

Social media: Facebook groups

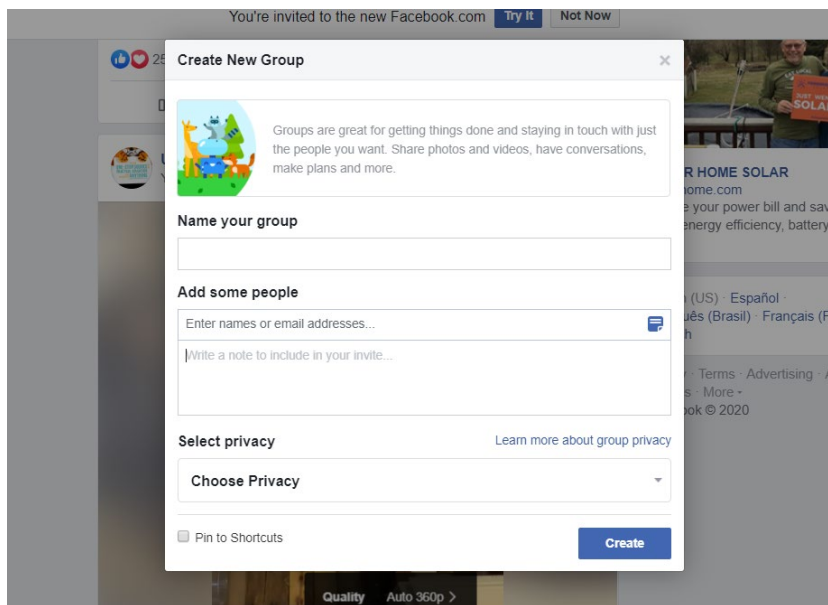
What are Facebook groups?

Groups are a great place to communicate specific information to a group of people who have shared interests.

Getting started:

To create a group:

- Click **Create** in the top right of your Facebook page and select **Group**.
- Enter a group name. Choose a name that is descriptive enough that people will understand the purpose of the group.
- Add group members. Create a personalized note to include in the invitation that explains what one can expect to gain from being a member of the group.



- Choose the privacy option for your group. Choose public if anyone can join and you want to grow your group by making it visible in a search. Choose private if the information shared is confidential and you want to approve members before they can join.

	Public	Private
Who can see what members post, comment and share in the group?	Anyone	Current Members
Who can see the list of members in the group?	People on Facebook	Current Members
Who can see who the admins and moderators are?	People on Facebook	People on Facebook

- Click **Create**.

Personalizing your Facebook group

Once you create your group:

- Upload a cover photo.
 1. From your News Feed, click **Groups** in the left menu and select your group from **Groups You Manage** or by searching for it.
 2. Click **Edit** in the bottom right corner of the cover photo and select where you'd like to choose an image from or select **Reposition**.
 3. Select the image, drag to reposition and click **Save Changes**.
- Add a description that communicates the benefits of the group. Include this is a pinned post so it will always display at the top of page.
 - Include the following text: "The admins of this Facebook Group are University of Missouri employees. Read the social media guidelines: bit.ly/mizzousocial

Inviting new members to a Facebook group

To invite new members to a group:

- From your News Feed, click **Groups** in the left menu and select the group you'd like to invite new members to.
- Click **More** below the group photo and select **Invite Members**.
- Enter the names of the people you want to invite and then click **Invite**.

To invite your Page fans to your group:

1. From your News Feed, click **Groups** in the left menu and select the group you'd like to invite new members to.
2. Click **Members** in the left menu.
3. In the right menu, you'll see a list of people who like your Page.
4. Click **Invite** to invite your Page fans to your group. Keep in mind that only Page fans who have interacted with your Page in the past week will be shown.

For all types of groups—public or private—group members can invite anyone they're friends with. Keep in mind that once someone is invited to join a group, they'll be able to preview the group before deciding if they'd like to join the group. Pages can't be invited to join groups as group members.

Facebook Groups: best practices

Define the main goal of your Facebook Group

- What makes your group unique from other groups?
- Who will (and why) be joining your group?
- What kind of information can one expect from joining the group?
- What type of interaction do you want to have with your members?
- What will be the purpose of your interaction?
- What type of content will you provide?

Give your target audience the content they want/need

- Make sure you have quality content before setting up your group.
- Engage with the group with actionable, informative and original content.
- Ask for collaboration from group members. Encourage interaction.
- Keep a consistent schedule.
- Notice how your content is performing. Focus on what triggers engagement and begins conversations.
- Share interesting content from other agencies, websites and sources. Non-extension content should be relevant to extension's mission and from a trusted source.
- Conduct research to determine WHEN to post. When your members are the most active is the time to post your best and engaging content.
- If your group is designed to help people learn or build a skills, create challenges for your members. Encourage them to share their results.
- Utilize Facebook Live videos to share important info or news.
- Feature content from group members to share best practices and success stories.

Grow your membership

- Insert the link to your group in your newsletter emails and other communications.
- Encourage members to recommend the group to others with same interest. Word-of-mouth is the best form of advertising and Facebook groups are no exception.
- What are the characteristics of your specific target audience for this group? You need to know who your group can help so that you can best describe your group and clearly communicate the group's benefits.
- Be precise when setting up your group. People want to join groups that include people with similar interests.
- The best way people will find your group is through a search. By giving a specific, keyword-rich name, your group will be easier to find. Choose an engaging photo and relevant icon to represent your group.
- Promote your group on existing Facebook pages that post similar content. However, the rule of thumb is do not promote your group on a page more than once a month.
- Invite customers, newsletter recipients, colleagues, friends and community partners to join the page. Then ask them to promote the page to their contacts. Host a contest to encourage competition and motivate people to invite more members.
- Identify experts or influencers in the group's topic and invite them to join to share their wisdom.

- Promote your Facebook Group on other social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.)

Finding success

1. Control spammers. If someone posts something that resembles spam, send them a direct message and let them know they are not following the group rules. If they continue to break rules, remove them from the group.
2. Encourage interaction and participation. Ask questions that will help engage with your members and encourage them to share personal stories. Share your own stories to get the conversation started.
3. Use polls to get people to share.
 - Start a new post in your group. Hover over “More” then “Create poll.”

Miscellaneous

- Send a welcome message to new members. Share pertinent info and encourage interaction. When you add new members, you’ll see a message on the main group page. Click on “Write post” to send to the newbies.
- Pin important information such as your introduction, rules and guidelines. Pinned posts will stick to the top of the group feed. To pin a post that’s been published, click the three dots icon in the upper-right corner of the post and select “Pin post.”