

Katie Lantukh and Lynsay Russell: Boosting your small business with Facebook

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With more than 30 million small businesses actively using Facebook, there must be something worth posting about.

Although measuring a company's return on investment varies depending on the industry and audience, it's no secret that a successful Facebook page can be a relatively inexpensive way to help get the word out about your business.

We found two small businesses in Knoxville using their Facebook accounts to meet the needs of their client-base and to get people excited about their brands.

Grant Scalf opened CrossFit KTown in May 2009 after training clients in his parents' garage in Seymour for a year and a half. He knew he needed a real gym when there were 10 people swinging kettle bells and doing dead lifts in his driveway.

He launched the Facebook page at the same time he opened his first gym.

Grant started growing the page by inviting his friends and family and running a grand opening special on the page offering a free month of membership in return for page likes.

After a few years as a co-owner at another salon, Rebecca Nixon opened her own hair studio — Studio Knox — in May. She started posting photos of work that she had done: dramatic-change haircuts, color, color corrections and makeup.

She quickly noticed a trend: Followers interacted with a few posts and then they would call her soon after to book an appointment.

Often, clients learned of new services from her Facebook posts and added on to their regular routines the next time they came in. Rebecca said that a few weeks ago, a new client came in for a color-correction because she had seen one of her friends comment on a color-correction photo Rebecca had posted.

Here are three ways you can use Facebook to grow your small business:

Reach a larger audience by creating share-worthy content. Posting shareable content like CrossFit KTown's weekly photo albums can increase the number of page likes.

Engage your followers. If you have a visual business like a hair salon, clothing boutique or a restaurant, post pictures of your products. Followers like to see what you're offering before they drive to your location.

Determine how to turn followers into dollars. Experiment with Facebook-only deals such as a "Mention this post and receive 15 percent off your next service." Facebook ads and sponsored posts are a very cost effective way to increase your reach to a new audience, and you can easily track their performance.

Facebook is an easy way to market your business and the more effort you put into it, the more you'll get out of it.



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