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## Turning *likes* into money by the (Face)book

By Garland M. Baker  
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People engaged in business all over the world use Facebook and other social media services to reach customers. Facebook statistics are impressive indeed. Many are not aware that older people use Facebook, too. It is not just for the young. The numbers among retired people are growing rapidly as they start to use all the new gadgets on the market. It is just dang convenient to lookup what friends are doing using an iPhone, iPad, Kindle, Nook, or whatever. Facebook works on just about anything. Expats in Costa Rica are strong users.

In light of this, there is a concern. Many businesses using Facebook to reach customers are using personal fan profiles instead of business pages. This is in direct violation of Facebook's terms of service. Here is an excerpt, "Facebook profiles are meant to represent a single individual. Organizations of any type are not permitted to maintain an account under the name of their organization...If you create a profile for your business, your account may be disabled for violating our [Terms of Use.](#)"

Are people unaware of this rule? Why are so many using personal Facebook fan pages for their business in violation of the rules? Reviewing the Costa Rica institutions listed [in the article](#) "Got a problem? Facebook is where the action is," found these institutions using the



service correctly. However, searching the web for Facebook pages of Costa Rican companies found many are not. Next time online, check it out.

What business people do not realize is that it is better to use an organization page instead of personal profile for a business. Used correctly, an enterprise can track mounds of data using Insights. This is a Facebook service for business customers. Social media as a whole uses

COSTA RICA EXPERTISE LLC

Tele: +506-2256-8585 • +506-2256-7575 • [info@crexpertise.com](mailto:info@crexpertise.com)

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people's information to target them. These services have tons of information on everyone. It can be put to good use marketing to these individuals.

All this data on people is quantified in the form of metrics. Metrics are the numbers that reveal important information about a market audience. With social media, very specific groups of individuals can be targeted using these tools. This is good for advertisers. However, for a person trying to reach people interested in Costa Rica it is more cost-efficient to use local media publishing to that group. The reason is because social media is somewhat a shotgun approach while the latter is more like precision targeting.

Facebook business pages have access to promoting events and offers. They cannot do this with a personal profile. Applications for shopping carts, newsletters, sweepstakes, blogs, YouTube and designating special landing pages for ads are available too. The list of applications that can be tied to a Facebook business page are growing daily. Posts can be scheduled natively or by using an array of third party tools. Personal profiles are limited to 5,000 friends where business pages do not have a limit as to the number of likes they can receive.

Another big problem is most people are not using their security settings. They are letting everyone see all their contacts and other information. This is not good for the casual user and it sure is bad for businesses. A company or organization using a personal fan page is letting everyone know too much about who likes them.

A personal user can hide their friends easily. Here are the instructions to do so:

Login to a profile and go to the timeline page. Click on the box in the lower header that says "friends." Click on the pencil icon next to "find friends" to edit.

Select "edit privacy" and then on one of the options to limit friend viewing. It can be limited to "only me," "friends," "close friends," "family," or custom. It probably should not be set to public.

If a business wants to do things correctly, it is possible to change a personal page used for an organization to a business page. Here are [the steps](#): Download the timeline. Appoint an administrator and then start the conversion process.

Why is using Facebook for a business correctly important? Because anyone including a competitor can complain and likely, the personal profile used for the business will be taken down. If this happens, all the contacts will be lost and the activity log gone as well. It would also be embarrassing.

Why is it important to limit who see friends? Among many reasons, it is a security risk. Especially in Latin American countries where thefts, home invasions and kidnappings are a problem.

**Garland M. Baker is a 42-year resident and naturalized citizen of Costa Rica who provides multidisciplinary professional services to the international community. Reach him at [info@crexpertise.com](mailto:info@crexpertise.com). Baker has undertaken the research leading to these series of articles in conjunction with A.M. Costa Rica. Find the collection at <http://crexpertise.info>, a free reprint is available at the end of each article. Copyright 2013, use without permission prohibited.**

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