

Article One

Getting In The Loop with Facebook

Ever talk to a know-it-all and wonder how they are familiar with all of the latest tricks and who is using them? Chances are, the answer is in some form of Social Media. From Facebook to Twitter to YouTube, information is easier to get and conveniently available at any time of day. It's quite the concept – the opportunity to share your progress, announcements, and even frustrations and gain instant feedback.

Let's say you are struggling to find a certain *<insert item relating to group here>*. Post: *"Looking for a <describe the item named in previous sentence>. Any ideas?"* on the *<Conference Name>* Facebook page (or your profile page) and see who responds. You may get responses from colleagues with ideas or a vendor that has exactly what you are looking for, saving you hours of research time! You can also contribute your ideas to other posted questions and create your own network of experts. Don't be afraid to request someone as a "Friend" if you are responding to each others posts.

When you register for the *<Great Lakes Floral Expo>*, be sure to announce that you have signed up! See who is attending and start making plans. This is a great way to connect with vendors that might have a special product, get the latest event plans, or meet new people. *<For added benefit, insert member's quote's here. See example below>*.

Consider Facebook your opportunity to have an open discussion about the expo and learn about the opportunities that are available. Wall postings with event plans, special deals in the city, and ideas for the expo all help you design your conference experience to meet your interests. This may be your best bet for learning more about speakers and decide which topics you can't miss.

The trick to Facebook is making it work for you. Remember the three P's of Facebook: Post your thoughts, Participate in discussion, and Propose new friendships to expand your network. With participation that can be as periodic as you choose, this low-commitment option creates a high return on time investment!

Tip for this article:

Enhance the article by interviewing 1-2 members who are already active. Ask them questions like, "How do you use Facebook for business?" and "Have you met or shared with others in the industry?". An example of an add on to the article is:

Tracy Park of Park Place Design uses Facebook to expand her network, "I have met a lot of people in the industry through Social Networking. When there are conventions or classes, we agree to meet there." She also notes the impact that Facebook has had on her business, "Social Networking has exposed me to so much more. I am from a small town and [Social Networking] has brought my business to a different level."