

Facebook for Organizations: Pages or Groups?

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Just this month Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced that the company has 300 million active users and is now cash flow positive. According to the [Facebook Statistics page](#), the fastest growing segment is people over the age of 35 and about 70% of users are outside the United States. With this phenomenal growth, more and more organizations are jumping on Facebook to promote themselves and build a fan base or community. HP has over 22,000 fans on its Facebook Page, Oracle has 17,000, and Google has a whopping 331,000!

Facebook offers two ways to promote your organization: Groups and Pages. Groups are better suited for causes, topical discussions and small non-profits. Pages are better suited to companies and brands. In this article, I'll describe the differences between Groups and Pages and walk you through how I set up a Page for KickStart Alliance.

Facebook Groups

A Facebook Group can be created by any Facebook user about any subject. For instance, there is a Salesforce Discussion Group created by a Salesforce.com customer for people to share ideas and help each other. A Group creator will have their name appear on the Group and when they post an item to the Group it will be attached to their personal profile. What to know about Groups:

- Groups are not indexed by Search engines
- Applications can't be added to Groups such as an RSS feed
- Only Facebook users can view Groups
- Groups can be open to any Facebook user, closed (meaning that members must be approved to join) and secret (meaning that members are invited to join and the Group is not searchable in Facebook)
- Group attributes include Type (for instance club, music, non-profit), News, Location, Description, Pictures, Videos, Events and a Discussion Board
- Group members can comment on the Group's Wall and get the latest news by either visiting the Group or by receiving a message from the Group in their inbox
- Groups have a 5000-member limit for sending mass emails

Facebook Pages

According to Facebook, “a Facebook Page is a public profile that enables you to share your business and products with Facebook users. Pages can only be created by an official representative of the business or organization, who remains anonymous.” Pages are ideal for companies, brands, artists and celebrities. What to know about Pages:

- Pages are indexed by the search engines and viewable by non-Facebook users
- Key attributes include: Year Founded, Website URL, Company Overview, Hours of operation (depending on the type of business), Photos, Events, News, and Notes
- Tabs are listed on the top of all pages, making content easy to organize and find
- You can add applications, such as RSS/Blog feeds, Flickr photos, Twitter links, etc. to Pages
- Fans can suggest a Page to their friends
- Fans can receive feeds when a Facebook Page has been updated
- Pages are displayed as a thumbnail with a picture and name, thus promoting the brand

Here is a chart summarizing the attributes of Groups and Pages:

	Groups	Pages
Creator	Anyone	Official company representative
Creator visibility	Tied to the Group and posts are attached to their personal profile	Anonymous
Indexed by search engines?	No	Yes
Visible to non-Facebook users?	No	Yes
Member/Fan limit?	No	No
Mass email?	Yes, up to 5,000 members	Yes, can message all Fans
Ability to add applications such as RSS feeds?	No	Yes
Integrated with Twitter?	No	Yes
Member/fan restrictions?	Yes, can have open, closed and private Groups	No

So, for businesses looking to promote themselves, increase their “findability” via search engines and establish a fan base, Facebook Pages are the best fit. For topical discussions, clubs and small non-profits, Facebook Groups are ideal. Some companies have multiple Pages for the corporate entity and many Groups – either set up by employees or by customers or others. See this example on a search of Cisco Systems which shows 9 Pages and 265 Groups!

The screenshot displays search results for 'Cisco Systems' on Facebook. It is divided into two sections: 'Pages' and 'Groups'.

Pages - 9 Results

- Page 1:** Cisco Systems Communications. Type: Communications. Fans: 323 fans. Action: Become a Fan.
- Page 2:** Cisco Systems, Inc. Type: Technology Product / Service. Fans: 66 fans. Action: Become a Fan.

[View All Page Results >](#)

Groups - 265 Results

- Group 1:** Cisco Systems. Type: Internet & Technology. Members: 17,442 members. Action: Join Group.
- Group 2:** CISCO SYSTEMS Student Groups. Type: Student Groups. Members: 272 members. Action: Join Group.
- Group 3:** Cisco Systems, Inc. Organizations. Type: Organizations. Members: 153 members. Action: Join Group.

Interesting to note it's a Cisco Group that has the most members (17,000+) versus one of the Pages that has 6,000 fans (not shown) in this screenshot.

In writing this article, I decided to set up a Facebook Page for KickStart Alliance. Here I'll walk you through the steps to do this:

1. Log into Facebook
2. Click on the Advertising link on the bottom of the page
3. Click on the Pages link – at the top with an orange flag icon

The screenshot shows the Facebook Advertising interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Advertising, Pages, Lexicon, Share, and Connect. Below this, the main heading is 'Facebook Advertising' with the tagline 'Reach your exact audience and connect real customers to your business.' On the right side, there is a green button labeled 'Create an Ad' and a link that says 'or manage your existing ads'.

4. Click on “Create a Page” in the Green Box

Facebook Pages

Create a presence that looks and behaves like user profiles to connect and engage with your customers and amplify your voice to their friends.

[Create a Page](#)
or [manage your existing Pages](#)

[Overview](#) [Prepare](#) [Step By Step](#) [Find New Fans](#)

5. Select the type of Page – for instance “Brand, Product or Organization”, enter the Business name, click that you are authorized to create the Page and enter your full name as an electronic signature.

Create New Facebook Page

Category:

Local:

Brand, Product, or Organization

Artist, Band, or Public Figure

Name of Other Business:

Please certify that you are an official representative of this brand, organization, or person and that you are permitted to create a Facebook Page for that subject.

I am authorized to create this Page

Electronic Signature:

[Create Page](#)

Here's how the KickStart Alliance Page first looked after following these steps:

The screenshot shows a Facebook page titled "KickStart Alliance" that has just been created. At the top, there is a notification: "Link Your Page to Your Twitter Account" with a "close" button and a link to enable the feature. Below this, a message states "Your Page has been created. To get started, upload a picture and edit information." The page header includes the name "KickStart Alliance" and a "Become a Fan" button. Navigation tabs for "Wall", "Info", "Photos", "Discussions", and a "+" icon are visible. On the left side, there is a large question mark icon, and below it, links for "Edit Page", "Add Fan Box to your site", and a text box with the prompt "Write something about KickStart Alliance." An "Edit Information" link is located in the top right corner of the page content area.

And once I had added year founded, overview and product information, a photo and an RSS feed for our blog, it looked like this:

The screenshot shows the updated Facebook page for "KickStart Alliance". The profile picture is the company logo, which features a stylized blue and black "K" and the text "KickStart Alliance". The navigation tabs now include "Wall", "Info", "RSS/Blog", "Photos", "Discussions", "Links", and a "+" icon. The "Edit Information" link is still present. The "Basic Info" section shows "Founded: 2002". The "Detailed Info" section includes "Website: http://www.kickstartall.com", "Company Overview: KickStart Alliance is a Silicon Valley-based consulting firm which helps B2B technology and clean tech companies grow revenue and market share by aligning and optimizing their marketing and sales operations and programs.", "Mission: Our goal is to help our clients achieve their next level of growth by establishing effective and repeatable programs and processes that they can continue to execute once we are gone.", and "Products: Sales Readiness:". On the left side, there is a link for "Edit Page", "Promote Page with an Ad", "Add Fan Box to your site", and a "More" dropdown menu. Below these are links for "Write something about KickStart Alliance." and an "Information" section with a pencil icon, which contains the text "Founded: 2002".

It was easy to do and just took an hour or so. Adding the RSS feed for the blog was a bit more challenging, but I was able to do it with an add-on application called Social RSS.

I hope you now have a better understanding of the differences between Facebook Groups and Pages and how you can leverage one or both for your organization. I invite you to [become a KickStart Alliance fan](#).

About the Author

Mary Gospe is principal and co-founder of KickStart Alliance. She helps B2B tech and clean tech companies build and nurture their sales pipelines through integrated marketing campaigns, sales development programs and inside sales operations. For more information on using Facebook for your business, contact [Mary Gospe](#) at 650.941.8970. You can follow Mary on Twitter at www.twitter.com/marygospe