How to advertise on Facebook

If you already have a Facebook business page (and you should), you can head straight to the Facebook Ads Manager or Business Manager to create your Facebook ad campaign. If you don't yet have a business page, you'll need to create one first.

We'll follow the steps for Ads Manager in this post. If you'd prefer to use Business Manager, you can get the details in our post on how to use Facebook Business Manager.

Step 1. Choose your objective

Log into Facebook Ads Manager and select the **Campaigns** tab, then click **Create** to get started with a new Facebook ad campaign.

Facebook offers 11 marketing objectives based on what you want your ad to accomplish. Here's how they align with business goals:

- **Brand awareness**: Introduce your brand to a new audience.
- **Reach**: Expose your ad to as many people in your audience as possible.
- **Traffic**: Drive traffic to a specific web page, app, or Facebook Messenger conversation.
- **Engagement**: Reach a wide audience to increase the number of post engagements or Page Likes, increase attendance at your event, or encourage people to claim a special offer.
- **App installs**: Get people to install your app.
- **Video views**: Get more people to watch your videos.
- **Lead generation**: Get new prospects into your sales funnel.
- **Messages**: Encourage people to contact your business using Facebook Messenger.
- **Conversions**: Get people to take a specific action on your website (like subscribe to your list or buy your product), with your app, or in Facebook Messenger.
- **Catalog sales**: Connect your Facebook ads to your product catalog to show people ads for the products they are most likely to want to buy.

- **Store traffic**: Drive nearby customers to bricks-and-mortar stores.

Choose a campaign objective based on your goals for this particular ad. Keep in mind that for conversion-oriented objectives (like sales) you can pay per action, but for exposure objectives (like traffic and views) you will pay for impressions.

For this example, we'll choose the Engagements objective. Some of the options you see in the next steps will vary slightly based on which objective you choose.

Step 2. Name your campaign

Scroll down to name your Facebook ad campaign and choose whether to set up an A/B split test. You will also choose whether to turn on budget optimization. This option can be useful if you're using multiple ad sets, but for now you can leave it turned off.

For the Engagements objective, you'll also choose whether to focus on post engagement, page likes, or event responses. For this example, we'll choose Page likes.

Step 3. Set up your ad account

If you've already set up an account, you'll see a button that says . Click that to move on to the next step.

But if you're new to Facebook advertising, you'll see a button that says **Set Up Ad Account**. Click that and you'll be prompted to enter some key details to create your ad account. Enter your country, preferred currency, and time zone, then click **Continue**.

Choose wisely, because if you want to change these options later, you'll have to create a separate ad account.

Step 4. Target your audience

At the top of this screen, you will name your Facebook ad campaign and choose which Page to promote.

Scroll down to start building the target audience for your ads.

You'll see the first option is to add a custom audience of people who have already interacted with your business on or off Facebook. We've got a separate guide to walk you through Facebook custom audiences, so here we'll focus on the targeting options.

Start by selecting your target location, age, gender, and language. As you make your selections, keep an eye on the audience size indicator on the right of the screen, which gives you a sense of your potential ad reach.

You'll also see an estimated number of Page likes. These estimates will be more accurate if you have run campaigns before, since Facebook will have more data to work with. Always keep in mind that these are estimates, not guarantees.

Now it's time for the detailed targeting. Remember: Effective targeting is key to maximizing ROI—and there's no shortage of ways to target your audience using Facebook Ads Manager. You have two fields here in which to make your audience as specific as you choose:

- **Detailed targeting**: Use this field to specifically include or exclude people based on demographics, interests, and behaviors. You can get really specific here. For instance, you could choose to target people who are interested in both meditation and yoga, but exclude people who are interested in hot yoga.
- **Connections**: You can target or exclude people who have an existing connection to your Facebook Page, your app, or an event you managed. For example, if you want to reach a new audience, your would select "Exclude people who like your Page." If you want to promote an offer or new product to existing fans, select "People who like your Page" to reach people who already know your brand. You can also choose to target friends of people who have previously interacted with your brand.

Check out these eight essential Facebook targeting tips for more on this subject.

Step 5. Choose your Facebook ad placements

Scroll down to choose where your ads will appear. If you're new to Facebook advertising, the simplest choice is to use **Automatic Placements**. When you select this option, Facebook will automatically place your ads across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and the Audience Network when they are likely to get the best results.

Once you have more experience, you may wish to place your Facebook ads in specific locations. You have the following options:

- **Device type**: Mobile, desktop, or both.
- **Platform**: Facebook, Instagram, Audience Network, or Messenger
- **Placements**: Feeds, Stories, in-stream (for videos), messages, in-article, and apps and sites (external to Facebook).
- **Specific mobile devices and operating systems**: iOS, Android, feature phones, or all devices.

Step 6. Set your budget and schedule

Next, you decide how much money you want to spend on your Facebook ad campaign. You can choose a daily or lifetime budget, then set the start and end dates if you want to schedule your ad in the future, or choose to make it live right away.

You can also add in an optional cost and bid controls, which will cap the amounts per action rather than for your overall campaign.

Budget & Schedule
Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear.

Optimization for Ad Delivery ⓘ — Page Likes - We'll deliver your ads to the right people to help you get more Page likes at the lowest cost.

Bid Control (optional) ⓘ — $0.97   maximum bid in each auction
Facebook will aim to get the most Page likes without bidding more than $0.97 in any auction using the bid cap bid strategy.
Show Additional Bid Strategies ▾

Budget and Schedule ⓘ
Daily Budget ▾
$25.00
$25.00 CAD
Actual amount spent daily may vary. ⓘ
⦿ Run my ad set continuously starting today
◯ Set a start and end date

You'll spend no more than **$175.00** per week.

You can get into pretty fine detail about how you want to spend your money using the advanced budget options.

When You Get Charged ⓘ ◉ Impression
                           ◯ Page Like

Ad Scheduling ⓘ ◉ Run ads all the time
                  ◯ Run ads on a schedule

Delivery Type ⓘ ◉ Standard (Recommended)
                  Get results throughout your selected schedule
                  ◯ Accelerated
                  Spend your budget and get results as quickly as possible

Keep in mind that running your Facebook paid ads on a schedule may be the most efficient way to spend your budget, since you can choose only to serve your ad when your target audience is most likely to be on Facebook. You can only set a schedule if you have created a lifetime budget for your ad.
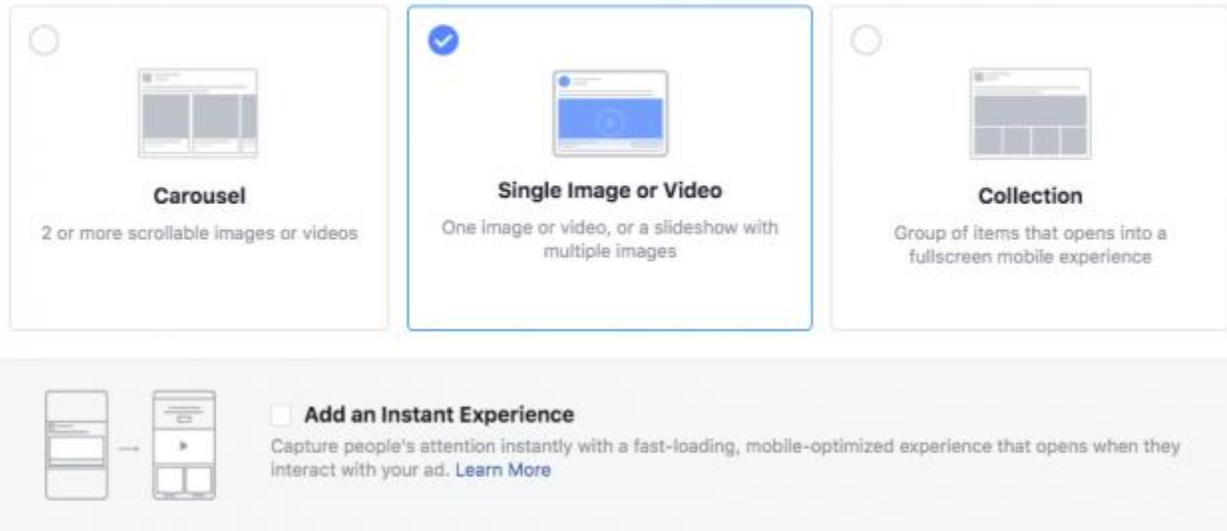
When you've made your selections, and you're happy with the audience size indicator, click **Continue**.

Step 7. Create your ad

First choose your ad format, then enter the text and media components for your ad. The formats available will vary based on the campaign objective you selected back at the beginning of this process.

Use the preview tool at the bottom of the page to make sure your ad looks good for all potential placements (mobile, desktop news feed, right column, and so on). When you're happy with your choices, click the green **Confirm** button to submit your order, then wait to get an email from Facebook notifying you that your ad has been approved.

Facebook ad specs

There are a lot of details to keep in mind when getting your images and videos ready for Facebook ads. Since these details can change often, we've compiled them in a separate, regularly updated post of Facebook ad sizes.

We've also got a set of 16 free Facebook ad templates you can use to help create your ads in just a few minutes.

Text and objective specs for Facebook ads

To create the best Facebook ads, you need to keep the recommended character counts in mind. Anything beyond these text limits will be cut off.

You also need to understand which types of Facebook ad work with each of the ad campaign objectives described above.

Image ads

- **Headline**: 25 characters
- **Link description**: 30 characters
- **Body text**: 125 characters

- **Campaign objectives**: All except video views

Video ads

- **Headline**: 25 characters
- **Link description**: 30 characters
- **Body text**: 125 characters
- **Campaign objectives**: All except catalog sales

Facebook Stories ads

- **Text**: No set character count. Aim to leave 250 pixels text-free at the top and bottom of the ad.
- **Campaign objectives**: Engagement, messages, catalog sales, store traffic

Carousel ads

- **Headline**: 25 characters
- **Link description**: 20 characters
- **Body text**: 125 characters
- **Campaign objectives**: All except engagement and video views

Slideshow ads

- **Headline**: 25 characters
- **Link description**: 30 characters
- **Body text**: 125 characters
- **Campaign objectives**: All

Collection ads

- **Headline**: 25 characters
- **Link description**: n/a
- **Body text**: 90 characters
- **Campaign objectives**: Traffic, conversions, catalog sales, store traffic

Instant Experience ads

- **Text**: Blocks of text up to 500 words each.
- **Campaign objectives**: All except lead generation, catalog sales, and messages

Messenger Inbox ads

- **Headline**: n/a
- **Link description**: n/a
- **Body text**: 125 characters

- **Campaign objectives**: Traffic, app installs, conversions, catalog sales, messages

5 smart tips for running Facebook ads

1. Experiment with audience targeting

Start with a narrow audience and then broaden it slowly by adding one interest category at a time. For example, you could start with an audience specifically interested in "Napa Valley wine tours" and then broaden it after a few weeks.

You could start by adding adding "wine tasting," then "food and wine," and so on. That way, you'll have a good idea of how expanding your target audience affects your results.

We go into this concept in detail in our post on how to use Facebook Audience Insights.

You can also use audience targeting to create different ads for groups related to different business goals. For example, you can speak to existing customers differently than you do to people who have never heard of your business before. You can also offer promotions based on your existing relationship.

If you have a local business, you can target your audience by zip or postal code. This is also helpful if you know a particular city or neighbourhood converts well.

Pro tip: Be careful with the assumptions you make about your audience when choosing your targeting options. Since moving to Europe, I get a lot of Facebook ads that make perfect sense based on where I live. One problem: They're in Dutch, which I don't speak (yet).

"A Wealthy Woman, A wealthy Nation"