

Chapter 3: MySpace

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Once a pioneer in the social media cybersphere, MySpace describes itself as “a technology company connecting people through personal expression, content, and culture.” MySpace was one of the first sites to offer a convenient online destination to

- ◆ Create a personal profile
- ◆ Upload photos, videos, and music
- ◆ Write a blog
- ◆ Play online games
- ◆ Exchange news and comments with “friends” who sign up to your account

MySpace claims to reach more than 160 million people worldwide each month, of whom about 50 million are in the United States. Though that number represents less than half as many U.S. Facebook users, 50 million users is nothing to sneeze at. If your business targets some of them, MySpace might still be an important arrow in your marketing quiver. This chapter discusses how to decide whether MySpace is right for you and how to maximize its marketing impact.



We cover here only the basic setup for a business MySpace account and best practices for business applications. For more details about using MySpace, see *MySpace For Dummies*, by Ryan Hupfer, Mitch Maxson, and Ryan Williams.

Deciding Whether MySpace Is Right for You

Leveraging the popularity of Friendster, MySpace.com launched in 2004 with the intention of offering the freewheeling cultural class in Southern

California a way to combine social networking with creative self-expression. It experienced phenomenal growth for its first few years, becoming the most visited social networking site in the United States by June 2006.

Alas, nothing lasts forever, especially dot-coms trapped in the shimmering World Wide Web. By April 2008 Facebook had eclipsed MySpace in terms of monthly unique visitors. Facebook continues to expand its market share for social media visits, much of it at the expense of MySpace, whose traffic continues to decline. Facebook had nearly twice the market share as MySpace only 18 months later, as shown in Table 3-1. Other, much smaller social marketing sites accounted for the remaining market share, but none had more than 3 percent.

Table 3-1 MySpace versus Facebook Market Share of All Social Marketing Visits

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Site Name</i>	<i>Domain</i>	<i>Sept. 2009</i>	<i>Aug. 2009</i>	<i>Sept. 2008</i>	<i>Year-Over-Year Percentage Change</i>
1	Facebook	facebook.com	58.59%	55.15%	19.94%	194%
2	MySpace	myspace.com	30.26%	33.00%	66.84%	-55%

Source: Experian® Hitwise® www.hitwise.com/us/press-center/press-releases/2009/social-networking-sept-09



A site can lose market share without losing users. Some of the MySpace share loss results from Facebook attracting more new accounts during the rapid growth of the social networking base.



It's all about *your* audience. Ignore all the press reports about the decline and fall of this or that social media empire. If you can successfully reach your target market on MySpace and energize them to become prospects, qualified leads, or customers, stick with it.

Exploiting the demographics of MySpace

The number of users isn't all that matters. The degree of *engagement*, or time on site (shown in Table 3-2), is also an important measure. In terms of engagement, MySpace is still ahead, boasting the highest time on site of 155 sites measured by Hitwise (www.hitwise.com).

Table 3-2 MySpace versus Facebook Time on Site (Minutes:Seconds)

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Site Name</i>	<i>Domain</i>	<i>Sept. 2009</i>	<i>Sept. 2008</i>	<i>Year-Over-Year Percentage Change</i>
1	Facebook	facebook.com	23:00	18:38	23%
2	MySpace	myspace.com	25:56	29:37	-12%

Source: Experian® Hitwise® www.hitwise.com/us/press-center/press-releases/2009/social-networking-sept-09

With their dark backgrounds, throbbing musical beats, and edgy — if sometimes hard to read — fonts and graphics, many MySpace pages have an urban feel that appeals to teenagers and young adults who definitely aren't upper-class, buttoned-down preppies.

The demographic profile shown in Table 3-3 shows that MySpace skews to a young adult female audience, with more than 54 percent younger than 35. By comparison, only 27 percent of the Facebook audience is under 35, but it has twice as many users 55 and over.

Table 3-3 MySpace Demographic Profile

<i>Category</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Female	56
Male	44
3 to 12	5
13 to 17	27
18 to 34	44
35 to 49	16
Over 50	8
Caucasian	65
African American	13
Asian	4
Hispanic	17
Other ethnicity	1
No kids 0 to 17	43

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Table 3-3 (continued)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Has kids 0 to 17	57
No college	58
College	33
Grad school	8
Income \$0 to \$30,000	20
Income \$30,000 to \$60,000	26
Income \$60,000 to \$100,000	27
Income over \$100,000	26

Source: Quantcast.com

Some analysts have discerned ethnic and class differences between MySpace and Facebook, with MySpace appearing to draw lower-income and more ethnically diverse populations, particularly Latinos and African Americans.

To reach Hispanic audiences in the United States, consider the site at <http://latino.myspace.com>, a primarily Spanish-language site. Latin American audiences are better reached through that section on MySpace International (<http://la.myspace.com>).



You can estimate MySpace demographics at <https://advertise.myspace.com>. Enter a test ad and then filter the audience by gender, age, education, relationship status, parental status, or geography. Education, which tiers by age, is a relatively good indicator of socioeconomic status: the more education, the higher the income. The gray bar at the bottom of the page displays the number of unique users within your filters.

If your business targets an ethnic audience, caters to a young adult market under 35, skews female, or plays to the MySpace strong suits in music, comedy, video, video games, fashion, celebrities, and other forms of entertainment, you can effectively promote your business to some of its most ardent users. Singer Gilbert Sanchez does so in Figure 3-1. Mr. G, a smooth-sounding R&B/soul singer in Albuquerque, uses his MySpace music page at myspace.com/mrgsanchez to allow visitors to listen to sample songs, buy a CD, link to his primary site at www.mrgsanchez.com, or e-mail him to book a gig.



Figure 3-1: This singer's home page displays many standard MySpace components and references his main Web site.



The MySpace reporting system for advertising demographics isn't updated in real time. Keep this information in mind if you're planning an ad campaign or trying to decide whether you want to dedicate your social marketing efforts to MySpace.

Fitting the MySpace glove

As you plan your social media strategy, consider whether your type of business would flourish on MySpace. Though MySpace is inherently a B2C (business-to-consumer) venue, you can reach other companies, such as musicians and filmmakers, that market themselves on the site with your business-to-business (B2B) message. Think of it like marketing to exhibitors at a trade show rather than to visitors. Here are a few ideas:

- ◆ **Music-related businesses:** In addition to the obvious bands, singers, instrumental soloists, and deejays, think about businesses that publish or produce CDs and music videos; design CD covers; make, rent, or sell musical instruments, film equipment, or audio accessories; rent recording or rehearsal studios; act as booking agents or publicists; or teach music.
- ◆ **Other entertainment-related businesses:** Comedians, dancers, clowns, filmmakers, live theatres, bars, comedy clubs, sports lounges, movie theaters, and restaurants that appeal to a younger demographic can leverage their own pages with MySpace Local, a collaboration with Citysearch that allows MySpace users to review venues and share reviews with friends.

If you don't find your business in the directory at www.citysearch.com/allstates, submit your information for a basic free listing directly to myaccount@citysearch.com or call Citysearch at 800-611-4827. An expanded paid advertising program for MySpace Local is also available:

www.citysearch.com/aboutcitysearch/advertise_with_us/myspace

- ◆ **Educational programs, sports groups, and other institutions targeting an audience under 25:** Summer camps, especially those in drama, music, or visual arts; training programs; summer or semester-abroad programs; youth groups, private or charter middle schools and high schools recruiting students; colleges; after-school programs; and home schooling groups and organizations with volunteer programs can — and probably should — all actively recruit on MySpace. Sports training programs, SAT preparation providers, tutors, gyms, and even karate schools may find avid consumers there.
- ◆ **Businesses whose products or services appeal to an audience under 25:** Fashion, accessories, makeup, and hair styling for young females are no-brainers. The large group of 18-to-24-year-old cohorts on MySpace

buys everything from T-shirts to tattoos, from auto decor to backpacks, from posters to running gear, and from energy drinks to lattes, not to mention CDs, DVDs, video games, and media downloads. Even younger teens who aren't legally able to use a credit card — and whose tastes are decidedly different from those even a few years older — will get their parents to purchase items for them.



Continue to watch the news about MySpace and your own traffic and sales results. At the moment, MySpace is refocusing its efforts on music, film, and entertainment, seeking to dominate the younger market rather than compete with Facebook. Whether that strategy will succeed remains an open question.

For authors such as Suzanne Crowley (see the nearby sidebar, “Teen lit author finds MySpace imperative”), whose teen lit books aim directly at this demographic, MySpace becomes a must-have service.

Teen lit author finds MySpace imperative

Suzanne Crowley, a published author of young adult books, has long since found her voice. Now she uses MySpace to find her readers. Her first novel, *The Very Ordered Existence of Merilee Marvelous*, aimed at middle-grade students, debuted in August 2007. Her second, *The Stolen One*, a young adult Elizabethan novel, came out in June 2009. She promotes it actively on MySpace, as shown in the sidebar figure.

Crowley, who's trying specifically to reach teens and young adults, initially got involved with MySpace after her publisher urged her to “join as many social networking sites as possible.” Crowley questioned whether MySpace would be worth her time, but “an author friend said she had over 4,000 hits to her MySpace page and she felt it was invaluable for her sales.” Crowley asked her teen daughter, Lauren, to design the page. Lauren already had experience in designing social networking sites, explains Crowley, and “she has the advantage of knowing what appeals to teenagers.”

Now, with more than 2,000 hits on her MySpace page, Crowley is enthusiastic. “To me, this

is invaluable free advertising. It's like a viral effect, as the more friends I have, the more the cover of my book shows up on their sites, with their friends seeing my book. I read somewhere that a person will only purchase a book after reading about it or seeing it seven times. Combine this with the data that shows teenagers are heavily influenced about book purchases after reading about it online. Being on a social network such as MySpace is imperative for a young adult author.”

It wasn't all easy, however. “Initially, it was very time-consuming acquiring friends. I set a goal of having 2,000 friends. I checked out other young adult authors, and invited as many of their friends as I could, figuring that their friends were probably book-loving teenagers more likely to accept my friendship and be curious about my page, and then of course, hopefully purchase my book. I've also made friends with over 200 libraries, corresponded with their librarians, usually a teen librarian, and sent free bookmarks to their teen groups. Several of the libraries featured my book after this in their teen section.”

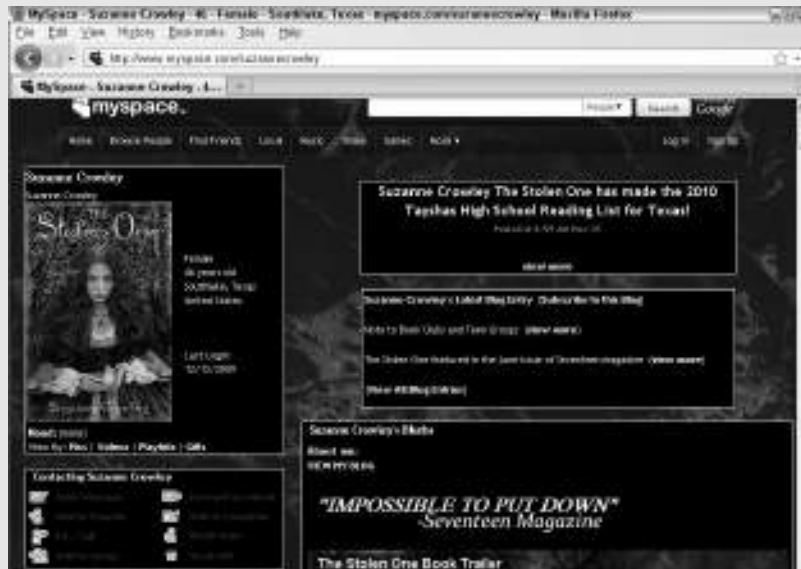
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MySpace is only part of Crowley's social media activities, which also include Facebook, YouTube, a blog on LiveJournal, and two specialty readers' networks — Goodreads and JacketFlap. Her hub Web site links to all these social networking sites.

Crowley acknowledges that she spends "a considerable amount of time" gathering new

friends, updating her social pages, and reading about other books. Still, her MySpace advice is pragmatic. "Create a simple yet vibrant page, make it interactive with links, add music that appeals to teenagers, make as many friends as possible who are your target audience, do contests, wish your friends Happy Birthday, and update as frequently as possible."



Courtesy Suzanne Crowley

Understanding How MySpace Can Benefit Your Business

The value of MySpace comes from sharing a sector of social-cyberspace with your target audience. It helps you to

- ◆ **Focus on branding rather than on selling.** Though you certainly can sell from MySpace, keep that task as an ancillary function. MySpace is soft-sell space, where recommendations from friends offer greater value than any pitch you make yourself.
- ◆ **Drive traffic to your site.** In addition to the link in your profile, place multiple links within MySpace content to other pages on your Web site.

Use *calls to action* — directions people should take — to tell people why they should visit your site. “Find out more about our next concert” is a much more appealing call to action than “Click here for more.”

- ◆ **Communicate directly with your audience.** Comments from MySpace friends can provide important, direct feedback that you’ll never hear elsewhere. Pay attention and respond. The content is more immediate than what you would get from a paid focus group, and cheaper, too.
- ◆ **Improve your search engine optimization (SEO) techniques.** After you optimize your site for search terms as discussed in Book II, Chapter 2, use the same essential search terms within your MySpace profile, blogs, and event listings. All those links you place to drive traffic also help improve your rank in Google results.



Update your MySpace page frequently to improve your presence in real-time search results.

Reinforcing your brand

When you pay attention to your online image and customer service, you’re paying attention to your brand. The visual appearance of your MySpace page is part of your brand.

When you create your MySpace page, as described in the next section, replicate as close as possible the appearance of your Web site for consistency. On the other hand, if you’re segmenting your audience — targeting a product line with a different message to a younger, hipper audience — you might need to make your MySpace presence more exciting, add music, or modify the page layout while keeping some internal image coherence.

Be sure to incorporate the following elements for branding purposes:

- ◆ Your logo
- ◆ Your marketing tag
- ◆ A link to your Web site, which can appear with your standard domain name but direct MySpace users to a landing page on your site designed with information and offers appropriate just for them
- ◆ Standard contact information addressed to a specific department or person who serves this market



You don’t have a second chance to make a first impression. Users establish an immediate visual and emotional connection within three to four seconds of viewing your MySpace or Web page. Think carefully about the audience you’re trying to reach and what visuals and music appeal to them.

Setting goals and objectives for MySpace

Everything goes better with a plan. Before you start developing your MySpace presence, think strategically. Whom are you trying to reach? Which goals are you trying to accomplish? Can you quantify your goals into quantifiable objectives, such as number of referrals to your site, number of sales, or number of posts? Here are some typical goals:

- ◆ **Friends:** *Friends*, the number of people who sign up to “pay attention” to your site, are the primary currency of MySpace. Think of your friends as prospects who might take additional action to become customers. It helps to establish a target objective and run a focused recruitment campaign to reach a targeted number of friends.

People ask to become your friend by clicking the Add to Friends link in the Contact box on your MySpace page. You decide which friend requests to accept. The friend space on your home page displays the number of friends you have as well as pictures of some of them.

A good rule is to estimate that about 5 percent of your friends might eventually click on your Web site or take another action.

Make sure to use calls to action on your Web site that remind people to become your friend and, in turn, to tell their friends about you. Just having a Follow Us icon for MySpace isn't enough! For example, the anchor text for a link to your MySpace page might read “Friend Us on MySpace.” If your online store can handle promotion codes, you might even offer a discount for becoming a friend. However, you have to e-mail the promo code to each individual who befriends you, or send a bulletin with the code.



- ◆ **Customer service:** Using your MySpace blog or bulletins, you can respond quickly to questions or complaints about your product or service, reaching many people at a time instead of responding to one person at a time. You can also post links to product videos for training, installation, troubleshooting, or product display.
- ◆ **Publicity:** Following the publicity vector on social media can become overwhelming. People can refer your page to another service, add a social bookmark, or e-mail a friend quickly. In addition to watching referrals to your Web site with your traffic statistic software, use one of the alert services discussed in Book II, Chapter 1 for online mentions of your company that you didn't place.
- ◆ **Sales:** You can use one of the third-party shopping cart tools (see Book II, Chapter 1) to sell from MySpace, or link users to your e-commerce Web site. Use Google Analytics to trace sales back to their referring source. Be sure to measure the value of sales, not just the number, to assess whether your investment is paying off.
- ◆ **Connection and communication:** You can tally the quantity of comments you receive, but it's hard to measure their quality. Many friends'

comments and blog posts are self-serving or self-promoting or utterly irrelevant. Your own communications, of course, are always relevant and responsive, right?

To track leads, as opposed to links, try using a MySpace-specific e-mail address (`myspace@yourcompany.com`), a person's name, or a different phone extension to identify the source of inquiries. In a pinch, you can always ask how someone heard about you.

Considering your investment of time and resources

MySpace can be time-consuming, but it isn't expensive. Unless you pay someone to develop your page or use paid advertising, you can keep your MySpace financial investment to a minimum.

However, MySpace works best when you interact with your friends. That means responding to comments, sending out birthday messages, or at least reading what others have written and moving the "conversation" along. As with any other form of social media, MySpace can rapidly morph into a time vortex that swallows you up.



You're already budgeting your social media marketing time. Allot 15 minutes every other day to monitor MySpace, respond to comments, and make updates. Make at least a small amount of content change once a week.

Beginning with MySpace

You follow the same process to sign up as a business as you would for an individual. However, you answer the questions differently. Unless you're an artist, entertainer, or author, you're generally *not* your business. Your prospective clients or customers are much more interested in what you can do for them than in your personal story.

The distinctions begin with the sign-up page, at <https://signup.myspace.com/Modules/Signup/Pages/CreateAccount.aspx?fuseaction=signup>. Musicians, comedians, and filmmakers complete slightly different forms that place their profiles into the correct category. Certain information on this page deserves your attention:



- ◆ **E-mail address:** Use a general business address, not your personal one — for example, `myspace@yourcompanyname.com`.
Configure your e-mail client to accept the new e-mail address.
- ◆ **Full name:** Enter your business name.
- ◆ **Date of birth:** Enter an arbitrary date, such as January 1, 1950, that makes your age 21 or over.



Do not use the age of your company, unless you have been established for more than 21 years. MySpace restricts permissible activities by age. If your age is under 13, you aren't even allowed to sign up.

- ◆ **Gender:** This one doesn't matter, but it's required. Flip a coin.
- ◆ **Photo:** After you confirm your account information, you can upload a photo. Rather than upload a picture of yourself, upload your logo or a product image.
- ◆ **Location:** Provide the country, city, state, and zip code for your business.

Save the form and move to the next step, creating your profile. MySpace automatically walks you through the profile process.

On the first page that appears (<http://profileedit.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=profile.username>), check the MySpace URL option in the upper-left corner to make it easier for people to find you. For branding purposes, enter a name that's as close as possible to your domain name. If it's already taken, use a variation of your company name. Don't use your personal name — it will only confuse users.



This page appears when you first create a profile, but never again. In other words, you're saddled with the URL you choose for your MySpace lifetime. Be careful.

Editing your profile

MySpace autofills some fields and outlines profile content in modules. You can fill out these fields any way you want and modify them at any time. For the MySpace audience, try to give your content a personal flair — take out the starch!

To edit your profile, choose Profile⇨Edit Profile. Work your way down the sections in the left navigation. Do what best fits your business, but here are some suggestions for each one:

- ◆ **About Me:** This first block is a good place to add a brief description of your business and insert your domain name. You can duplicate the Page Description metatag from the home page of your Web site, which is already optimized for certain search terms (see Book II). Be sure to include benefits and your value proposition (what sets your company apart from others). You can also include links to your Web site and to your other social media pages. In the second area (Who I'd Like to Meet), describe your target market, at least the portion of it that's likely to be on MySpace!
- ◆ **Interests:** Depending on the nature of your business, you might want to fill out only the General block with information about your products and services. Be sure to use some of the same search terms for which your

Web site is optimized. Fill out the blocks for Music, Movies, Television, Books, and Heroes, if they apply. However, if you're in one of those industries, consider talking about your track record and experience instead of your likes and dislikes.

- ◆ **Basic Info:** Modify the sign-up information you provided, change your display name, or add or substitute other images for display. With as many as four images available, you can supplement your logo with photos of your product in use or your crew at work. You can also enter a headline for your business.



Use the Headline field in the Basic Info section to insert your *marketing tag*, the five- to seven-word description of your business that appears on your business card and Web site and all your other marketing information. In the best of all possible worlds, the headline includes at least one of your preferred search terms.

- ◆ **Details:** You can delete this module unless you're a freelance model or actor. This section generates the demographic information, including ethnicity and marital status, that MySpace uses to target audiences for paid advertisers.
- ◆ **Schools:** Delete this module also, unless you're creating a profile for an educational institution or program.
- ◆ **Companies:** This module is designed for employment history, but if your company has multiple storefronts or divisions, you can enter that information here. Otherwise, you can delete it.
- ◆ **Networking:** In this valuable module, you select a field and subfield and your role from a list, and then you add a description. You can add multiple networking fields. Complete this module carefully because it categorizes your MySpace page for search purposes. If you're interested in reaching particular industry sectors with your services or products, you might want to include those fields here, too. Include search terms in the Description fields.

For instance, if you're a graphic designer who wants to create CD covers, you might select music/marketing/art design and insert a description of your creative CD covers.



If you aren't sure which fields to choose, find your competitors on MySpace by using the Search function (choose Search MySpace⇒ People). Then do some basic research by looking at their MySpace pages and Web sites.

Customizing your profile

On the Profile Tab, click Customize Profile. As you hover the mouse over the various display blocks, you see options for Settings, Visibility, Edit, and Delete Module on each one.

First, you may want to delete the blocks that don't apply to your business such as the Mood module; the Details module, which provides irrelevant personal information such as marital status and height; and the Schools module. Don't worry: You can reinstall the modules later if you change your mind.

For each of the modules that you decided to keep, adjust the settings as follows:

1. Set the visibility level.

The Visibility setting controls which users can view a specific module. For most businesses, the settings are Everyone and Apply to All Modules. Then click to apply changes.

2. Set the privacy levels for each module by clicking the privacy link within the Visibility dialog box or by going to <http://profileedit.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=accountSettings.privacy>.

You can set different privacy levels for each module, but most businesses should select the broadest audience (Anyone) with the possible exception of preventing users under 18 from contacting you.

3. Use the edit mode as another way to modify the content within a module.

Once you're in Edit mode, your list of modules also appears in the left margin of the window.

4. Click the Save Changes button after you edit each one.

Customizing your MySpace appearance

Customize Profile also allows you to adjust the look and feel of your MySpace presence. At the top of <http://profileedit.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=pageeditor.profile>, you see choices for theme and layout. Here are some other options you have:

- ◆ **Choose a new theme:** Select the Appearances option and click Select Theme. You can choose from 157 themes organized in 16 categories. Choose the predesigned template that best matches the look and feel of your Web site, or one that you feel will appeal to your audience.
- ◆ **Change the layout:** Click the Change Layout option to rearrange the overall appearance of your page. Then select Modules in the left navigation in the upper left pane to if you want to add or delete additional modules from your MySpace page. Click the Preview button to see how your page will look. You can change the template at any time.



If you prefer to have your MySpace page directly mirror your Web site, you can control all settings in the Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) option or use the Advanced Edit function.

- ◆ **Go hybrid:** Use one of the MySpace templates for layout, but create a customized background that repeats your logo or echoes your Web site. Get technical support from your programmer if you need help with this task. In Table 3-4, you can find a summary of some handy URLs for navigating your way through the MySpace configuration process. You must be logged into your account for most of these URLs to work.

Table 3-4 Helpful URLs for MySpace

<i>Task You Need Help With</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>What You Can Do</i>
Account settings	http://profileedit.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=accountSettings.contactInfo	Establish administrative settings for your MySpace page.
Blog Control Center	http://blogs.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=blog.controlcenter	Set controls for posting and viewing blogs and obtain blog stats
Blog help	http://faq.myspace.com/app/blogs	Help manage your blog
Connect with MySpace	www.myspace.com/getconnected	Connect your MySpace page to other social media dashboards or monitoring services
Customize page appearance	http://profileedit.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=pageeditor.profile	Go directly to the Customize Profile page
Events and calendar	http://events.myspace.com	Create events to post on your calendar and view recommended events
Mail settings	http://messaging.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=mail.settingsV3	Establish settings for your MySpace e-mail

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Table 3-4 (continued)

<i>Task You Need Help With</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>What You Can Do</i>
MySpace browser toolbar	http://faq.myspace.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/306/kw/Blogs/page/3/r_id/100061	Install a MySpace toolbar in your browser
Groups Home	http://groups.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=groups.categories	Search, create, and manage your MySpace groups
Help	http://faq.myspace.com/app/home	Search for answers to common questions

Selecting other options

You can further personalize your MySpace page to maximize your marketing impact by clicking the Profile tab and selecting an option from the drop-down list:

- ◆ **Music:** My Playlists lets you upload an optional music clip to play when users visit your site. Match your music to the mood you're trying to establish. Be sure that you own the copyright or have the owner's permission for any music you use!
- ◆ **Video:** With My Videos, you can upload optional video clips that users can select to view. A still of the first one appears on the screen. Select this primary video with a specific marketing goal in mind. Again, be sure that you own the copyright or have permission.
- ◆ **Activity Stream:** This option displays activity on your MySpace page. It's a little like displaying a counter on your Web site. If your MySpace activity level is high, the numbers act like a testimonial. If your numbers are low, turn off this option by choosing Customize Profile → Modules so that you don't discourage viewers.
- ◆ **Applications:** Choose My Apps to choose from more than 1,000 little applications — *widgets* — to offer to your visitors. On one hand, applications such as contests, polls, quizzes, or games can keep users on your page and draw them back, reinforcing your brand. On the other hand, they can distract from your marketing message and slow the download time of your MySpace page. Choose no more than two, or ignore applications altogether.

Making the Most of MySpace

You can amplify your marketing message by taking advantage of three MySpace features: groups, blogs, and bulletins. Selecting the right groups helps you target your market, whereas blogs help you update content and interact with all viewers. Bulletins are used to communicate only with your MySpace friends, comparable to sending a bulk e-mail or e-newsletter to subscribers.



Combine your MySpace page with a MySpace Local listing, and possibly some MySpace advertising, for more marketing oomph.

Selecting groups

It might not seem obvious, but joining a MySpace group or creating a new one is a tactical marketing decision. Select groups whose membership parallels your target market.

Start by reviewing the list of group categories at <http://groups.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=groups.categories>. As you can see, often thousands of groups are within each category. Click the category name to see a brief description of each one. Look for public groups with recent activity and a reasonable number of members. Use the Search Groups function on the Groups Home page (refer to Table 3-4) to make your life a little easier. Because each of the 34 categories has tens of thousands of groups, try the Advanced Search option to filter results by keyword, category, location, and other parameters.

When you find a group you like, simply click Join Group to become a member.

By joining a group, you become more visible to MySpace members who are looking for people who share their interests — and, conversely, you have an inside track to reach your target markets.

You can join an unlimited number of groups, and you're expected to participate. Try limiting your participation to only a few groups, though you can drop out of any group at any time.



Don't judge a group by its name. Spend some time watching the interaction level in the group and be sure that it covers the interest area and draws the users you expect.

If you decide to create a group of your own, you need to spend some time promoting the group and waiting for membership to build. From a business perspective, starting with an existing group is easier. If you want to develop a group of your own, simply click the Create Group option on the Group

Home page, or go directly to <http://groups.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=groups.creategroup&lang=en>. Complete the form on that page and click the Create Group button at the bottom.

Managing your MySpace blog

As discussed in Book III, Chapter 2, blogs are one of the most useful ways to reach prospects with easily updated content. If you don't already have a blog, you can create your primary blog on MySpace and then propagate your postings elsewhere. Conversely, you can automatically update MySpace with posts from other sources by using a syndication service, such as ping.fm. (See Book II, Chapter 1 for more services.)



For most businesses, one blog is plenty. Some companies have more than one expert write a blog about their specialty.

Busting out with MySpace bulletins

Sometimes you want to communicate only with your MySpace friends and not with the general world. For instance, you might want to reward friends with a special offer or promotion code to buy something on your Web site.

Or, you may want to copy a blog posting to your friends to be sure that they see it. Your bulletin appears on all your friends' private bulletin boards, on their individual home pages. The bulletin remains visible for two weeks, and only they can see it.



You cannot “unsend” a bulletin. Be absolutely sure you want to send it.

You can find the directions to post a bulletin or to review all bulletins you've posted at http://faq.myspace.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/310/kw/bulletins/r_id/100061

Promoting events

The MySpace calendar is a handy way to plan and publicize your events. To generate an event posting, choose Edit Profile→Account Settings→Calendar→Create. Use this module to display scheduled events, from performances, gallery openings, and book signings to online or in-store sales.

Be sure to include conferences at which someone from your business will be speaking, trade shows or crafts fairs at which you're exhibiting, or other third-party events, such as trade association meetings, that you're attending. Try to use at least one of your preferred search terms within the Event Title field.

Selling through MySpace

You can't sell directly from MySpace, but you can link one of the following elements to a third-party site for e-commerce:

- ◆ Your own Web site.
- ◆ A third-party store such as Netcarnation or Sellit (see Book II, Chapter 1).
- ◆ Your page on a third-party site such as Amazon, eBay, or Etsy. For an example, see the Texas Tornados's MySpace page at www.myspace.com/texastornados, shown in Figure 3-2, which links to the Double Stereo Web site.



Figure 3-2: To buy the latest Texas Tornados CD, viewers can click from their Purchase link.

Courtesy Texas Tornados 2010



MySpace tries to keep users on its own site. Viewers may see an interstitial message warning about phishing and requiring confirmation before they arrive at your Web site or third-party store.

Offering your MySpace friends, visitors, and blog readers something special for their loyalty makes sense. You can do it in several ways:

- ◆ Post a promo code in one of your blurbs and link visitors to your Web site or third-party site.
- ◆ Send a bulletin to your friends that includes a time-limited, special offer.
- ◆ Promote an offer on your home page to encourage visitors to become friends. For instance, “Become my friend this week and save 10 percent on your next purchase.” Be sure to e-mail the promo code to all visitors who sign up or send them a new bulletin.
- ◆ Include an offer in your blog.
- ◆ If you’re running a loyalty program on your e-commerce site, set up a special program just for MySpace users.



You cannot sell directly from MySpace. Be sure to read the terms of use carefully to see what you can and cannot do. Otherwise, your account may be suspended.

Advertising on MySpace

Consider buying pay-per-click (PPC) or pay-by-impression (CPM) banner ads on MySpace if you want to reach this demographic of users under 34 but don’t want to devote time to creating and maintaining a MySpace profile. MySpace is part of the MyAds self-service ad program at www.myads.com/myspace/login.html, which serves the FOX Audience Network. The service offers a template builder for ads, statistics, and detailed targeting options.

Budgets for ad campaigns, which you can start and stop at will, can run as low as \$5/month. You’ll find additional information and directions for businesses at www.myads.com/businessads.html, as well as advertising suggestions specifically for musicians and concert promoters, comedians, and filmmakers.



Page owners can choose not to permit most ads to display on their MySpace page by choosing Edit Profile⇨Account Settings⇨Ad Categories, and leaving all the boxes blank. To avoid distracting viewers of your MySpace page, exercise this “no ads” option. However, at least one leader board ad probably will still run above the MySpace header graphic.

MySpace also displays PPC text and banner ads from Google Adwords in multiple locations. If you run a Google Adwords campaign, you can select various MySpace locations and audiences as a destination for managed content placements.



To set this up for your ad campaign, choose Settings⇨Networks & Devices⇨Select Content Network⇨Placements and Audiences I Manage. Save your settings. Then, from your campaign or ad group, choose Networks⇨Managed Placements⇨Add Placements⇨Try the Placement

Tool. After you enter MySpace.com into the Website box, you'll see a list of MySpace placement options (see Figure 3-3). For more information on combining social media with advertising campaigns, see Book VIII, Chapter 5.

The screenshot shows the Google AdWords Placement Tool interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with 'All Categories' (Animals, Arts & Humanities, Automotive, Beauty & Personal Care, Business, Computers & Electronics, Entertainment, Finance & Insurance, Food & Drink, Games, Health, Home & Garden, Industries, Internet) and 'Placement Types' (Site, Video, Feed, Game, Mobile, Audio). Below the sidebar is a 'Help' section with a 'Search help center' input field. The main area is titled 'Placement ideas' and contains a table with the following columns: Placement, Placement Type, Ad Types, and Impressions Per Day. The table lists various MySpace placement options, such as 'myspace.com', 'myspace.com > Multiple sections, locations', and 'myspace.com > User Interest - Dating, Multiple locations'. The 'Impressions Per Day' column shows values like '500,000+', '100,000 - 500,000', and '10,000 - 100,000'.

Figure 3-3: Google feeds PPC and banner ads to multiple locations on MySpace.

Screenshot © Google Inc. Used with permission.

Buying group or bulletin access

Some MySpace sites sell advertising on their bulletins or in their groups. Be cautious. Whether those ads successfully reach your audience depends on the quality of the site that's selling the access. Those with high-quality MySpace friends and high standards may do well, but others are just people sending bulletins to each other.

It may take longer, but you'll probably find that it's more effective to promote your products and services in your own bulletins and blogs to your own carefully cultivated list of friends.

Marketing off MySpace

Cross-promoting your MySpace page on all your other social media efforts is always a good idea. Similarly, use your MySpace page to cross-promote the others.

Using the MySpace icon

Post a MySpace icon and a call to action to become your friend on your Web site, on your other social media sites, and at any other place where you have a Web presence. This icon should link directly to your own MySpace home page. You can find the icon at

www.myspace.com/pressroom?url=/section_display.cfm?section_id=18



Be sure to include MySpace as a Follow Us On button (as shown on mrgsanchez.com in Figure 3-4) to link people directly from your Web site to your MySpace page. Also include MySpace in your list of social sharing buttons from AddThis (<http://addthis.com>) or other sharing services (see Book II, Chapter 3). Users who select MySpace from a sharing service log in to their MySpace pages and are invited to post a link to your Web site on their own pages, bulletins, or blogs. It's a failsafe word-of-Web technique.

Figure 3-4:
The MySpace Music button on his Web site links to Gilbert Sanchez's MySpace page.



Courtesy Mr. G - Gilbert Sanchez

Cross-promoting on Twitter

If you also have a Twitter account, you can use Twitter Sync at www.myspace.com/twittersync to display your MySpace online status and mood automatically with Twitter. This strategy works only if you have enabled the Mood and Status module on MySpace. Conversely, you can post your tweets on MySpace.