal content mix depends on your business type.
 - **Visually Interesting Businesses** (e.g., boutiques, florists, artists) can be more salesy (90-95%) because their products are visually appealing and related to people's passions.
 - **Service-Based Businesses** (e.g., accountants, coaches, marketing agencies) must focus on the 80/20 rule, providing valuable tips and advice to demonstrate their expertise and bring their service to life, as its quality isn't immediately visible.
- **Developing a Posting Plan:** Creating a plan with 7-8 different topics ensures variety in your content, which keeps your feed fresh for followers and presents an interesting page for new visitors.

5. How to Post on Desktop and Mobile

- **Post Formats:** The course covered posting single images, multiple images, links to a website, and videos/reels.
- **Image Sizing:** For single-image posts, **using a 4x5 aspect ratio is recommended**. This size takes up more screen space, especially on mobile, grabbing more attention than smaller landscape images. You can easily create 4x5 images in Canva.
- **Adding Text to Images:** Whether to add text to an image depends on your business. Service-based businesses should add text to quickly convey the topic of a tip or offer, while visually-driven businesses might find text detracts from the product's beauty.
- **Multiple-Image Posts:** This format is highly effective as it is visually interesting and tends to get more engagement and reach because users interacting with the images signals interest to the algorithm.
- **Posting Website Links:** Instead of just pasting a link (which can result in a small, unappealing preview image), the recommended method is to **first upload an eye-catching 4x5 image**,

video, or multiple images, then write your text, and finally, add the link. This ensures the post is visually impactful and more effective at driving traffic.

- **Videos and Reels:** All videos uploaded to Facebook are now classified as **Reels**. For best results, videos should be **short and in portrait format**, as the algorithm prioritises this style.

6. Facebook and Meta Business Suite Apps

- **Facebook App:** Functions very similarly to the desktop version, allowing you to switch between personal and page profiles and create posts. The mobile app offers more creative options than the basic desktop interface, including post scheduling.
- **Meta Business Suite App:** A dedicated app for managing your business pages.
 - It keeps your business activities separate from your personal Facebook feed.
 - It allows you to **post and schedule content to both Facebook and Instagram simultaneously**, saving a significant amount of time.
 - It provides a unified inbox for all messages and comments from both platforms.
- **Meta Business Suite (Desktop):** This is the desktop equivalent of the app and is the most sophisticated way to manage your page on a computer. It offers scheduling, cross-posting to Instagram, a unified inbox, and detailed analytics on when your followers are most active ("Active Times").

7. Increasing Your Reach

- **Organic Reach Decline:** The percentage of followers who see a page's posts (organic reach) has declined significantly over the years because of increased competition and algorithm changes designed to prioritise content from friends and new, interesting accounts.
 - **Encourage "Favorites":** You can ask your followers to "favourite" your page. This ensures they will see all your future posts, bypassing the algorithm's filter. This is a good tactic to increase visibility among your most loyal followers.
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List of Actions for Participants

1. **Create a Test Page:** Set up a trial Facebook page with a fictional name to practise the techniques learned in the course without affecting your actual business page. You can delete it later.
2. **Add a Trusted Admin:** Make a trusted person an admin with "full control" of your business page to act as a safety net in case you get hacked and locked out of your account.
3. **Link Your Instagram Account:** Go to your Facebook Page settings on a desktop, find "Linked Accounts," and connect your Instagram profile. This is essential for using Meta Business Suite effectively.
4. **Develop a Content Posting Plan:**
 - Research 4-5 competitors on Facebook (including some from outside Ireland) to identify the topics they post about and which formats (e.g., reels, multiple images) get the most engagement.
 - Use an AI tool like ChatGPT to brainstorm an additional 20 interesting post ideas that are helpful but also allow you to sell.
 - Combine this research into a posting plan with 7-8 core topics to ensure variety.
5. **Optimise Your Image Posts:**
 - Use Canva to create images in a **4x5 aspect ratio** ("Instagram Post 4x5") to maximise their size and impact in the feed.
 - If you have a service-based business, add clear, attention-grabbing text to your images to summarise the content.
6. **Adopt the Best Practice for Posting Links:** When driving traffic to your website, always upload a large 4x5 image or video first, write your descriptive text, and paste the link last.
7. **Install and Use Meta Business Suite:**
 - Download the **Meta Business Suite** app to your phone.
 - Use it to schedule posts and save time by posting to Facebook and Instagram simultaneously.
 - Use the desktop version of Meta Business Suite to check the "Active Times" feature to find the best times to post for your specific audience.
8. **Encourage Followers to Favourite Your Page:** Create a post explaining to your followers how to "favourite" your page so they don't miss your content, which will help increase your overall reach.