

Why You Should Read This E-Book

Tour, Activity, and Package Operators should read this to understand:

1. Why You Need Facebook Marketing

Facebook is here to stay. Even with all the turmoil around it, Facebook still retains a bulk of its audience- an audience which keeps coming back for more.

2. How should you use Facebook Marketing?

We will share practical, usable, and everyday tips on how to use Facebook to your advantage- to build your audience and get actionable leads and business from the platform.

3. How to become an advanced user

We will point out clear paths for you to take in order to boost your business's Facebook Marketing to the next level.

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Why Vacation Labs

We are a technology company on a quest to revolutionise the travel industry.

We meet travel operators everyday, throughout the world. Most of them have mutual pain points- forever struggling with software, trying to make technology work for them, and not the other way around.

Our quest is to make software & technology accessible. We want to make it so easy, that you never have to look up a developer, designer, or marketer in your life.

That's our mission!



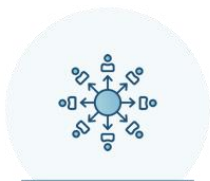
Website Builder



Bookings & Payments



Management System



Distribution system



Mobile App



Dedicated Support

VISIT OUR WEBSITE →

Chapter 1: The Basics

Why Facebook Marketing



Facebook had 2.2 billion active users in the last quarter of 2017. That's nearly one-third of the world population. That is one of every 3 people in your city, target market, or your customer base. Let that sink in for a moment.

Your customer is on Facebook, and you need to be in front of him, or there is very little chance he is going to buy from you.

Here are 5 reasons being on Facebook helps:

1. **Reach:** Over a billion people visit the Facebook platform on an average of 8 times a day. That's 8 billion opportunities for you to remind a potential client to buy from you. Short of Google, this is the largest reach you can find for yourself.
2. **Outcome based marketing:** You can actually measure the outcome of your advertising/ posts, etc. The number of views, clicks, and conversions

are tracked. Unlike, say, a marketing hoarding near the airport, which is priced offensively high.

3. **Cheap, effective:** Facebook is, in essence, free. You can actually do a great job getting leads and business from Facebook without ever having to spend a penny. Even when spending, this channel can be extremely cost effective.
4. **Control over your image:** Unlike an aggregator/ review platform, Facebook actually gives businesses enough power to control their image, reviews, etc.
5. **Knock-on effect on Search rankings:** As search rankings go, social media (Facebook, Twitter) are given a fairly heavy leverage to impact your overall search ranking. It also helps define a good context to the search a potential client is making- chances are you will rank equally high on Facebook and Google when it comes to relevance for that particular client.

“

Social media is about the people. Not about your business. Provide for the people and the people will provide for you.

-Matt Goulart

”



Chapter 2: Getting Started

The Basics - How to Use Facebook

I am sure you have used Facebook in the past. It's a platform which lets users see what they wish to see and follow what they wish to follow. Their 'feeds' are essentially reflections of themselves, their social circles in real life, and their online acquaintances.

Sometimes, their feed is a reflection of what THEY WANT TO BE (or be perceived as) in real life. To tune your Facebook marketing according to this criteria you must understand the following:

1. **Hit the right target (mostly):** The potential customer who will read your post/ see your advertisement, is either a traveller or wishes to travel or wants to be seen as a discerning traveller. But, you will always have impressions which are of no use and you can't avoid that (only optimise it over time).
2. **Engagement rules the roost:** Facebook is very personal, so any engagement you have with a potential client will be seen by their acquaintances or online friends. So, the better the quality of engagement (comment vs. like, like vs. impression, etc.), the better the outcome of the effort.
3. **Snowball effect:** This one is more to do with quantity (while engagement is about quality). The more people that interact with your post, the more it gets featured on other people's feeds. Engagement and outcome thus follows a snowball pattern.
4. **Images are important:** Facebook is a visual platform. So if you post videos and great photos on the platform, your post will do better than, say, putting plain texts with links. Pick your images carefully and deliver your message in a few, short words. Maximum impact is delivered in the sharpest punches!

5. **Quality over quantity:** While quantity definitely has a strong impact on the final outcome of your Facebook marketing strategy, quality trumps quantity every single day. What this means for you is, one quality post is worth 5 posts with lower quality, but probably not 100 (unless they are really poor posts). So, try to improve your content in every post. Read what other people are doing, try to use the best practices, and avoid what is not working. Experiment!
6. **Cultural dos and don'ts:** There might be certain things which you can do on your personal Facebook profile but probably not on your business one. Remember that your business profile needs to be professional, so don't mix the two profiles and their posts. Keep these separate. Other things like the language you use, the sensibilities of your international audience, and the things you say reflect strongly on your business. So be aware of misusing the platform!



Chapter 3: How to go about it

How to start things up on Facebook

Content curated by [Bonny Philip](#)

#1 First things first:

If a tour operator comes up to us and says that he still doesn't have a Facebook business page, here is our standard reaction – What? Why?

In today's world of online & social travel, a strong Facebook marketing strategy is a must, and a well-maintained and active Facebook business page is just the starting point.

While we are pretty sure that most of you already have a Facebook page, for the sake of completeness, we will start with the basics – best practices for setting up your account on Facebook. And you never know, you might figure out something important that you would have missed out earlier.

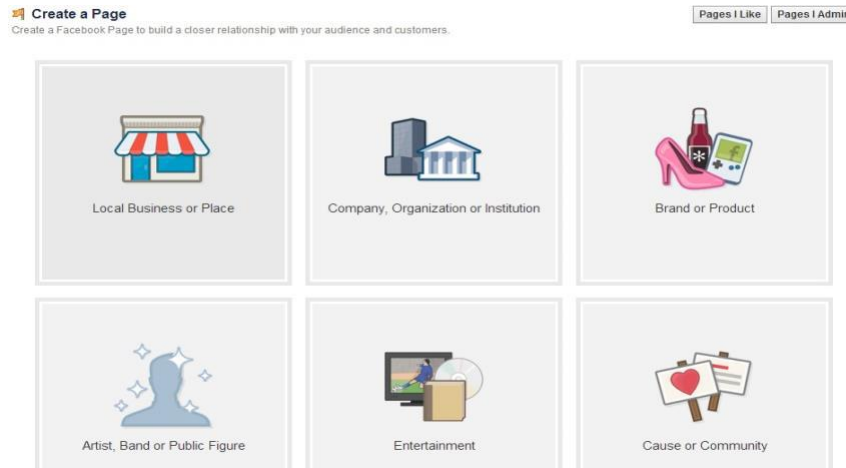
Our later sections in this e-book will deal with more exciting stuff like building your audience & growing your likes, advertising and remarketing for higher bookings through your online travel agency software.

So, here are step-by-step instructions for setting up your Facebook business page for tour marketing:

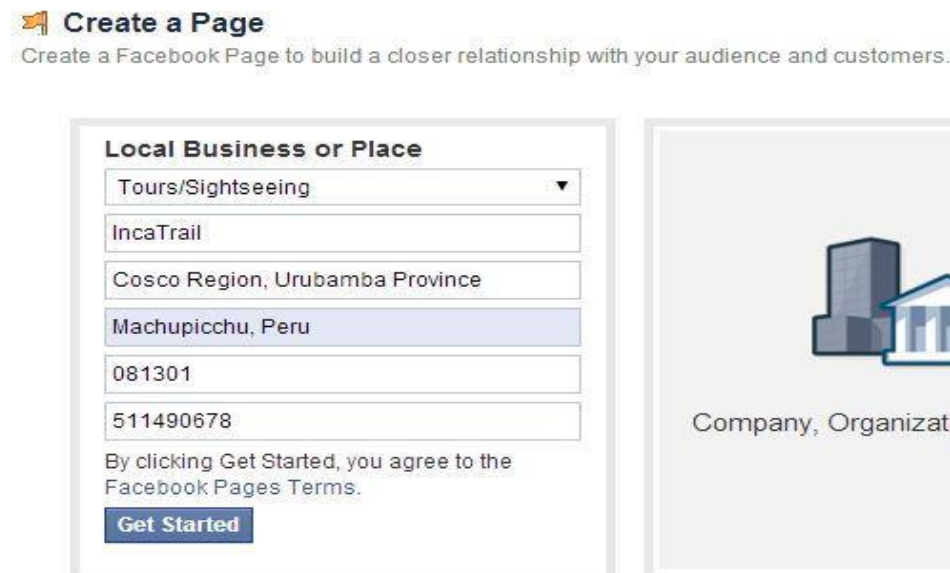
Step 1: Naturally, you will need a Facebook account first. Presuming that you have one, (if not, where have you been? Create one right now) visit your Home page, scroll down and to the left you will find the link 'Create Page'. You can also find this link at the bottom of your Facebook sign up page.

Step 2: Next, you have six page-types to choose from. In this way your page appears in relevant searches. Also, each type varies slightly in the information requested during setup and in the features offered on the page.

This can be a bit dicey. You need to think of how you would want your tour business to be represented to the customer. 'Local business or place' is a viable option when your business requires physical visits. You can also show reviews, open hours, location, etc. which are not available for other types. Consequently, as a local tour operator this would be the preferred choice. If your business is dispersed across multiple locations then 'Company, Organization or Institution' is a safe bet. But don't worry. The page type can be changed later if needed. However, try getting it right on the first go.



For the sake of demonstration, here’s how a page for a local tour in Machu Picchu, Peru gets created (Disclaimer: Any resemblance to real pages, living or dead, is purely coincidental). Select ‘Local business or place’. Choose the category as ‘Tours/Sightseeing’ and then enter your address details accurately.



Step 3: The ‘About’ section has to be given a good deal of thought to help improve your page’s ranking and thus the effectiveness of your Facebook marketing.

- Select categories (keep in mind, these are your subcategories) relevant to your page.
- Give a brief description that will pique visitor’s interest and essentially drive traffic to your page. You can make changes to your description after your page has been set up.
- Enter the address to your tour booking platform and a Facebook address that will be easy for people to remember and associate with your tour brand.

1 About 2 Profile Picture 3 Add to Favorites 4 Reach More People

Add categories, a description and a website to improve the ranking of your Page in search. Fields marked by asterisks (*) are required.

Tour Company* | Tours & Sightseeing*

Click a specific category:

Cruise Excursions | Eco Tours | Rental Shop | Tour Guide | Tourist Information

Add a few sentences to tell people what your Page is about. This will help it show up in the right search results. You will be able to add more details later from your Page settings.

Immerse yourself in the ancient Inca civilization, tread the Inca trails, learn of Inca folklore & culture, and explore the enigmatic city of Machu Picchu!

http://incatrail.com

Choose a unique Facebook web address to make it easier for people to find your Page. Once this is set, it can only be changed once.

http://www.facebook.com/incatrail

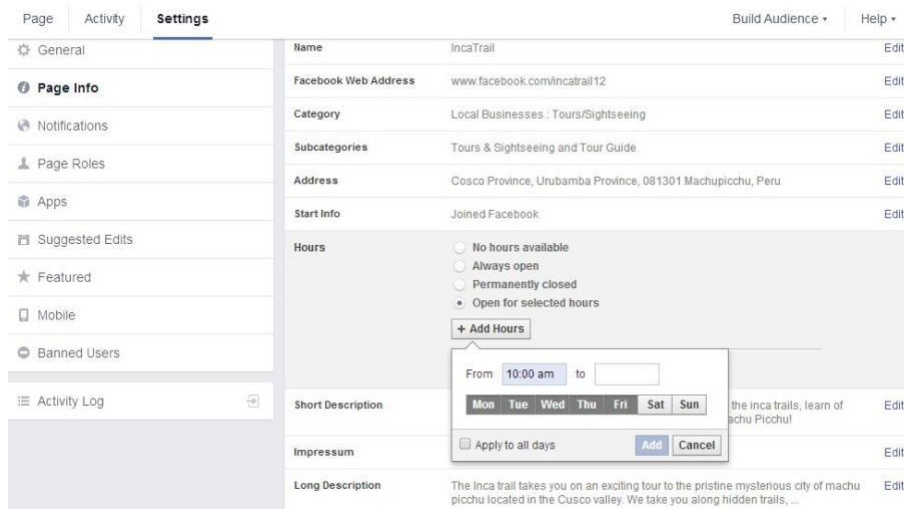
Step 4: Upload your profile picture. Pay attention to the size (i.e. 180×180). This image should be the logo or brand image of your business, similar to the one on your tour booking platform. Wherever you comment or post, this image will faithfully appear next to it. ‘Reach more people’ section, digresses into paid advertising. Let’s skip it for now.

And voila! Your page appears. Doesn’t look all that glamorous as you imagined? That’s because there’s still some more work left to do.

Step 5: You will observe that your ‘About’ section appears to the left of your timeline, and there is a separate tab ‘About’ below your cover photo as well. Let’s tackle this section first. Fully exploit this space. Attack every feature on offer and use them to your advantage. This is your chance to let your targets get to know more about you and help build an air of credibility.

Handy Facebook Business Page Features You Can Start Working On

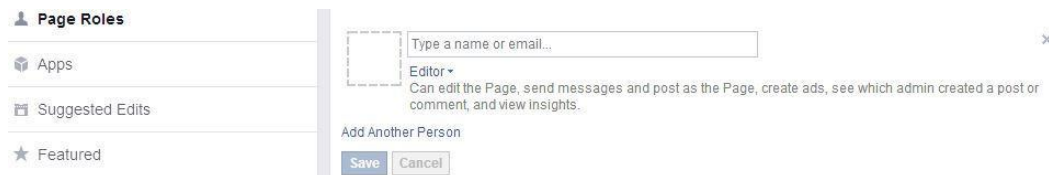
Check out *Page Info* under *Settings*. You can put in a well written long description in addition to the short description, detailing the highlights of your tour. Make both of these descriptions stand out. Visitors click on ‘About’ to get to know more about you. So, put in as much interesting information in there. You can also boost your Facebook marketing strategy by putting in open hours, an email id, and get yourself plotted on the map to help targets spot you.



Facebook gives you an accurate online map (derives from the address you gave during setup) to show your location. You can adjust the pin, give more directions, or make changes to the address.

If you have second thoughts about your page type, go to Category. Here, you can change both, page type as well as the main category of your page. As for Subcategories, ignore at your peril! It appears on your timeline, on the cover photo below the tour name, in full view. So double check both Category and Subcategories to make sure they are exactly as they should be. Under Featured if you want you can also show the founders.

Use Page Roles to add persons and roles like editor, moderator or an admin other than yourself.



Step 6: Once you are done with Settings, select a really nice cover photo to make your page attractive and capture attention. The more tempting your cover photo looks, the better. Get your creative best with both, profile picture and cover photo. That’s it! You are all set to begin your tour marketing on Facebook.



#2 Building and Engaging Audiences

The next step is to start building your audience and keeping them engaged. Here are some simple steps to help you do just that.

Your aim undoubtedly is to drive traffic to your Facebook business page and eventually to your business. Click on Build Audience, upper left on your admin page, to import contacts from your existing accounts and invite your Facebook friends to come visit. Increasing your likes is, of course, a nice goal to have but the main focus should be to tap into that set of people with travelling interests. You may be able to generate a good amount of likes but the odds are that a sizeable number of those visitors are not really interested in your tour or worse still, hate travelling. You are then fighting a losing battle!

Start out by building brand advocates, mainly clients who have already experienced your incredible tours, probably by booking through your holiday system. You can use the review feature on your page. Get clients to post their reviews and ratings as part of your tour social media marketing. Send emails requesting them to do so. You should look to increase and improve your ratings more than ever since prospective travellers have come to rely significantly on online reviews. Reviews by fellow tourists can make or break travel plans.



You could also provide a link to your Facebook page on your website. Allow people to share, like, post or comment from your website. Facebook has quite a few plugins you could use for this.

And How Do I Keep My Audience Engaged?

This is perhaps the most important question. Targeted activity (posts, events etc.) not just helps in keeping the existing followers interested, it also helps in building new ones.

Let's put your Facebook business page activities into 2 broad buckets:

1. Timeline posts
2. Events, contests, quizzes, sweepstakes, deals, offers etc.

Let us discuss both.

What Should I Post?

The first thing is to know who your audience is. Once you know that, your goal is to post stuff that they are interested in, something that will keep them engaged.

While posting images of your tour is a no-brainer, you can still spice it up. Your tour marketing imagery should give your audience a virtual experience. Post enticing photos of locations, scenery, buildings, trails, eateries and everything else on your tour. You could add historical tidbits or fascinating facts along with these images. Throw in a few interesting well-made videos of what your clients have to say about you, funny incidents, or experiences.

While this is the very least that you must do, you can also engage your audience in much more ways. Here are some examples:

- If you are a scuba diving operator, your audience (people who would want to follow your page) is most likely diving enthusiasts. Apart from regular photos of your dives, you can engage your followers by posting useful & interesting information about diving, best dive sites in the world and so on.
- Similarly, if you offer cooking classes, regular posting of interesting recipes and information about world cuisine are some good starting points.

Here are some other cool tips for your tour social media marketing:

- Make sure that there are enough photos out there of happy waving customers. Better still, tag them to get yourself a couple of brand advocates. You could also share some of the posts or pictures posted by clients.
- Why not post photos of your tour guides and tell your Facebook audience a little about them? It creates a sense of familiarity and is an opportunity

for you to let potential clients know that they are in safe hands. You could use a gist of the info already up on your tour booking platform.

- Cross-promote other related businesses associated with you, in your neighbourhood. Show some love. It will go a long way in helping you connect with each other's audiences and grow together.
- If you plan to hold any special tour or fixed departures, then post it as events. Also, don't fail to use your milestone feature. Completed ten years of successfully running your tour? Post it.

A Facebook business page also allows you to create custom tabs. This helps users know the kind of content you have and helps the user navigate your page easily. Visit [developers'](#) page to get started.



What About Events, Contests, Deals & Offers?

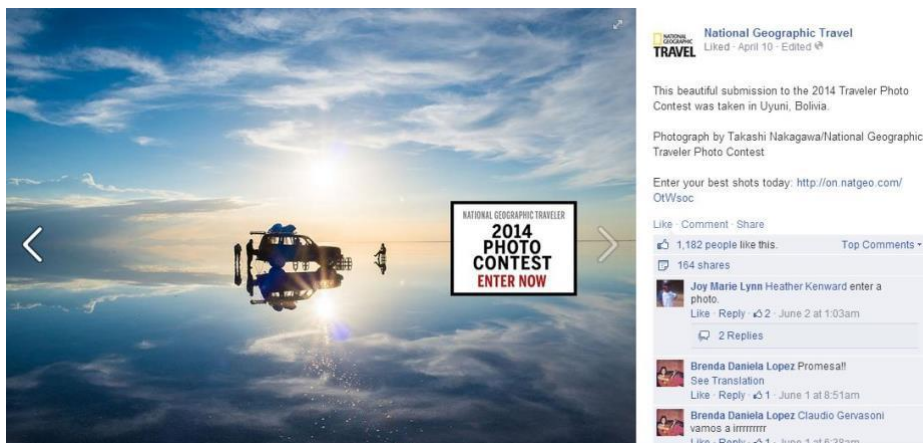
These will be less frequent than your timeline posts and should be aimed at building excitement and participation on your page as well as tour booking platform.

There are a number of things that you could do – contests, special deals and offers, sweepstakes, etc. Here are some nice case studies of businesses using events on their Facebook page.

Lay's (the wafers brand) in its attempt to crowdsource a new flavour, started an extensive campaign, encouraging people to submit their flavour ideas to win a whopping \$1 million prize money. Four flavours were selected and made available at retail stores, after which the public votes for them. The last time this contest was conducted, votes were registered on the Facebook page and comments on the flavours were encouraged. The finalists also took to Facebook to reach out to their friends and contacts. Lay's thus effectively used their Facebook business page and gained the personal connections of contestants. Social media marketing at its best!



The Traveller photo contest also saw some amazing entries, all of which are posted on Facebook. National Geographic travel with two million likes, looks to expand its popularity through this contest and encourages people to rate photos, based on which the viewer’s choice winner will be decided.



Page Yourself has a few interesting apps to put up quizzes, deals, etc. on your Facebook page. You can check it out for ideas for your own tour marketing. And, for the management of all the tour bookings that come in through this channel, you can use the Vacation Labs booking engine.

#3. Maintaining a Facebook Page

Once you cross the first hurdles of launching your tour business Facebook page, building an audience and getting some decent number of likes, the next step is to figure out how to maintain that momentum and cast your net wider.

1. Be active and responsive

This is perhaps the simplest and the easiest thing to get right when doing social media marketing. Respond to all comments without fail and delay. Queries and concerns about your tours, praise, complaints, address them all, pronto.

So, when your customers ask you a few questions or have a couple of opinions thrown up for discussion, be quick to respond. Make sure you do not overlook comments. Another matter of concern is how you respond. Needless to say, that you must be courteous, calm and respectful no matter how heated a discussion gets. Remember your page is public and the world is watching.

Here's an interesting interaction on the Starbucks page. Notice the speedy replies from Starbucks.

Carol Adkins I love stark bucks but won't buy it as they won't support our troops !! Ouch
Like · Reply · 5 · April 8 at 5:04am

Starbucks Hello Carol Adkins. Please know that we do support the troops, despite false rumors to the contrary. But thank you for caring enough to comment. It's so important that everyone can voice their opinions and engage in meaningful debate around the issues that matter. We invite you to read more about our support for the troops and share your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions here: <http://sbux.co/Kq0fOI>.
Like · 8 · April 8 at 5:26am

Paul Graham Carol, if you still believe that old story you are gullible. That was disproven long ago.
Like · 1 · April 8 at 7:58am

View more replies

Write a reply...

Kevin Alore Screw them they won't support our Troops!
Like · Reply · 6 · April 8 at 1:10am

Starbucks Hello Kevin, this just isn't true. We absolutely support our troops - for more information on this please visit: <http://sbux.co/Kq0fOI> Thank you!
Like · 16 · April 8 at 1:20am

If you haven't received any posts on your page from travellers, get your existing ones to review the tours they booked with you. Tour booking systems like Vacation Labs help you automate this, [sign up](#) with them for free to see how this works.

2. Understand the “News Feed Algorithm” and make it work in your favour?

The news feed algorithm, a chip off the old block EdgeRank, decides exactly what appears on a user’s News Feed, by ranking posts based on certain factors. Facebook says that it uses this ranking method rather than chronological listing *‘because every time someone visits News Feed, there are, on average 1,500 potential stories from friends, people they follow and Pages for them to see and most people don’t have enough time to see them all.’* (read more about it [here](#)).

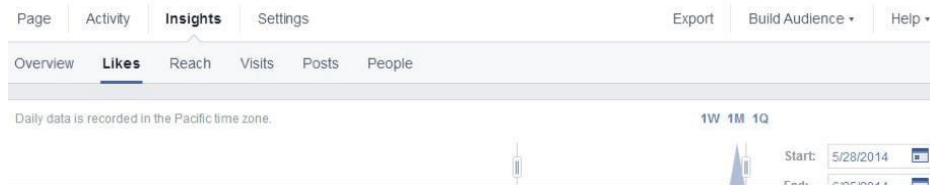
The News Feed now shows what it believes the user would be interested in, rather than just showing random posts. So, the spotlight is of course on the quality and how engaging a post is. The rather worrying bit, however, is that **your posts won’t be seen by all your page fans**. According to Facebook, only 16% of your fans see your latest stories. So, if a user likes your page, it is no guarantee that everything that happens on your page will appear in the user’s News Feed. This in a way is great for the Facebook user, but proving to be a steep climb for your social media marketing.

No, you do not need divine intervention to influence the algorithm. All you need to do is, understand a little how it works and how to tame it. Some influencing factors:

- Engagement rate of your post. How many likes, comments and shares does a post get as against the number of people who viewed the post. This clearly reiterates the fact that your content has to be engaging, exclusive and of high quality. Nothing less.
- What were the last 50 pages or people, the user interacted with? These stories will have a slight upper hand over others. So, post frequently and regularly. Don’t even think about taking a few days off. Or you lose out.
- If the user hides or reports your post as spam, then it reflects poorly against your post. The more negative the feedback the worse it gets and it significantly affects your engagement rate. Hence, spamming is a strict no. Do not even think of repeating because you don’t want to be blacklisted by your audience.
- Story bumping is another feature that influences the News Feed. Old posts that the user has missed while scrolling, but still finds quite a bit of likes and comments, can re-appear on user’s timeline. Facebook says that in case of such re-posts, there is an ‘8% increase in likes, comments and shares on such organic stories from pages’.

3. Take your page to the next level with page Insights

Facebook is not just a great tour marketing medium but also allows you to measure how well you engage and market your tours & activities. Page Insights is a goldmine of information. How many likes, views & shares for your posts, engagement rate for each post and much more.



When and How Frequently to Post

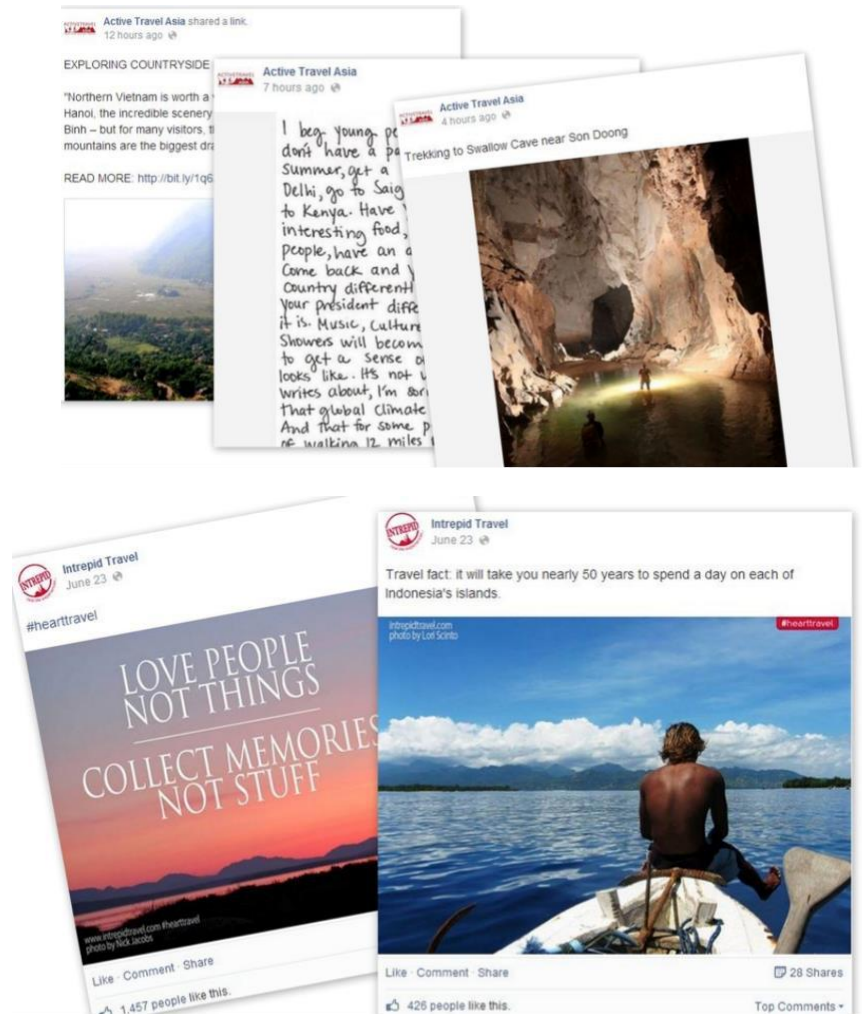
Keep up your slew of amazing posts, some of which we discussed in the last section. You must know that when you post something on your page, there is a good chance that users who are online at around the same time will see your post. So, when do you post on your tour business Facebook page? When most of your target users are online. People will naturally log into Facebook at different time frames; some during lunch break, in the evening after work, you could not be all that sure.

Your tour business Facebook page comes to the rescue here. Go to insights and then posts. 'When your fans are online' is a very handy tool that will help you pace your posts to appear at strategic intervals in a day and determine when is the best time to put up your most important post.



No re-posting and no compromising on your content quality. So, don't hesitate to start off with three to four posts a day, as and when you have great content.

Active Travel Asia almost always posts three times a day. While Intrepid Travel, generally have two posts.



Is Your Content Working Its Magic?

How good is your content on your tour business Facebook page? Do your fans find themselves drawn to your page or do they just scroll past your post? Do some posts work better than others?

Insights has some handy tools to let you analyse how well your posts are working; how many people have viewed your posts be it fans or non-fans and how engaging they are through likes, shares and comments.

‘Likes’ lets you know your page likes as of today, un-likes and Net Likes.



Under 'Posts', you will find a list of posts published and how they've performed, in terms of reach and engagement. *Reach* can be obtained in terms of fans/non-fans or organic/paid. Similarly, you can examine the *engagement* in terms of likes, comments, shares or spams, hides, un-likes or engagement rate itself, by clicking on the arrow next to 'Engagement Rate'.

Reach: Organic / Paid | Engagement Rate

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote
06/24/2014 5:50 pm	"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page." – St Augustine	Text	Global	23	13%	Boost Post
06/24/2014 12:58 pm	Have a trip of a lifetime!	Photo	Global	30	20%	Boost Post
06/16/2014 11:42 am	IncaTrail's cover photo	Photo	Global	5	20%	Boost Post

See More

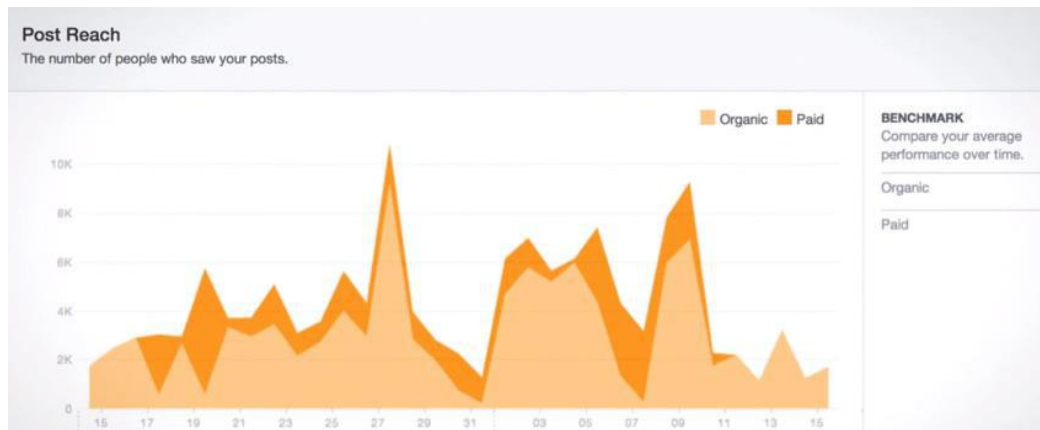
'Post Types' shows the average rate of engagement with each post type whether it is a status, photo, video or link.

The success of different post types based on average reach and engagement.

Show All Posts | Reach | Post Clicks | Likes, Comments & Shares

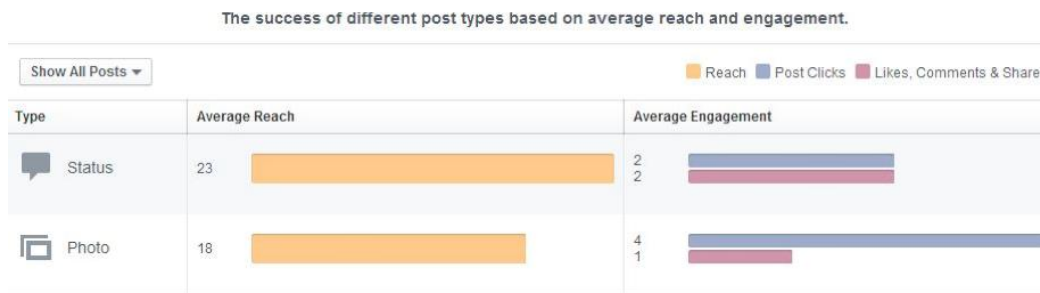
Type	Average Reach	Average Engagement
Status	23	2 (Post Clicks), 2 (Likes, Comments & Shares)
Photo	18	4 (Post Clicks), 1 (Likes, Comments & Shares)

'Reach' gives you *post reach* that is the number of people who have seen your post and also the *total reach* of your entire page and everything in it.



What Type of Content Works?

Keep varying the type of content you put up. See what clicks the best with your fans – interesting links you shared or offers & deals or images of scenery and exotic food that left people drooling. ‘Post Types’ under Posts, helps you gauge each post type by average rate of reach and engagement. Understand what type of posts people like the best.



Who is your audience?

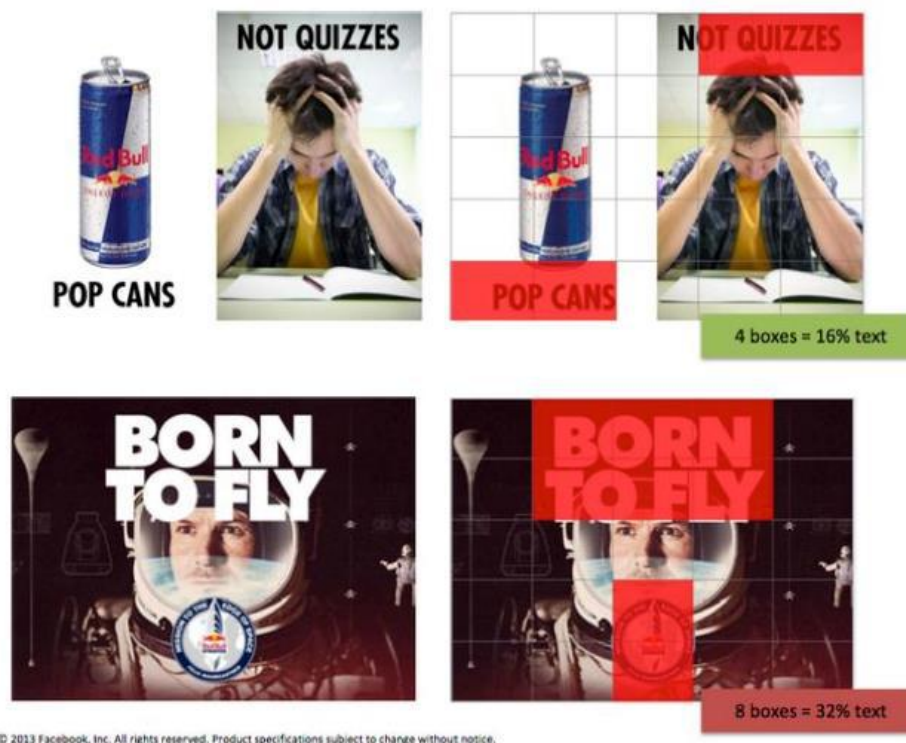
The best part about Facebook’s page insights, is gauging your audience. ‘People’ provides age, gender, geographic and language demographic data w.r.t your fan base, people reached and engaged. This of course helps you identify, construct and focus on your target segments through your social media marketing campaigns.



4. Get a grip on Facebook Terms and Policies

Familiarize yourselves with Facebook's terms and policies.

Earlier, promotions could only be administered through apps and not through posts or likes, to collect entries from participants. However, last year they got rid of it, with one restriction still in place, "*Personal Timelines must not be used to administer promotions*". Another tip you would need to know – your cover photo should not contain more than 20% of text. So tread carefully when you're trying to advertise on your cover.



Not complying with Facebook promotion rules may have repercussions like having your page shutdown. So, run a constant check on what is changing. Play safe. Don't end up on the wrong side of Facebook and your social media marketing will be fine.

5. Keep pace with constantly evolving Facebook ecosystem

Stay updated on what is happening in and around Facebook and what you can use to your advantage. Visit Facebook for Business page frequently.

Facebook has over a billion users. All you have to do is reach out to them. Yes, paid advertising means a more guaranteed reach. But that's not to say, you don't have a shot at going viral the organic way.

In fact, it would be most prudent to first get the foundations of your page right. Establish a steady frequency of posting consistent good quality content, and keep an eye out on how people are responding. This way you will know who your audience is, what draws attention, and how best to approach them. It is vital that you get your bearings straight before you even think of paid advertising.

Chapter 4: Learn from your Competitors (and others)

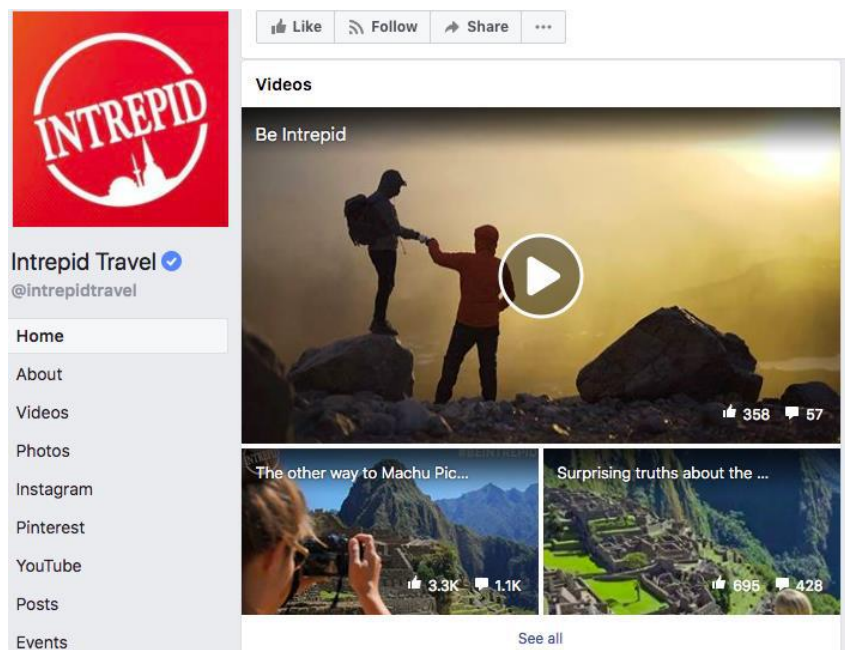
You have to see and follow what others are doing, so you learn and do what works in the market. Here are some examples of great pages on Facebook from the travel industry. Look at some of these for inspiration!

1. [Intrepid Travel](#)



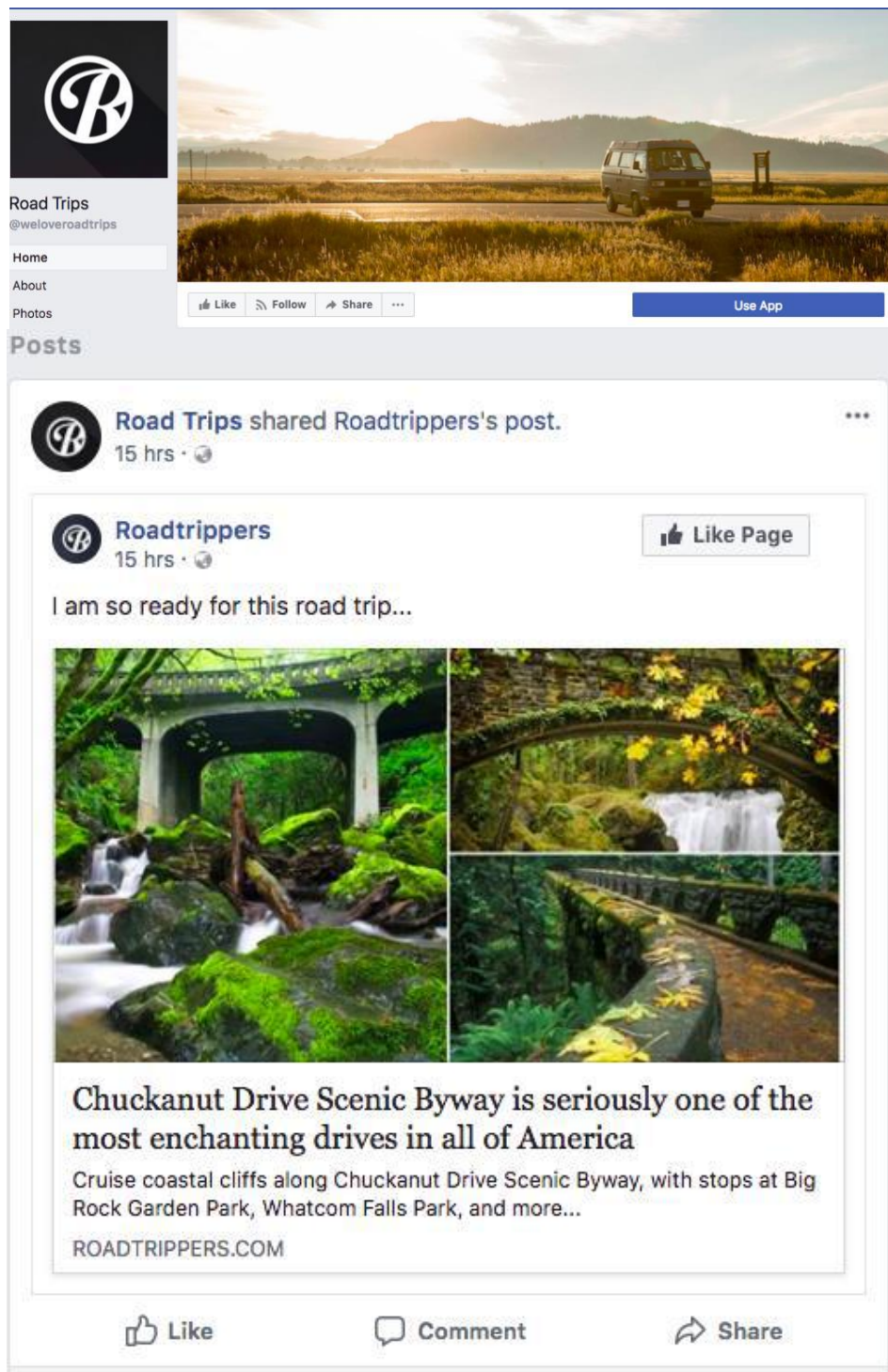
Travel agency Intrepid Travel has a great Facebook Page. The Book Now button now takes visitors off their Facebook page, whereas it used to allow visitors to book directly earlier. The ratings are high too (4.4 at the time of writing), but notice the high engagement rate. All reviews are responded to quickly and effectively.

They post compelling videos that gets the viewer dreaming of packing their bags and booking an adventure.



2. [We Love Road Trips](#)

Dedicated to road trips, this Facebook page has a huge number of followers. The quality of blogs, engagement, and photos is just awesome. If you are in the road travel market or associated with it, or even if you are a faithful road-tripper, do have look!



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook page for "Road Trips" (@weloveroadtrips). The page features a profile picture with a stylized "R" logo and a cover photo of a van parked on a road in a scenic landscape. Below the profile information, there is a "Posts" section. The first post is a share from "Roadtrippers" (15 hrs · 🌐) with the text "I am so ready for this road trip...". The post includes two images: a waterfall cascading over mossy rocks under a stone bridge, and a scenic view of a road winding through a forest with a waterfall in the background. The text of the post reads: "Chuckanut Drive Scenic Byway is seriously one of the most enchanting drives in all of America. Cruise coastal cliffs along Chuckanut Drive Scenic Byway, with stops at Big Rock Garden Park, Whatcom Falls Park, and more... ROADTRIPPERS.COM". The post has interaction buttons for "Like", "Comment", and "Share".

Road Trips
@weloveroadtrips

Home
About
Photos


Like Follow Share ... Use App

Posts

Road Trips shared **Roadtrippers's** post.
15 hrs · 🌐

Roadtrippers
15 hrs · 🌐 [Like Page](#)

I am so ready for this road trip...



Chuckanut Drive Scenic Byway is seriously one of the most enchanting drives in all of America

Cruise coastal cliffs along Chuckanut Drive Scenic Byway, with stops at Big Rock Garden Park, Whatcom Falls Park, and more...

ROADTRIPPERS.COM

Like Comment Share

3. [Nomadic Matt](#)

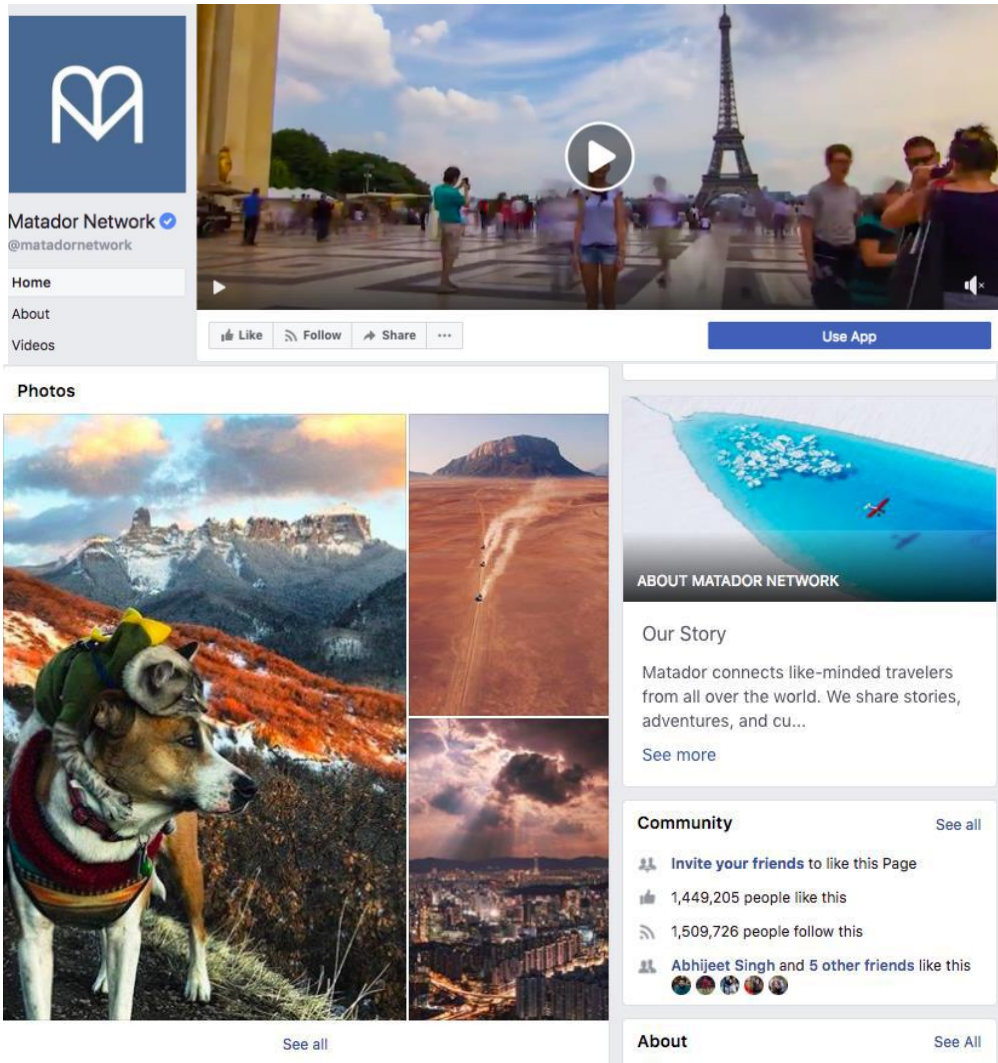
Here’s a great idea to build a personal travel brand. There is just so much great content, photos, videos, tips, and travel tricks on this page, that any avid traveller has this in his repertoire. See what great ideas the author comes up with to retain and engage his audience. Maybe you could take a leaf or two out of Matt’s travel journal?

The screenshot shows a Facebook profile for 'Nomadic Matt' (@nomadicmatt). The profile picture is a black square with a green silhouette of a person walking and the letters 'N' and 'M' on either side. The cover image is a scenic landscape with mountains, a lake, and a wooden dock with several red canoes. Overlaid on the cover image is the text 'TRAVEL BETTER. CHEAPER. LONGER.' in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the cover image are interaction buttons for 'Like', 'Follow', 'Share', and a three-dot menu, along with a 'Learn More' button.

The main post is from 'Nomadic Matt' and is dated '17 hrs'. The text of the post reads: 'Travel insurance is a MUST for any trip, but it can be a confusing topic, especially when deciding what plan is best for you.' Below the text is a large image of a white airplane flying in a clear blue sky. Underneath the image is the title 'How To Find The Best Travel Insurance In 2018 | Nomadic Matt' and a short description: 'An in-depth guide to travel insurance, demystifying and explaining everything you need to know about getting a good plan for your next...'. At the bottom of the post is the URL 'NOMADICMATT.COM'. Below the post are interaction buttons for 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'. At the very bottom, there is a reaction bar showing 13 reactions (a thumbs up and a surprised face emoji) and a 'Top comments' dropdown menu. Below the reaction bar, it says '7 shares'.

4. [The Matador Network](#)

Describing itself as “a tribe of millions of travellers across the globe with an unquenchable thirst for adventure and exploration.”, The Matador Network is not really a travel agency as such, but is a great source of content ideas for your own page and blog. Hitting 1.5 million followers at the time of writing this e-book, the quality speaks for itself (and so do the numbers). If you are interested in the travel industry, follow these guys and see what they are doing.



5. [Bluebulb.in](#)

Bluebulb is a local city & adventure tour operator in India. After viewing their Facebook page we are impressed with the work these guys do. Check out their posts, promotions, photographs, and events. Everytime a new post goes up, we seriously consider travelling with them (some of our teammates actually have, and can't stop talking about them). With a 4.7+ rating on their pages at the time of writing this e-book, the team at Bluebulb is making serious waves in the Indian adventure market.

Blue Bulb
@BlueBulbDotIn

Home
Posts

www.BlueBulb.in #DoSomethingNew

Blue Bulb
26 March at 11:00 · 🌐

This midnight cycling tour will transcend you to the time when Bombay was a quaint little town under the British Raj.
<http://bit.ly/Heritage-Cycle-Tour>

The Story of Mumbai: Midnight Cycle Tour
A cycling tour that brings Mumbai's history to light through the story of individuals who helped shape it. An entertaining take on connecting the City's past to its present.
BLUEBULB.IN

What's new
A new event has been created: Paint Party: Santorini Dreams.

Community See all
Invite your friends to like this Page
19,086 people like this
18,985 people follow this

About See All
Typically replies within a day
Send message
bluebulb.in
Local & travel website
Price range ££
Suggest Edits

6. [MHE Adventure Holidays](#)

Mercury Himalayan Exploration organises active family holidays, adventure trips, and expeditions across India. Check out their engagement with their clients, and prospects on their Facebook page. They also post great videos on their page- it will help to follow them for inspiration!

MHE
MERCURY HIMALAYAN EXPLORATIONS

MHE - Adventure Holidays
@MHEAdventures

Home
Events

Announcing MHE's #WonderWomen Trips
LED BY WOMEN, FOR WOMEN

Like Follow Recommend ... Call Now Send Message

MHE - Adventure Holidays
@MHEAdventures

Home
Events
Shop
Services
Reviews
Posts
Photos
Videos
About
TripAdvisor Reviews
Notes

MHE - Adventure Holidays
12 April at 10:00 · 🌐

Fancy a breakfast with a view of Mt. Everest? Here's your chance! Details at <https://bit.ly/2HepJT4>
#MHEAdventure #EBC #MTEverest

The Everest Base Camp Chopper trip is a once-in-a-lifetime adventure!

424 Views

Like Comment Share

3

10 shares

7. [World Nomads](#)

World Nomads is a travel packages operator based in Sydney, Australia. Their Facebook page is full of stunning photographs and videos, enticing users to travel with them. They also run theme based banners, and posts depending on season. When we last checked, the page was running an Indonesia video banner, with a lot of recent posts around Indonesia. That's a way to create buzz isn't it?

World Nomads ✓
@worldnomads

Home
About
Posts

Indonesia Discoveries
Watch Now

Like Follow Share ...

Watch Video Send Message

 **World Nomads**
22 hrs · 🌐

The plan was simple - travel from Dili to Jakarta by bus. Here's what it was really like. By One Road to London



Falling in Love With Indonesian Buses
Traveling overland can open the door to aspects of a country you might otherwise never see.
WORLDNOMADS.COM

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

👍❤️😄 46 Top comments ▾

Posts

 **World Nomads**
Yesterday at 02:45 · 🌐

Get off the tourist trail for a unique cultural experience.



A Nomad's Guide to Exploring Java, Indonesia
Discover the beauty and distinctive culture Java has to offer, from adventure hotspots to unexplored townships.
WORLDNOMADS.COM

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

👍 30

8. [Active Holidays](#)

The India based holiday company which runs a great facebook page, had 20,000+ followers when we checked. They have some stellar pictures and videos, combined with content woven around the packages they sell. Definitely follow them to see how to increase followership and get business from your Facebook page!



The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of Active Holiday Company. The profile picture is a colorful logo with the text "ACTIVE Holiday Company". The cover photo features a group of people in front of a banner that reads "RUN A WORLD MAJOR MARATHON" with locations "CHICAGO | BERLIN | NEW YORK 2018" and "OPEN FOR BOOKINGS". The banner also shows the Statue of Liberty and the Chicago skyline. The page has a navigation menu on the left with options like Home, About, Posts, Shop, Reviews, Photos, Videos, Events, Community, and Join Email List. A "Create a Page" button is visible at the bottom of the menu. The main content area shows a post from December 21, 2017, with the text "What do we do at Active Holiday Company? We help you find a new you..." and a photo of a scenic mountain landscape. To the right, there is a "Tour agent in Bangalore, India" section with a 4.7-star rating and a "Community" section showing 23,039 likes and 22,983 followers.



This screenshot shows a post from Active Holiday Company. The profile picture and name are the same as in the previous screenshot. The post is titled "Face your fears!" and features a large image of a person mountain biking on a rocky trail with snow-capped mountains in the background. The text on the image reads "ON THE OTHER SIDE OF FEAR LIES FREEDOM" and "#DontBeAfraid | #TakeThePlunge". The post is dated "Yesterday at 12:00". At the bottom of the post, there are buttons for "Like", "Comment", and "Share", along with the website "ActiveHolidayCompany.com".

Chapter 5: Facebook for Business

Promoting posts, spending advertising money

In this chapter, we analyse the various ways to earn returns on investment (RoI) from the efforts you spend on Facebook.

Objectives:

- Traffic:
 - Generate repeat traffic to your website, remind people to go back to your website.
 - Reaching new people and driving them to your webpage.
 - Driving traffic to your tour pages and booking page.
- Engagement:
 - Connecting with the target market using images, videos, and other content.
 - Building influence and authority.
- Revenue:
 - Targeting your ideal market to generate revenue.
 - Encouraging repeat purchase.

Methods:

I. Organic Posts

We have discussed a lot of tips and tricks to write great organic posts in the previous chapters. This remains a very important feature as business can build trust with customers, even while helping them make a purchase decision.

II. Boosting Posts

Organic posts have unpredictable value. Even if a page has numerous followers, post reach can vary every day. Engagement definitely vary depends on content attractiveness. A sure-shot way to increase post views is 'boosting' it. It's not exactly an ad, but costs money to do it (published in the past or new) for more visibility.

You should know which posts work well, so you invest money well and do not burn cash where there is little possibility of engagement.

Here is what you need to do:

1. Select a post. This could either be an existing post or a new one. Click the Boost Post button to start.

Vacation Labs
@vacationlabs

Home
About
Photos
Videos
Posts
Events
Services
Shop
Groups
Notes
Offers
Community

Promote
Manage Promotions

Liked Following Share

Vacation Labs
Published by Rebecca Menezes · 3 mins ·

When analysing business performance there are hundreds of metrics you can monitor. Which ones truly allow smart business decisions? Here are 5 statistics you can begin with- <https://goo.gl/NnjJc1>

How To Measure Business Performance As A Tour Operator | Vacation Labs

One of the most challenging tasks when analysing business performance is knowing what to measure. There are hundreds of metrics you can monitor...

VACATIONLABS.COM

Boost Post

Like Comment Share

See All

2. For targeting, you can select the News Feeds of people who like your page (or their friends), or choose a specific audience through targeting.

Boost Post

OBJECTIVE

What results would you like from this post?

Website visits: encourage people to visit your website
Change

AUDIENCE

People you choose through targeting Edit

Location - Living In: India: Goa
Age: 18 - 65+

People who like your Page

People who like your Page and their friends

BUDGET AND DURATION

Total budget

By clicking Boost, you agree to Facebook's Terms & Conditions | Help Center

Cancel Boost

DESKTOP NEWS FEED MOBILE NEWS FEED

Vacation Labs
Sponsored · Like Page

When analysing business performance there are hundreds of metrics you can monitor. Which ones truly allow smart business decisions? Here are 5 statistics you can begin with- <https://goo.gl/NnjJc1>

How To Measure Business Performance As A Tour Operator | Vacation Labs

One of the most challenging tasks when analysing business performance is...

VACATIONLABS.COM

Select people who follow your page if you have many followers, and a lot of them are existing clients. That way, you are sure that your ad money is being spent

wisely. Spreading the targeting to 'friends' also helps, since there will be context to your post.

However, if you are new to this and your page doesn't have a lot of followers, how do you ensure a great ROI? The answer, obviously, is targeting. Facebook has great targeting filters:

Facebook's Targeting Is Based on Five Areas:

- **Demographics:** Age, gender, language, income, education, employer, job title.
- **Events:** Upcoming or recent engagement, new job, birthday, relationship status, etc.
- **Location (address/ postcode):** People might (a) live in the specified location; (b) visiting that location; or (c) travelling in that location. 'Travelling' is when the most recent location is the same as specified, but their homes are more than 200 kilometres away.
- **Interests:** What does the target audience like? E.g., reading, travel, etc. The targeting can be specific- Arundhati Roy, Kerala, historical temples.
- **Behaviour:** Activities the audience was recently engaged in. For example, logged in by mobile, used a travel app, business travellers, international travellers, expats, etc.

3. Set up a budget depending on whether you are running a trial, or how much you are willing to spend. On an average, we suggest not exceeding INR 300-400 (\$5-\$8) per day as your budget. If your daily budget is too high, you might start annoying people with repetitive displays of your post- you can boost different posts to achieve a better effect.

The screenshot displays the Facebook 'Boost Post' configuration window. On the left, the 'BUDGET AND DURATION' section is highlighted with a red border. It contains the following details:

- Total budget:** 66.00 INR (with a dropdown arrow)
- Selected budget:** 66.00 INR (checked), with an estimated reach of 441 - 2332.
- Duration:** 1 day (selected), 7 days, 14 days.
- Run this ad until:** Apr 18, 2018.

The main content area shows a sponsored post from 'Vacation Labs'. The post text reads: "When analysing business performance there are hundreds of metrics you can monitor. Which ones truly allow smart business decisions? Here are 5 statistics you can begin with- <https://goo.gl/NnjJc1>". The post includes an image of a calculator and a pen on a desk. At the bottom of the window, there are 'Cancel' and 'Boost' buttons.

III. Advertising

Spending Wisely, Scaling Up Your Business

We recommend you try out the organic and boost post functionalities well before moving to full-fledged advertising on Facebook. This helps you figure out what works, and what doesn't for your business. You can set up your expectations from this investment clearly too.

For tackling advanced targeting, here are a few examples to get you thinking on who exactly should you target:

1. **Fresh arrivals at the airport:** Target the address of the airport to catch tourists at the beginning of their trip. In your ads you can wish them an amazing experience and add tip suggestions for their travel. Add a link to your tours, activities, and a Google map location.
2. **Specific interests in the city:** Target people who are travelling to your city and are interested in adventures within the city.
3. **Parents travelling with kids aged 6–12:** If your tours are targeted around kids, you could target this market.
4. **Newlywed couples for romantic tours:** For example, honeymooners in Kerala would be interested in staying in houseboats, or a trip on the secluded Kerala backwaters. Add discounts for this group to boost sales and bookings.
5. **Birthday celebrators:** Extend the concept of honeymooners to people who travel around their birthdays.

Having discussed targeting, other important things to note are:

1. **Campaign Objectives:** While there are multiple different campaign objectives you can design your campaign to meet, we recommend sticking to these 2-
 - a. **Event Responses:** Would you open a Facebook event for your daily tour and promote it?

Pros: Users can see how many people will attend the tour, they can RSVP, Facebook will log the time and destination, and users can tag and invite friends to the event (talk about your client doing the selling for you).

Cons: The ad format is not flexible — Facebook allows you only one image which doubles as the event featured image as well.

- b. **Post engagement:** create an unpublished post that won't be seen by your page fans, but will be seen by the target audience, right to their mobile feeds. This can include several images, can link to a Facebook event, and will allow you to match images and creative text for your audience.

2. Remarketing:

Remarketing is exceptionally effective in digital marketing. Someone who has already visited your website, interacted with your Facebook page, or in general has searched for you or read your content, is more likely to buy from you.

Remarketing is the process of targeting these people who already know about

you. And, it's pretty simple to do (create and include the Facebook Pixel code on your website, then create a custom audience for your Facebook targeting).

How to create and install a Facebook Pixel: Facebook's FAQ

<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/314143995668266>

More help on creating custom audiences?

<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/1474662202748341#>

You can now run ads specifically for this audience. The cost per conversion and the marketing effort required is minimal, giving you the best return possible!

Finally, depending on your capability to create highly targeted ads, you need to continuously optimise for CTR (click through rate), and conversion (people coming to your booking page and actually paying you). There is a lot of activity in the marketing space, keep track of the changes Facebook makes to its ad platform and keep learning!

Chapter 6: Word of Caution

Content curated by [Rebecca Menezes](#)

Not everything that glitters is gold. If this guide raises your hopes in going '100% Facebook', think again.

Why Shouldn't Tour Operators Count On A Facebook Only Strategy

In a small survey we conducted, we noticed a common tour marketing pattern employed by small scale or part time tour operators. In this survey, we included tour operators in Mumbai some in Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar.

The Facebook Only Strategy



The common pattern observed among the tour operators was that their tour marketing, promotions and bookings were completely dependent on Facebook.

They developed friend networks through personal accounts and promoted tours by sharing details within those networks. The promotions were largely in the form of infographics which displayed a number to call and confirm bookings. This strategy has worked for them so far. However, it is limited and doesn't allow them to grow beyond the part-time or small-scale operations that they run. They have the talent and the skills to scale up but their tour marketing/ operations strategy is holding them back.

The Drawbacks Of A Facebook Only Strategy

1. The Friends Strategy is Limited



Facebook has a limitation of 5000 friends for a personal account. Beyond this, Facebook recommends a move to a fan page. 5k may seem like a big number but it's not to someone meeting 50 new people every weekend. With 600-700 real friends, this 5k limit will be breached in less than a year. So, your network is capped with Facebook marketing of this kind.

2. Page Strategy Also Comes With Limitations



A slightly better approach to the above is a fan/business page. It has no limitation on number of members. What it limits is, holding a recall on a fan page without being intrusive. It is difficult to get likes and very easy for someone to unlike a page if they don't like any of the posts there.

The scope of your network is quite limited. You are restricted to a particular demographic and location. Scaling up becomes more and more difficult.

Facebook is a great marketing tool but it cannot be the only marketing solution. It is just one of the many tools that you should leverage to have a balanced marketing strategy. It can only take you so far.

3. Selling On Facebook Brings Uncertainty



The other problem with both these strategies is heightened uncertainty. If tours are booked through Facebook, money will be collected only at the start of a tour. Assume 25 people have confirmed on the phone out of which 4 have a prepaid booking. The tour is affordable for minimum 15 people and the maximum people that can be accommodated is 30. In such events, there are always unexpected walk-ins. The level of uncertainty is such that, the organizer is not even sure if the tour will lose its feasibility by going in an assured loss or he will have to lose face by refusing people.

An Alternative To The Facebook Only Strategy

A little [investment in technology](#) like Vacation Labs can take care of the above limitations. People can pay for and confirm bookings in a single click. Multiple tour marketing avenues can be explored and all of them can redirect to your storefront to confirm bookings. Payment will be immediate and positive cash flows will result in better planning. Manage everything on the go through a mobile app and you are sorted with your operations. It is time to focus on making your trip awesome.

Tour marketing through Facebook has made your business a feasible venture. Now, you need to scale to the next level. It is time to embrace technology rather than use it as a compulsion. Technology can act as your loyal companion, an assistant who will always be by your side. Let technology take care of all the mundane activities. That way you can focus on doing what you do best, your awesome tour activities.

Conclusion

Hope this guide was useful to you! Write to us for feedback at saurabh@vacationlabs.com or sign up to our newsletter at www.vacationlabs.com/blog

Let technology take care of all the mundane activities. That way you can focus on doing what you do best, your awesome tour activities.

VacationLabs

The ultimate all-in-one travel software



Website Builder



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Management System



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