



Week 4 – Facebook Marketing

Delivered by Evan Mangan on behalf of the Local Enterprise Office Kerry

This course represented the fourth week of a six-session Digital Marketing Program. Evan began the session by establishing that the focus would be specifically on using Facebook as a free marketing tool, while also touching on principles that apply to Instagram and TikTok.

The Fundamentals of Facebook for Business

Evan initiated the training by clarifying the distinction between personal and professional presences on the platform. He explained that users join Facebook as people with **profiles**, whereas businesses operate through **pages**. Evan stressed that people primarily use Facebook to see what their friends are posting, which is a critical piece of context for any business trying to enter that space.

For those without an existing business presence, Evan demonstrated the process of creating a page. He noted that a business page is created while logged into a personal account, but the two remain separate; followers of a business page do not see the personal profile of the creator, and personal friends do not automatically see business posts unless the creator chooses to share them manually. Evan recommended that participants fully brand their pages with a logo and a high-quality cover photo, and emphasized the importance of filling in contact details like web addresses and phone numbers, as the page serves as a marketing tool rather than a private space.

Security and Management

A significant portion of the fundamentals focused on security. Evan warned that many business owners lose access to their pages because their personal profiles are hacked. He explained that if a personal profile is the sole admin of a business page and is compromised, the page may be lost forever. To mitigate this, Evan strongly advised participants to add a trusted second person as an **admin with full Facebook Access** to serve as an emergency backup. He also clarified the difference between "Facebook Access" (full control) and "Task

Access" (limited to specific actions like posting), recommending the latter for employees or external contractors.

Understanding the Facebook Algorithm

Evan provided a deep dive into how the Facebook algorithm functions, which he described as having two primary jobs. The first is to **micro-analyse users** to determine their interests based on their search history, private shares, saved items, and video "dwell time". The second is to **evaluate every piece of content** sent out by pages.

Evan explained that when a post is published, the AI shows it to a small sample of followers to gauge their reaction. If users engage—meaning they watch more than three seconds of a video, like, comment, share, or save the post—the AI interprets the content as interesting and expands its reach. Conversely, if there is no engagement, the reach is restricted. Evan was blunt in stating that Facebook feels no obligation to show a business's content to its followers; instead, it views followers as its own "users" and treats boring business content as a liability to the platform's appeal.

What to Post: The Business Spectrum

Evan introduced a strategic framework for content creation based on where a business falls on a "visual-to-service" spectrum.

- **Visually Interesting Products:** Businesses like boutiques, florists, and antique shops sit at one end. Evan noted that these businesses have it easier because their products are inherently interesting to look at. He suggested they can be sales-focused 90% of the time because their audience is often passionate about the items and finds the photos/videos themselves to be "content".
- **Service-Based Businesses:** Accountants, coaches, and consultants sit at the other end. Evan stated that these businesses cannot simply "flog" their services. They must follow an **80/20 rule**: 80% of content should be helpful, informative, or interesting tips that bring their expertise to life, and only 20% should be direct selling. Evan argued that for a coach or consultant, "selling" actually happens by demonstrating expertise through video tips, which builds trust and reputation.

Content Research and AI Brainstorming

To develop a consistent posting plan, Evan recommended identifying 8 to 10 recurring topics. He suggested two methods for this. First, he demonstrated how to conduct **competitor research** by searching for similar, established businesses (even those abroad) and noting which topics they post about and which formats (reels, images) receive the most engagement. Second, Evan showed how to use **AI tools like ChatGPT** to brainstorm content ideas. He explained that by giving the AI context—such as "act like a Facebook marketing expert for a ladies' boutique in Killarney"—it can generate creative ideas that the business owner can then evaluate against their research.

The Mechanics of High-Engagement Posting

Evan shared several technical tips to ensure posts stand out in the mobile feed:

- **Image Aspect Ratio:** Evan emphasized using a **4x5 aspect ratio** (portrait) for images. He explained that landscape images are too small and easily overlooked, whereas a 4x5 image dominates the mobile screen. He demonstrated how to use **Canva** to crop photos to this specific size.
- **Multiple Images:** Evan noted that posts with multiple images often reach more people because the act of swiping through them is tracked as engagement by the algorithm.
- **Linking to Websites:** Evan warned against simply pasting a link into a post, as it often pulls in a low-quality or poorly cropped preview. Instead, he advised uploading a high-quality 4x5 image first, then adding the text and the link. This allows the business to remain in full control of the visual presentation while still driving traffic to the site.
- **Reels:** Evan described Reels as the most pushed format on Facebook and Instagram because users engage with them more than anything else. He suggested keeping visual reels (like showing products) very short (15-20 seconds) to ensure high completion rates, while information-heavy reels could go up to 60 seconds.

Meta Business Suite

For participants wanting to manage Facebook and Instagram more efficiently, Evan recommended the **Meta Business Suite** app and desktop tool. He explained that this tool allows users to:

1. Post to both Facebook and Instagram simultaneously.
2. **Tailor text** for each platform—specifically, keeping links in Facebook captions (where they work) but removing them from Instagram captions (where they don't) and directing users to the "link in bio" instead.
3. Manage all private messages and comments from both platforms in one **centralized inbox**.
4. View "Active Times" to see when their specific followers are most likely to be online and engage with content.

Timing and Strategy

Evan concluded by discussing the best times to post. He explained that for service-based businesses where content requires an "investment of time" (like watching a 60-second tip), posting in the evening when people are relaxed is often more effective. However, for visually striking products that can be "liked" in a second, the timing is less restrictive. Evan finished the course by reiterating that while Facebook reach has declined to around 10% for many businesses, it remains a powerful tool when combined with Instagram and a strategy focused on being genuinely interesting to the target audience.

Action Point List for Participants

- **Audit Page Security:** Add a trusted second person as an admin with full "Facebook Access" to your page to ensure you are never locked out due to a personal profile hack.
- **Optimize Visuals for Mobile:** Stop posting landscape-oriented images. Use **Canva** to crop all future post images to a **4x5 portrait aspect ratio** to maximize your visibility in the mobile feed.
- **Establish Your Topic List:** Identify 8 to 10 core topics for your business. Use a mix of competitor research on Facebook and AI brainstorming (ChatGPT) to finalize this list.
- **Implement the 80/20 Rule:** If you are a service-based business, ensure 80% of your posts provide value (tips, expertise, advice) and only 20% are direct sales pitches.
- **Master Link Posting:** When driving traffic to your website, upload a custom, eye-catching 4x5 image **before** pasting your link into the text box to avoid poor-quality automatic previews.
- **Adopt Meta Business Suite:** Download the app to manage your Facebook and Instagram in one place. Use the "centralized inbox" to ensure no customer comments or messages are missed.
- **Tailor for Instagram:** When cross-posting from Meta Business Suite, remove links from the Instagram caption and replace them with a "link in profile/bio" call to action, as links are not clickable in Instagram captions.
- **Experiment with Reels:** Create short (15-60 second) portrait-mode videos. For quick visual content, use templates in apps like **CapCut** to turn existing photos into engaging video content.
- **Check "Active Times":** Use the scheduling tool in Meta Business Suite to post at the recommended times when your specific audience is most active.

This was created with the help of one of our AI colleagues 😊