

# FaceBook bridges the digital divide



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FaceBook is rapidly becoming one of the most influential online platforms. Having started its life as a modest photo-sharing service for university friends, it has developed beyond a personal community network into a mainstream business tool.

An ideal and cost-effective medium for informal conversation and discussion, FaceBook is the perfect place to focus promotional campaigns that lend themselves to online community or group participation. Businesses in the consumer space will probably benefit most from the community connection capability, but there is definitely potential for B2B brands to achieve value from a FaceBook presence.

You can create custom landing tabs within your FaceBook page, which can be fully branded and customised to suit your specific promotional needs. Tabs can be configured as your default landing page, effectively making it an entry homepage for your FaceBook profile, as we have recently done for the National Contemporary Art Award ([www.facebook.com/NatConArtAward](http://www.facebook.com/NatConArtAward)). In this case, we are also using it to capture email addresses for related marketing activities. But please remember when setting up your own FaceBook presence; profiles are for individuals and pages are for businesses and brands.

FaceBook supports the proposition that personal recommendations by friends and people we trust are a powerful influencing factor. By allowing a seamless connection between FaceBook pages, followers or 'Likes' and websites, FaceBook is enabling a rich cross-flow of personalised information.

FaceBook page customisation now allows you to aggregate the 'Likes' for images, videos, and web pages into a single view within your own website. You can also add filters to see what your network of followers like or recommend, adding a neat touch of personalisation to your website. Levi Strauss is one of the market leaders in connecting its fans and their networks with the Levi Strauss product range through its 'Friends Store' (see <http://store.levi.com/#store/friends>).

Today, FaceBook has 400 million global users, with over 1 million active users in New Zealand. It's impossible to ignore its influence on society in general and business in particular. With the fastest growing demographic in the 35 years-plus category and the option to target 'paid for' advertising by area, age and sex, FaceBook is a must-have for today's forward-thinking marketer.

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