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## EVENTS GET SOCIAL

By Kerrie Luginbill

The Mantooth Company is currently working on planning an inaugural event for The Fort Collins Rotary Downtown and Breakfast Clubs, Pigs n' Pits 5k Run/Walk and BBQ. Working on this event has brought to forefront how important it is to generate buzz around events, especially first year events. Social media and the effective use of social networking sites are currently the most popular methods of generating word-of-mouth buzz surrounding events, and The Mantooth Company is currently discovering why.

For most, Facebook is the hub of all social events. There are over 3 million events created each month on Facebook ranging from formal to informal and from large to small. The great thing about Facebook is that you can target your audience directly without any interference, and you can send a clear cut message and receive instant feedback about that message.

While it is incredibly easy to create an event on Facebook, it is not necessarily easy to make sure that those exposed to the event actually take the information in and exercise our desired actions. There are many ways to ensure that your Facebook events promotional efforts will be successful:

- Create a fan page for your event, not merely an event on your (or your business's) page, this offers much more opportunity for exposure and engagement with your audience.
- Make sure that your events fan page is clearly branded and consistent, you don't want your audience guessing, you want them to know exactly who you are and what your event is.
- Create comprehensive and clear copy for your "Info" section.
- Include photos, especially if this is an annual event (not inaugural) and include photos from the event after.
- Keep the wall updated with fresh content daily

or weekly, and try to engage your fans by asking questions and executing contests (for example: the best answer receives a free food ticket at the event).

- Provide informative and entertaining information to your fans via status updates, discussions and notes. Don't simply pitch the event; offer a reason for them to pay attention to what you are saying about your event.
- When building your network, start by searching Facebook for people who you know who are already a part of the community, and suggest your page to them. You can also invite people you email or IM via your contact list to join Facebook. Also use Facebook search to conduct searches of People, Pages and Groups to identify those who might be interested in your content and your event and suggest your page to them.
- Be sure to promote your Facebook presence off site to attract others to become your friend or fan, do this by incorporating widgets and blurbs such as "Follow us on Facebook!" on outgoing email signatures, print materials, websites etc...

To see how The Mantooth Company is using Facebook to promote Pigs n' Pits 5k Run/Walk and BBQ, check out the Facebook page, "Pigs n' Pits BBQ & 5K," and follow along to see the different techniques used to build a network and create a buzz.



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## Reconnecting With The Dead

There are some things that social networking sites have a hard time dealing with. Take for example you log into your Facebook account and are presented with a suggestion to "reconnect" with someone, and now imagine that person has passed away.

Back in 2009, Facebook released a feature that suggests old friends and family members with whom users might want to "reconnect" with. This is to encourage use of the site and networking, but it can have its downsides, especially when someone has died.

Soon after the release of the new reconnect feature several members complained that they were being encouraged to get in touch with people who have died. One Twitter user, Anita Frediani, actually tweeted, "Ironic that Facebook is suggesting I 'reconnect' with a friend who was murdered this year."

There are a lot of problems such as this that can occur when a deceased persons Facebook page is still active, and there aren't a lot of people who know how to correct this problem. Facebook does, however, have one solution. Facebook soon after created a feature that would memorialize the Facebook pages of the deceased.

Max Kelly, the head of Facebook security, said that memorializing a Facebook profile would stop suggestions from happening. Kelly sites other benefits to creating a memorialized account. "When an account is memorialized, we also set privacy so that only confirmed friends can see the profile or locate it in search. We try to protect the deceased's privacy by removing sensitive information such as contact information and status updates."

However, the memorializing of a profile hasn't been perfected. One issue with memorializing a page is that once a profile is memorialized, many items on the page are no longer available. Rachel Cooper, who lost her 19-year-old son, was furious when she memorialized his page. "There was absolutely no warning given about all his comments

and postings being deleted. All his friends and our family have now been caused the additional pain of losing all his written contributions to our lives without having the opportunity to save them first."

The death of a loved one is such a sensitive situation it is almost impossible to come up with the perfect solution, and Facebook is still working on coming up with one, but before memorializing a Facebook page, take into account the following:

- Memorializing a page means that you can no longer access their account with their email and password, this means that a deceased person cannot accept new friend requests, and the profile will only remain seen by the people who were previously friends on Facebook.
- The profile no longer appears in top friends or other applications. It remains an empty space.
- Notifications (such as pokes) and gifts are no longer available.
- The deceased persons "info" page is deleted, which includes the "interests" and "about me" sections.
- Tagged videos and uploaded videos are gone.
- Status updates and wall posts are removed. This is what most people have considered to be the most devastating part of memorialized accounts.




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