

How To Configure a Google Alert

1. Go to <http://www.google.com/alerts>

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Videos](#) [Maps](#) [News](#) [Shopping](#) [Gmail](#) [more](#) ▼

[ngustas@gmail.com](#) | [My Account](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign out](#)



Search terms:
[Preview results](#)

Type:

How often:

Volume:

Deliver to:

Monitor the Web for interesting new content

Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.

Enter the topic you wish to monitor, then click preview to see the type of results you'll receive. Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:

- monitoring a developing news story
- keeping current on a competitor or industry
- getting the latest on a celebrity or event
- keeping tabs on your favorite sports teams

You can also [click here to manage your alerts](#)

2. In the "Search Terms" field, type in the term you want to monitor.
 - a. **Use quotes around your term if you are searching for that exact phrase.** For example, *Pebble Beach* will return anything with the words *pebble* and *beach* in it ("In the morning, I went running on the *beach* and got a *pebble* in my shoe."), while "*Pebble Beach*" will return only articles and documents with that exact phrase ("Tiger Woods had a meltdown at *Pebble Beach*").
 - b. **Use a hyphen immediately before a term in order to exclude pages that use the term.** For example, the term *Carmel* will return many, many (many!) pages of people discussing Starbucks' "carmel" macchiatos. Type *Carmel -macchiato* to exclude these pages. (Carmel, Indiana appears often in search results, so if you are monitoring for posts about Carmel in California, *Carmel -macchiato -indiana* is strongly recommended.)
3. In the "Type" field, select "Everything." This will provide news stories, blog posts, videos, and other relevant items in a digest format.
4. Select how often you would like your Google Alert delivered.
 - a. "as-it-happens" means you will get an email whenever something new is posted (and you may get many messages a day).
 - b. "Once a day" means you will be sent a message once a day, compiling the results of the past 24 hours. This is usually sufficient.
 - c. "Once a week" means you will be sent a message once a week, compiling the results of the past seven days.
5. In the "Volume" field, choose between "Only the best results" and "All results."
 - a. "Only the best results" means that you will receive the results that Google deems most relevant to your query.
 - b. "All results" means you will receive every result connected to your query.

6. Under "Deliver To," you can either type in an email address or select "Feed."
 - a. Type in the email address you would like the alerts to be delivered to. Google does not spam.
 - b. If you select "Feed," new items will be placed in your RSS reader on an "As It Happens" basis. (RSS readers are explained on the next page.)

RSS Feeds: What They Are and How To Use Them

RSS stands for “Really Simple Syndication.” It allows a user to read a compilation of content from frequently updated online works (community discussions, blogs, Twitter searches) in one central online location, in real time.

The symbol for an RSS feed is a bright orange square with a circle and two curved lines:



This symbol means that an RSS feed is available for the web page in question. If you click on it, you can add it to your RSS reader, allowing you to read it at your leisure, rather than having to go to the specific website.

What's an RSS reader?

An RSS reader is a piece of software, either on the web or on your desktop, that compiles all your feeds in one place. The most popular and convenient of these is Google Reader (www.google.com/reader).

Setting Up Google Reader

1. Go to the Google Reader website: <http://www.google.com/reader>
2. If you have a Google account, sign in now. If you do not have a Google account, click on the blue “Create an account” button. Setting up a Google account is quick, easy and free. Once you are done, return to <http://www.google.com/reader> and log in.

Now, as long as you are logged in to Google, you will be able to automatically add a subscription to Google Reader.

Adding a Blog to Google Reader

1. Go to the blog site.
2. Click on the RSS icon.
3. You may be presented with a page that looks like this:

FeedBurner makes it easy to receive content updates in My Yahoo!, Newsgator, Bloglines, and other news readers.

[Learn more about syndication and FeedBurner...](#)

A message from this feed's publisher: This is an XML content feed. It is intended to be viewed in a newsreader or syndicated to another site, subject to copyright and fair use.

Subscribe Now!

...with web-based news readers. Click your choice below:

[MY YAHOO!](#) [newsgator](#) [myAOL](#)
[ROJO](#) [ojo](#) [Bloglines](#) [netvibes](#)
[Google](#) [Pageflakes](#)

...with other readers:

(Choose Your Reader)

[Get Mashable! delivered by email](#)

[View Feed XML](#)

If you see this window, click on the Google button. You will then see a page offering to add the feed to your Google Reader:

Google offers two different ways to keep up-to-date with your favorite sites:

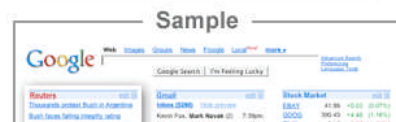
Your Google homepage brings together Google functionality and content from across the web, on a single page.

Google Reader makes it easy to keep up with the latest content from a large number of sites, all on a single reading list.

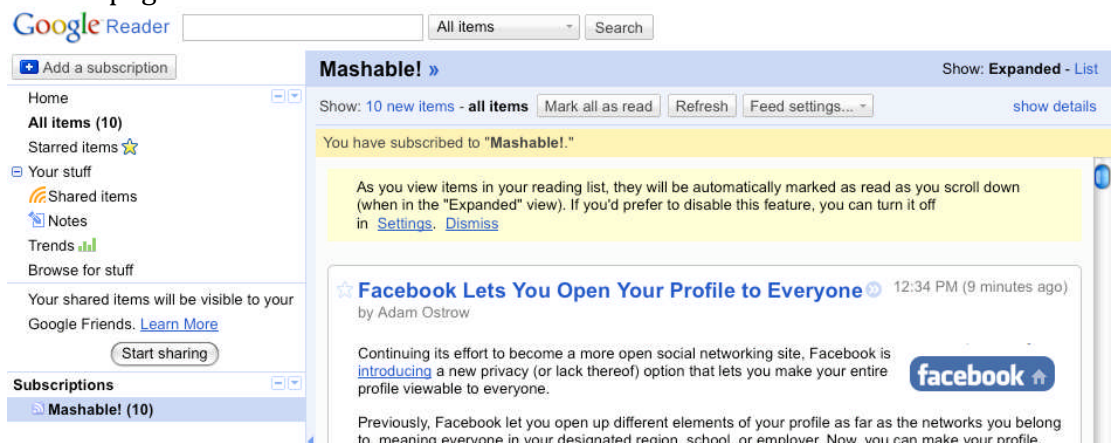
[Add to Google homepage](#)

or

[Add to Google Reader](#)



Click on "Add to Google Reader." You will now see the blog in your Google Reader page.



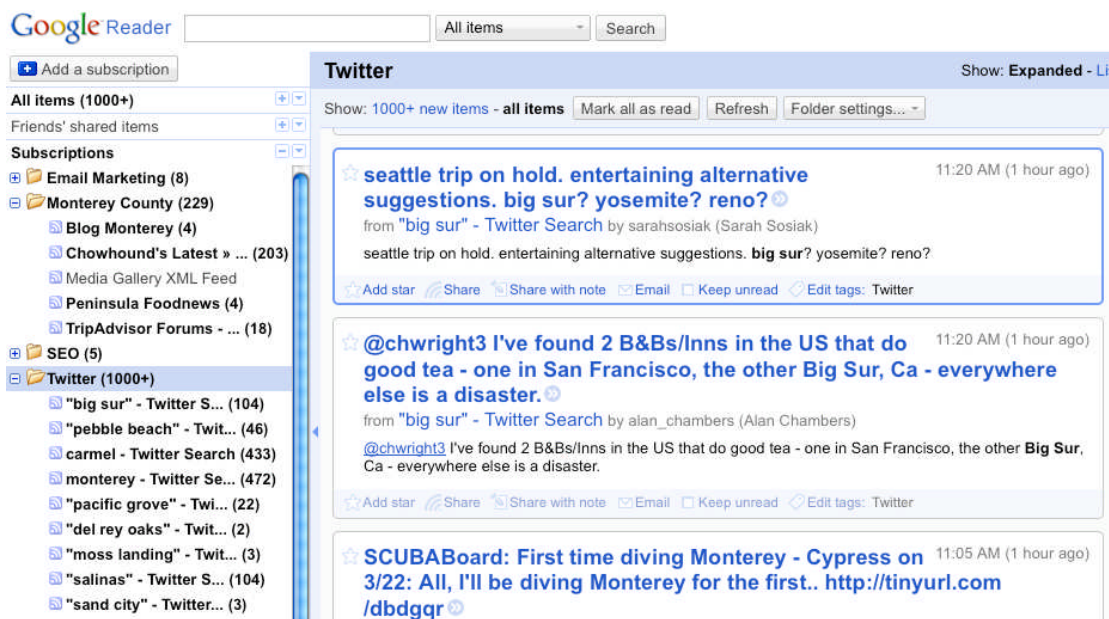
The screenshot shows the Google Reader interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with options like 'Home', 'All items (10)', 'Starred items', 'Your stuff', 'Shared items', 'Notes', 'Trends', and 'Browse for stuff'. Below these are 'Subscriptions' and 'Mashable! (10)'. The main content area shows the 'Mashable! »' feed with a 'Show: Expanded - List' dropdown. A yellow notification banner states: 'As you view items in your reading list, they will be automatically marked as read as you scroll down (when in the "Expanded" view). If you'd prefer to disable this feature, you can turn it off in [Settings](#). [Dismiss](#)'. Below this is a post from Facebook: 'Facebook Lets You Open Your Profile to Everyone' by Adam Ostrow, dated 12:34 PM (9 minutes ago). The post text says: 'Continuing its effort to become a more open social networking site, Facebook is introducing a new privacy (or lack thereof) option that lets you make your entire profile viewable to everyone.' A 'facebook' logo is visible in the bottom right of the post.

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Subscribing To a Twitter Search in Google Reader

1. Go to <http://search.twitter.com>.
2. Type in your search term.
3. Hit the return button on your keyboard, or click the Search button on the screen.
4. You will see all the Tweets people have made about your search term.
 - a. You can refine your search term by using quotes and the “-“ symbol as discussed in the “How to Configure a Google Alert” section.
 - b. You can limit the Tweets shown to English-language only by selecting English under “Show tweets written in.”
5. In the upper right-hand corner of the page, you will see the orange RSS logo followed by the link “Feed for this query.” Click on the link.
6. Click on the “Add to Google Reader” button. The Twitter feed will now appear in your RSS reader in real(ish) time (there is frequently a lag of 30 minutes or so).

Once you have subscribed to a number of feeds, you can place them in folders in order to better organize them.



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Facebook Accounts

It's free to sign up for Facebook. Facebook only allows one profile per email address. Facebook does not allow page creation without a Facebook account.

There are two kinds of Facebook accounts. Both accounts allow you to create Facebook Business Pages. Choose wisely, because you cannot convert from one type of Facebook account to the other.

Personal Accounts

The standard Facebook account is a Personal Account. This is a profile that carries as much or as little information about you as you choose. You can also hide your information from search, so no one will be able to see you.

A Facebook Personal Account allows you to maintain your Business Page and place ads. You can also look at user profiles (if they give you permission), look at content on other Pages, and otherwise use Facebook as much (or as little) as you want. Personal Accounts provide a user with the most flexibility, and are recommended.

Facebook personal accounts are created before you create your Business Page.

Business Accounts

Facebook Business Accounts only allow you to maintain a Business Page and place ads for that page. You cannot look at the profiles of your fans, look at other Business Pages, or do any of the many things Facebook allows a Personal Account to do. These limitations can create obstacles to using a page for your business.

If you prefer to create a Facebook Business Account, you will create it as you are creating your page.

How to Sign Up for a Facebook Personal Account

1. Go to <http://www.facebook.com>
2. You should see a screen that looks like this:

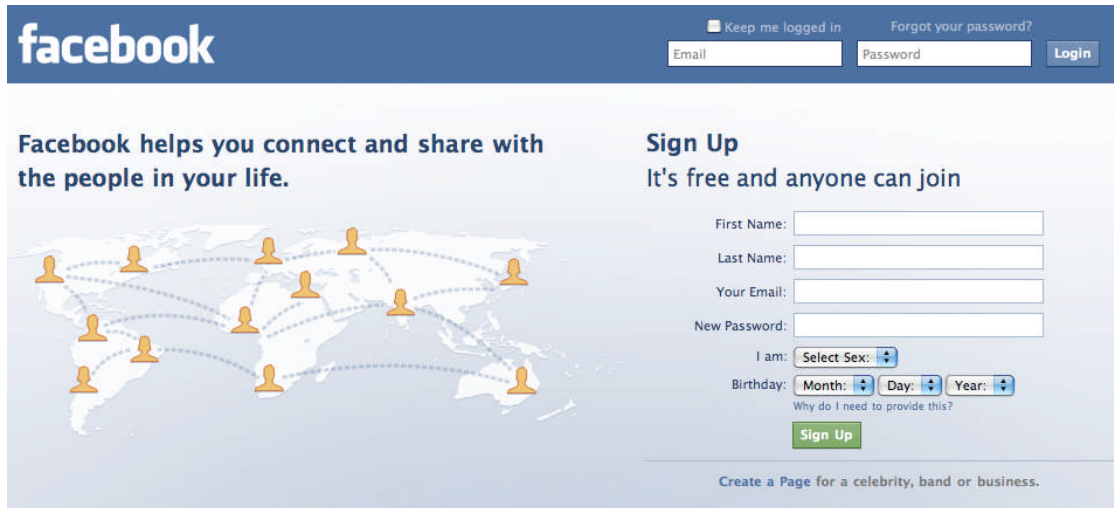


Figure 1. Facebook signup screen

If you see a screen that looks more like this:

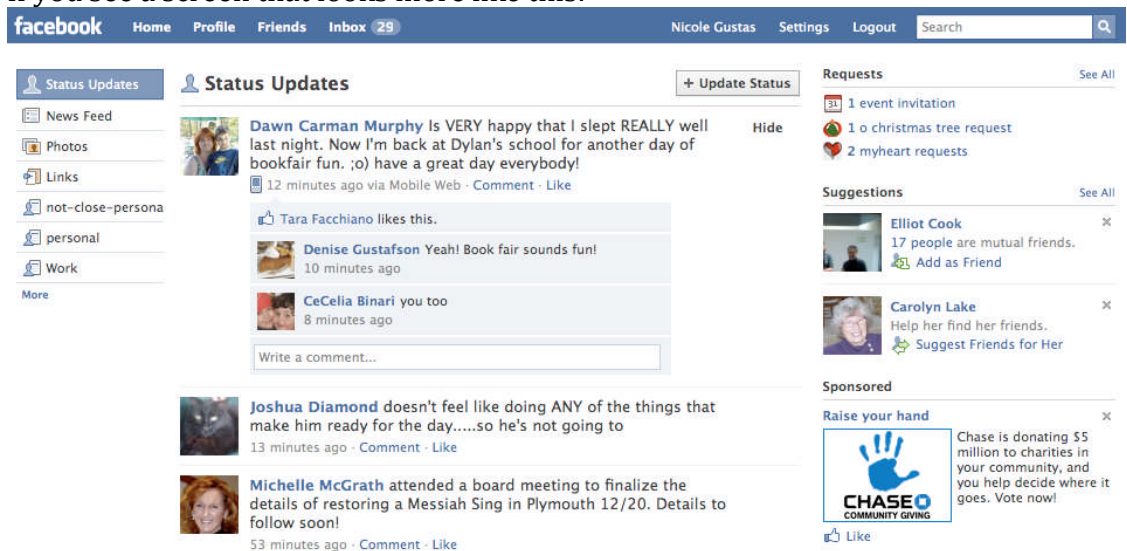


Figure 2. Facebook user landing page

it means that someone is already logged in using your computer. Click on the "Logout" button in the upper right hand corner to get back to the screen showed in Figure 1.

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3. In the “Sign Up” area, enter your first name, last name, email, password, sex, and birth date.
4. Click the green “Sign Up” button.
5. Facebook will then present you with a security check that looks something like this:



Figure 3. Facebook security check

This is to prevent computers from auto-creating account. Computers can't read the words "sunset" and "the" in the white box, but humans usually can. The words that appear for you will be different than the ones in the above example. Type in the two words and click "Sign Up."

6. Facebook will now give you the opportunity to find friends that have already created Facebook accounts. You will see the following window:

Profile Friends Inbox Share Jackson Settings Logout

Step 1 Find Friends Step 2 Profile Information Step 3 Profile Picture

Are your friends already on Facebook?
Many of your friends may already be here. Searching your email account is the fastest way to find your friends on Facebook.

Your Email:

Email Password:

Find Friends

Facebook will not store your password. [Learn More.](#)

[Skip this step](#)

Figure 4. Find friends on Facebook

When you enter your email password, you are giving Facebook a one-time opportunity to look at your email address book. It will cross-reference those email addresses with the email addresses of users that are already on Facebook. Facebook will then show you a list of people in your address book that are already on Facebook, and you can choose whether or not to make them your “Facebook friend.”

If you do not want to allow Facebook to see your address book, click “Skip this step” in the lower right-hand corner.

You will note that Facebook makes the “Skip this step” item a little hard to find. That’s because it’s in their best interest for you to link to as many people as possible when you start. The more people you are connected to, the more likely you are to use the site.

7. Next, Facebook will ask you for demographic information such as your high school, your college, and the company you work for. Facebook will then use this information to present you with more potential friends – for example, users who graduated from your high school the same year as you did.

Step 1 Find Friends

Step 2 Profile Information

Step 3 Profile Picture

Fill out your Profile Info

This information will help you find your friends on Facebook.

High School: Class Year:

College/University: Class Year:

Company:

Back Skip Save & Continue

Figure 5. Profile Info screen

If you prefer not to give Facebook this information (or if you really didn't like anyone you went to high school with), click on the extremely small "Skip" word to the left of the large "Save and Continue" button.

8. Facebook will now ask for a photo. If you have a photo of yourself on your computer that you'd like to use, click on "Upload a Photo," and then click on "Choose File." This will bring up a window that will allow you to browse through your computer's files to find a picture of yourself.

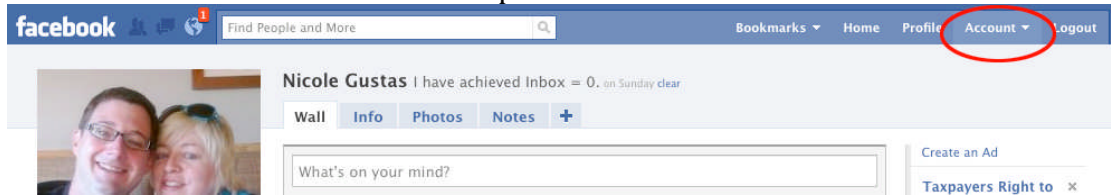
If you choose not to put up a photo of yourself, click the small "Skip" to the left of the large "Save and Continue" button.

9. If, in the previous steps, you have selected any friends, you will now see a page that shows your friends' status updates. If you have not, Facebook will provide links to find people you know, and to edit your profile to help your friends find you.

Become the Invisible Man (or Woman): Facebook Security Settings

Facebook has robust security settings which which you can allow the world to see as much – or as little – of you as you prefer. With Facebook’s security settings, you can make yourself almost entirely invisible. Here’s how.

1. Click on the Account button on the top bar of Facebook.



- 2.

Figure 6: Facebook navigation bar, with Account button circled.

3. On the drop-down menu that appears, click on the item “Privacy Settings.”

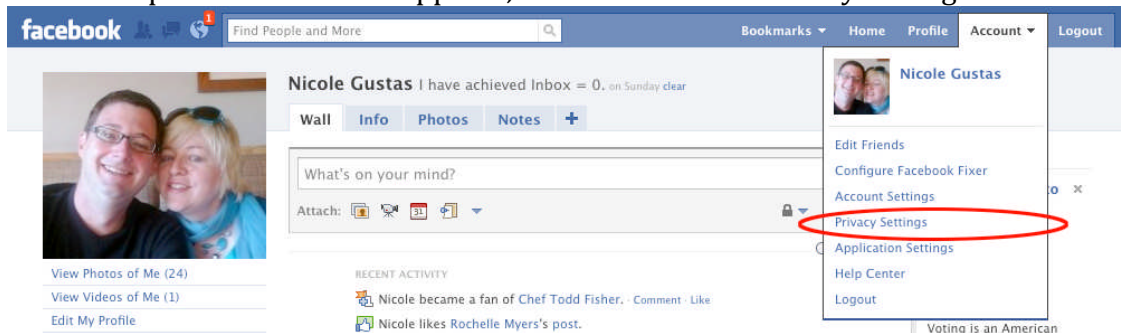


Figure 7: Facebook account management menu, with “Privacy Settings” circled.

4. You now have access to the Privacy Control Panel.

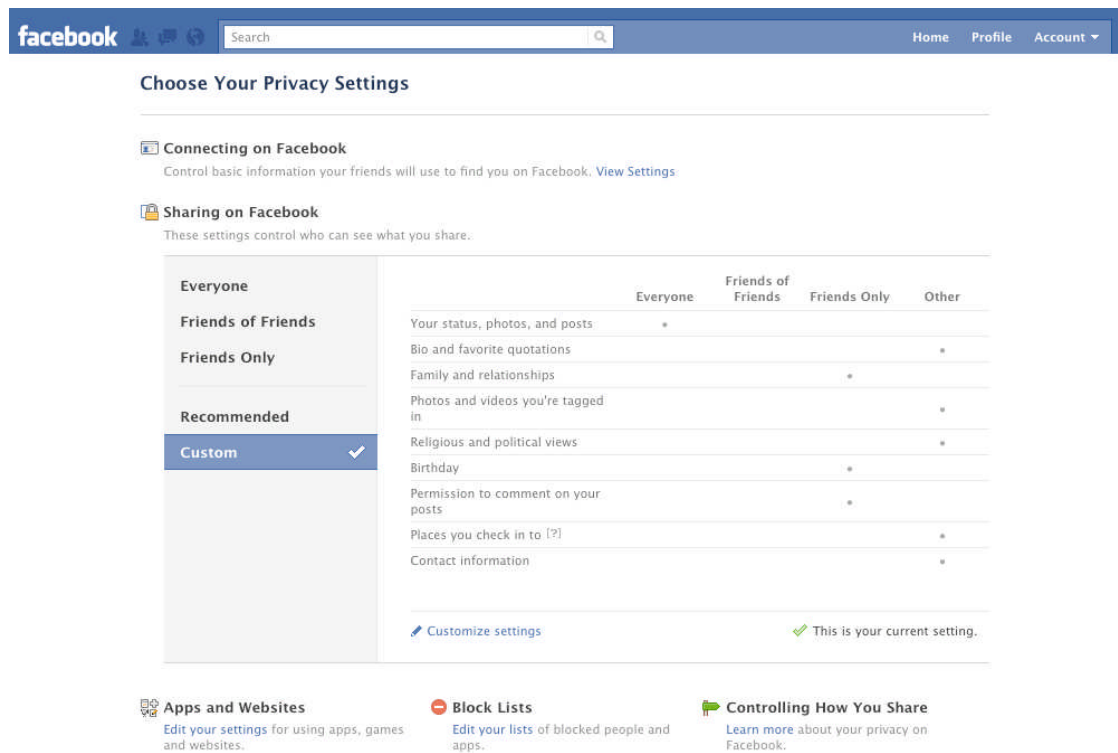


Figure 8: The Facebook privacy control panel.

5. Under the “Connecting on Facebook” heading, click the “View Settings” link.
6. **Search for you on Facebook** allows you to control which users can find you in Search.
 - i. **Everyone** means that any Facebook user can find you.
 - ii. **Friends of Friends** means that both your friends and their friends will see you if they type your name into Search, but no one else will.
 - iii. **Friends Only** means that only people who you designate as friends will be able to find you in Search. If you have no friends, then no one will be able to search for you.
7. When you are done, click “Save Changes.”

For more specific control of what various groups of users can and cannot see on your profile, see the items below “Search for you on Facebook.” To prevent specific people from contacting or finding you, return to the control panel and click on “Block List.”

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Creating a Business Page in Facebook

Businesses have a separate type of page than people. While a Personal Account can only have 5,000 friends, a Business Page can have an unlimited number of fans.

In general, Facebook's page creation setup is very intuitive. However, there are a couple of sticking points that can cause a large hassle down the line. These steps are highlighted below.

1. Search the word "Facebook page" in Google. (There are ways to find the interface in Facebook, but this is much easier.) One of the first results should say "Create a Page | Facebook." Click on this result.

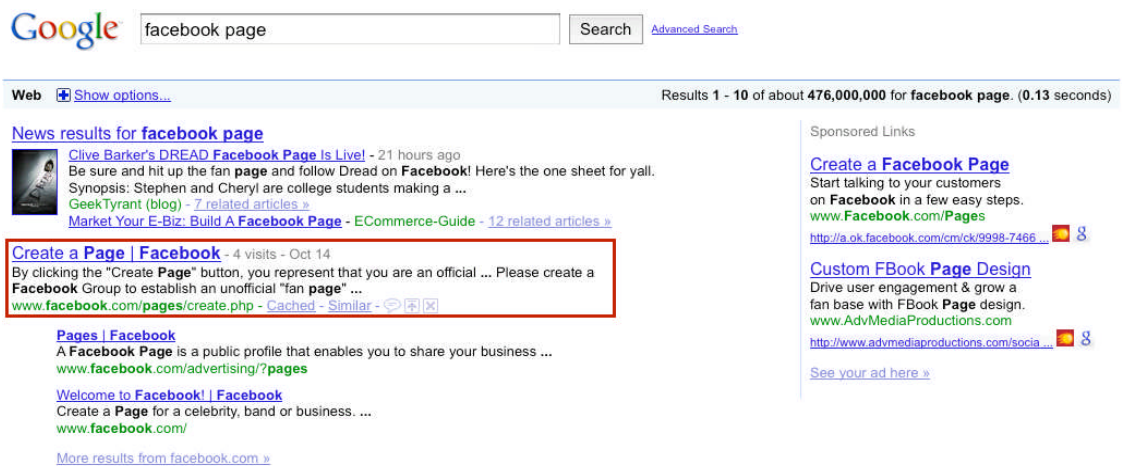


Figure 8: The Google search results for the term "Facebook page." The most useful result is circled in red.

2. The next page allows you to choose your *page category*. Each page category has a slightly different template. Don't worry – if you discover later that you need to use a different category, you can always change it.

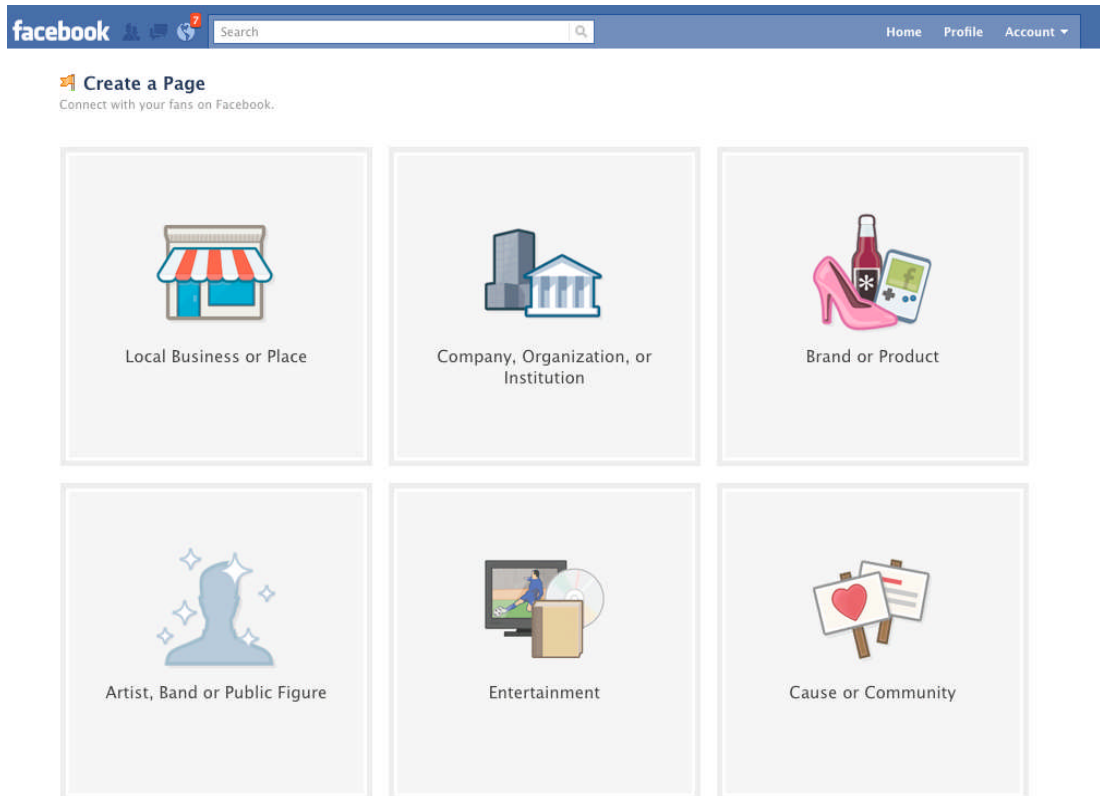


Figure 9: Creating a new Facebook page.

- a. Since users generally search for a business or brand by name, the category is most important in the way it affects the information you can put on a page.
3. The name of your page should be the name of your business.
4. Beneath "Name of Page," check the box labeled "Do not make Page publicly visible at this time." This will allow you to perfect your Page before you reveal it to the world!
5. Once you are done, click the "Create Page" button. Your initial page will look something like this:

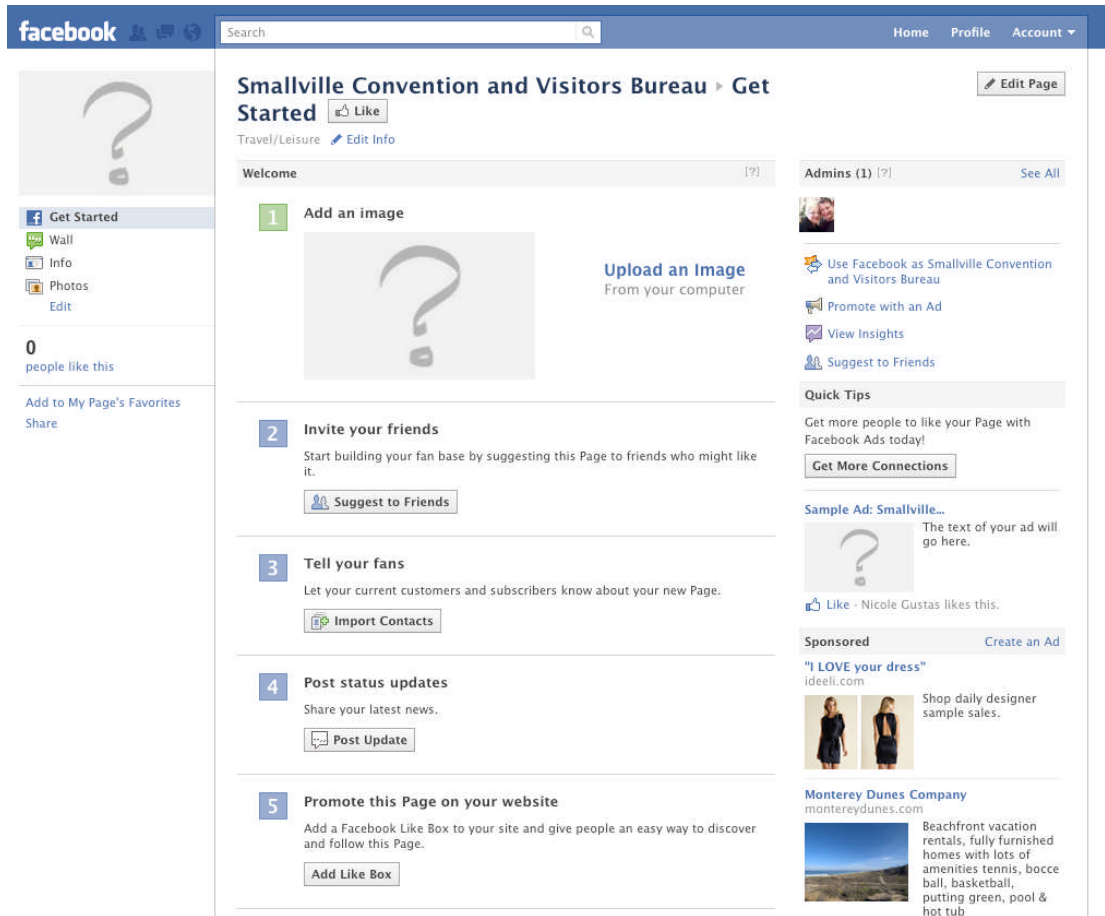


Figure 10: A newly-created Facebook page

6. As you can see, Facebook provides you with step-by-step instructions on how to get youu page started.

Enhance your page

7. To make your page more inviting, add information to it. Start by clicking on the words “Edit Info” that are below your business name.
8. The Information area allows you to add information about your organization such as your address (perhaps the address of your visitors center), your website, and more.
9. Once you are done, click “Done Editing.” You’ll now see your information as a user would see it. To change it, click the “Edit Info” button again.

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Facebook Page Settings

Just like your personal Facebook account, you can limit what people can do on your Facebook business page.

1. Just below your Facebook picture, click “Edit Page.”
2. In the right-hand column, click “Manager permissions.”
 - a. **Page visibility:** Check this box if you only want administrators to be able to see your page.
 - b. **Country restrictions** allows you to restrict viewing of your page to people in certain countries.
 - c. **Age restrictions** allows you to limit the ability of people under a certain age to view your page. If you are a winery, you will want to select “Alcohol-Related,” which will set the minimum age based on the drinking age in the country of origin of the user.
 - d. **Published status** allows you to select whether or not the page is viewable to the world. You may not be ready for this yet – if not, just remember where it is for later.
3. Once you are done, click “Save Changes.”
4. **Wall settings** allow you to control who can post to your page. The “wall” is what users usually first see when they come to your page.
 - a. **Only posts by page** means that users will by default only see the things you post.
 - b. **Posts by page and fans** means that users will see both your posts and your fans posts intermingled, sorted by date.
 - c. **Default landing tab for everyone else** allows you to choose what the first tab is that people will see when they come to your Page.
 - d. **Fan Permissions** allows you to choose whether or not fans can post to your wall, and what they can post. The temptation is to prevent fans from posting to your page, because you cannot control their message. However, fans expect to be allowed to post things to your page. If you don’t let them, they will feel that you don’t have any interest in them or what they have to say. If you don’t want to allow fans to post anything to your page, you may want to consider whether a Facebook Page is appropriate for your business.

Social networking sites: a brief list

www.Facebook.com: General social media site.

www.bebo.com: Similar to Facebook; popular in the UK and Europe.

www.orkut.com: Similar to Facebook; popular in South America.

www.myspace.com: Popular among youth and musicians; rapidly losing traction in the marketplace.

www.Linkedin.com: Professional networking website.

Travel and Restaurant Sites

www.TripAdvisor.com: Travel-focused website compiling user-generated reviews of hotels, restaurants, attractions, etc.

www.Fodors.com: Travel-focused website with active message boards.

www.Frommers.com: Another travel-focused website with active message boards.

www.yelp.com: User-generated restaurant/business review site, geared more towards locals than vacationers.

www.Chow.com: Combines user-generated reviews and discussions of restaurants and bars with editorial content. Focused more on foodies/food snobs than Yelp.

www.Citysearch.com: Similar to Yelp; has a reputation for extremely biased reviews and has lost significant traction.

www.UrbanSpoon.com: Similar to Yelp and Citysearch; picking up traction recently.

www.dopplr.com: Users list their upcoming trips and learn if other people in their network will be at their destination.

Wine Sites

tv.winelibrary.com: Gary Vaynerchuk has made himself a brand in web 2.0 wine circles. His site includes a video podcast and very active message boards.

www.snooth.com: Largest user wine review and cataloging site. Links to many online stores to facilitate purchasing. Includes iPhone integration.

corkd.com: User wine review and cataloging site.

www.winelog.net: Similar to Cork'd, but includes editorial content.

Health and Wellness Sites

DailyStrength.org: Online support groups for many health conditions.

www.PatientsLikeMe.com: Online communities and blogs for patients suffering from various health conditions.

www.RateMDs.com: Rate and discuss doctors.

www.SparkPeople.com: Online fitness site with calorie-counting and workout-tracking components, as well as message boards, blogs, and other networking tools

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Photo Sharing Sites

www.flickr.com: Easy uploading, organization, and sharing; has a very active photo community. The most popular photo-sharing website.

picasa.google.com: Google's Flickr competitor; lacks some social aspects.

www.smugmug.com: Similar to Flickr, but more customizable.

photobucket.com: Competitor to Flickr; popular with teen media fans.

Book Sites

www.GoodReads.com: Book review and discussion site. "Like MySpace for book nerds."

www.librarything.com: Main competitor to GoodReads.

www.shelfari.com: Another GoodReads competitor.

Social News Sites

www.digg.com: Users contribute and comment on stories, and rate existing stories up or down based on interest.

www.reddit.com: Major Digg competitor; uses the same concept.

www.slashdot.org: Social news site focused on the tech world.

Link Sharing Sites

www.MetaFilter.com: Combines social news with general interesting links in a community weblog. Each story usually includes several links on a topic.

www.StumbleUpon.com: Users rate sites randomly shown to them with a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" using a free web browser toolbar.

Other Popular Sites

www.ravelry.com: Incredibly popular social networking site for knitters.

www.etsy.com: Handmade objects for sale.

www.dogster.com: Editorial content, advice, and community for dog lovers (and their pets).

coastr.com: Reviews of beers and venues that serve it.

There are hundreds of social networking sites out there. These are only the tip of the iceberg.