

Chapter 4: Analyzing Facebook Metrics

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You've created a spiffy Facebook page and added a couple of bells and whistles to it, and you've posted religiously to your page and interacted with the people who like your page. Now it's time to see the fruits your efforts have yielded. Unless you have time on your hands, you know that your marketing efforts are paying off. You probably use Facebook as part of a much larger marketing effort. Therefore, you *must* know which form of social media is giving you the most bang for your buck. You may not think you're spending money on social media, because most of it's free. But you are spending time. And time is money.

In this chapter, we show you some ways to measure the effectiveness of your Facebook page.

Checking Referrals from Web Sites

One of your goals is probably to drive more traffic to your Web site. If your Web hosting service has a service that can track where your Web site traffic is coming from, you can use this service to see how much of it is from Facebook. Check with your Web hosting service for additional information.

If you have a Google account and you've enabled Google Analytics for the Web sites you want to track, you can use this service to see how many referrals are a result of your Facebook activity. Follow these steps:

- 1. Log in to Google Analytics.**
- 2. Select the Web site you want to monitor from the View Reports drop-down menu.**
- 3. Click Traffic Sources.**

When the page refreshes, you see a graph measuring visits to your Web site.

4. Click All Traffic Sources.

When the page refreshes, you see a list of sources that generated visits to your Web site.

5. Enter Facebook in the Filter Source/Medium text box using the default Containing parameter.

The page refreshes and shows you the number of visits resulting from Facebook.

We talk more about Google Analytics in Book VIII, Chapter 1.

Monitoring Post Comments

The easiest way to know how well your message is received is the number of comments left in individual posts. If you write a post that strikes a chord with the people who like your page, you receive a lot of comments. Let's face it: You can't please everybody. Some comments are good, and some are bad.

When your post receives lots of good comments, it's a sign that you're getting the right message to the people who like your page. When you receive positive comments on a post, think of similar subjects to write about or expand on the subject in future posts.



A Facebook post has a limited number of characters. To keep your fans coming back for more, break a popular subject into several small tidbits.

When you receive negative comments, analyze them carefully. See whether the fan disagrees with your point of view — or offers a spirited alternative. In the former case, refrain from creating posts about similar topics. If the latter is true, think about writing similar posts that will engage a lively conversation with the people who like your page. Sometimes it pays to spice things up a bit.

Consider also your original goals for setting up a Facebook business page: Ask yourself whether the quality of interaction from your fans is at the level you expected and whether posted comments are positive and generate visits to your Web site. See the earlier section “Checking Referrals from Web Sites” to find out how to measure Facebook traffic to your Web site.

You can also gain some insight from whatever prompts the largest amount of commenting and feedback. If you're a photographer who hears lots of “oohs” and “aahs” about your photos, for example, continue uploading them. If you're an instructor and your instructional videos receive lots more feedback than your written posts, you're doing the right thing. Analyze which types of posts are prompting comments and then consider the type of work you do or product you sell.

Measuring Link Effectiveness

When you add a link to a post, you may be tempted to type the whole URL into the message box. However, unless you dig deep into your Web site analytics, you have no way of knowing whether the Web site visit came from Facebook or another form of social media or was generated by search engine results.

The solution is a unique URL through bit.ly for your Facebook posts that you can easily track. (See Book II, Chapter 1 for more information on bit.ly and other services that create short URLs.)

After you create a shortened URL and add it to a Facebook post, you can easily track the number of hits the link receives by following these steps:

1. **Open your favorite Web browser and navigate to <http://www.bit.ly>.**
2. **Enter the shortened URL in the address window followed by the plus sign (+).**
3. **Press Enter or Return.**

The Web site returns statistics about the shortened URL, as shown in Figure 4-1.

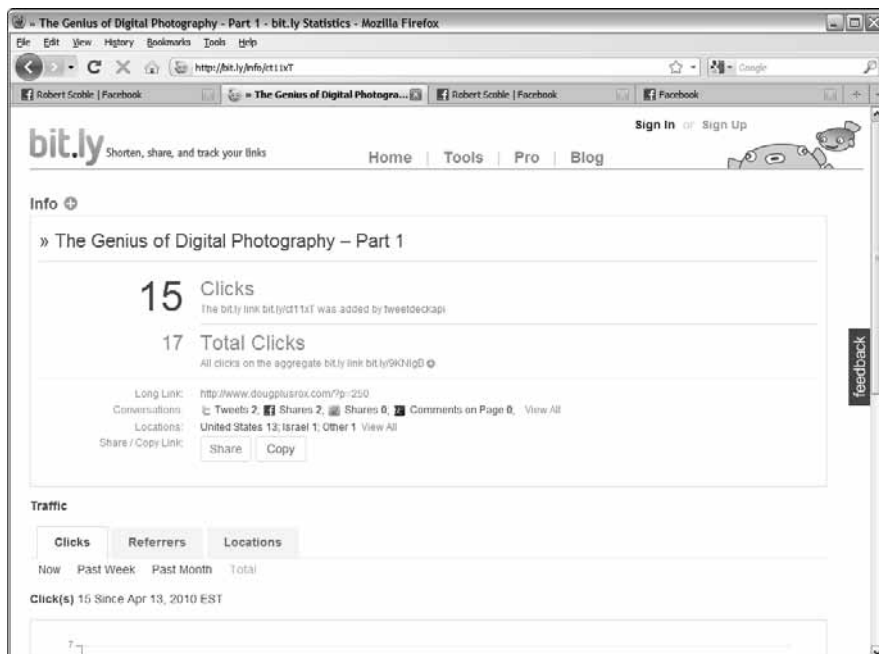


Figure 4-1:
Tracking a
shortened
URL.

Tracking Friend and Fan Requests

If you have a personal Facebook page, you acquire friends. It's almost the same as a popularity contest, and the late, great comedian George Carlin could have had a field day with the concept of Facebook friends. If you have a personal page, the trick is to turn your friends into people who like your Facebook page. To pump up your business page, increase the number of friends on your personal page and then invite them to like your business page. In return ask their friends to like your business page. The total number of friends and people who like your business page is known as your *reach*.

If people who like your page start bailing ship, figure out what you're doing wrong. Perhaps you're posting too often, or not posting enough. Another possible problem is the type of content you're posting. If lots of fans bail ship after you upload images or create a series of posts on a particular topic, it's time to cease and desist what you've been doing recently and return to the basics — the actions that you know work.

Here's another good metric to follow: If the number of people who like your page increases after uploading photos or videos, this type of material is stronger than your written posts are. You can find a lot of information from Facebook Insights, discussed in the later section "Using Facebook Insights."

Gathering Group Members

If you create a Facebook group, it goes without saying that having lots of group members can equate to having lots of people like your Facebook page. You can measure the impact a group has on your overall Facebook status by tracking how many group members end up becoming friends of your personal page and eventually liking your business page. If lots of friends of your personal page or people who like your business page become members of your group page when you create it, it indicates that you're putting out the right message and influencing people.

If you create a group about a popular subject, quite a few people will become members after searching for information about the subject. If you want these group members to eventually like your business page, follow these guidelines:

- ◆ Interact with group members and post frequently to the group.
- ◆ Encourage group members to participate, write posts on the wall, and upload photos, for example.

- ◆ Create a contest among group members to pump up interest.

Everything you do on Facebook — or, for that matter, in social media — dovetails. When you see a spike in group interaction, look for a corresponding spike in the number of new people who like your page. Your group can feed your business page and vice versa.



If you have a good following on Twitter, make sure your followers know about your group page. Whenever you post a new discussion there, or modify content, send a link in a tweet to your group page. Use the URL shortening service at <http://bit.ly>, and track the link as outlined in the earlier section “Measuring Link Effectiveness.”

Using the Ads Manager

If you purchase ads on Facebook, you can gauge their effectiveness by the number of clicks they receive and then track this information too. Determining which of your multiple ads returns the most bang for your buck can become confusing, so Ads Manager comes to the rescue.

You can track virtually every conceivable statistic regarding your ad by following these steps:

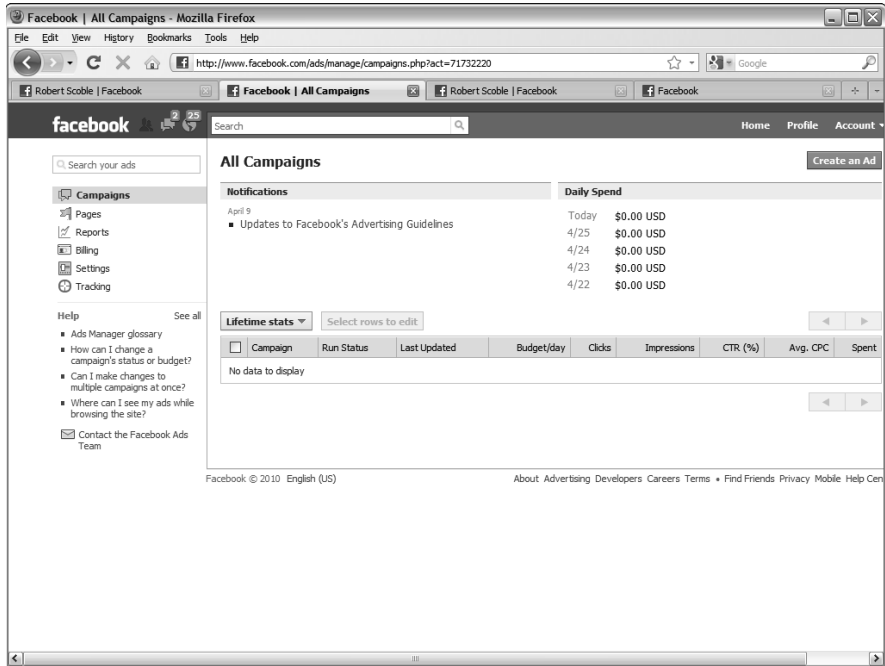
- 1. Log in to Facebook and navigate to your business page.**
- 2. Click Edit.**
- 3. Click Ads Manager.**

A list of the settings you can edit appears.

- 4. Click a link in the left column.**

The Ads Manager appears, as shown in Figure 4-2. You can change settings and view reports, billing information, and tracking information. The tracking information is especially helpful because it lets you see Web site activity resulting from someone clicking or seeing an ad.

Figure 4-2:
The Ads Manager gives you pertinent information regarding your Facebook ad campaigns.



Using Facebook Insights

Facebook provides you with a method of tracking your business page activity. As the page owner, you have access to the Insights feature (located in the left column of your business page), which tells you how many people like and how much interaction they've had with your page.

To view detailed information about your business page, follow these steps:

- 1. Log in to Facebook and navigate to your business page.**
- 2. Scroll to the Insights box on the left side of the page and then click See All.**

Information about your page appears, as shown in Figure 4-3, in the form of graphs.



Figure 4-3: Displaying insights on your fan page.

You can find the following information in your Insight graphs:

- ◆ **A breakdown of activity during the previous week:** As time goes on, you see how many new subscribers you have and how many have unsubscribed. You also can see when a former subscriber decides to rejoin your ranks.
- ◆ **The number of interactions per post, the breakdown of active fans, and much more:** To analyze a specific metric, choose an option from the Choose a Graph drop-down menu.



- ◆ **A spike in the number of new fans:** When you see this type of activity, note the type of activity you posted on your fan page that day. If you posted about a new topic or uploaded a video or photo album, you know that your fans like this type of material. Keep writing posts in this vein, or upload similar material to increase your fan base.

Making the Grade on Facebook Grader

The Web marketing company HubSpot has created Facebook Grader (www.facebook.grader.com), a free tool that shows you lots of information, including how you rank with other Facebook users. You simply enter the URL to your business page or enter a keyword or URL. The Web application looks for your page, analyzes certain data, and then posts a score along with other pertinent information, as shown in Figure 4-4.

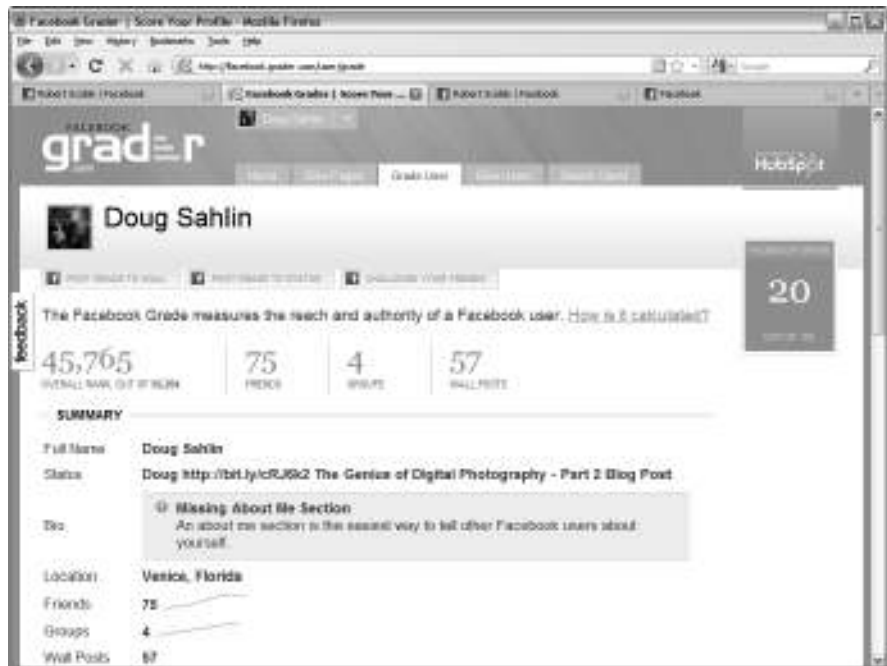


Figure 4-4: Did you make the grade?