

## Keys to Hosting a Successful Facebook Forum

- **Topic:** Find a topic that isn't too exclusive. It should have a specific focus within its broad category. For example, the flu is rather broad and could lead to conversation drift. A forum on how flu touches young children, however, would be perfect to spur conversation over the course of two to five days without straying into other subjects.
- **Audience:** Your topic will guide the rest of the event, including identifying the target audience. Reach out to relevant participants only. Continuing with our original example, focus on targeting key groups for the particular topic: parents, caregivers and healthcare professionals. College students or senior citizens won't be as relevant.
- **Co-hosting:** Now that you know your topic and target audience, it's helpful to bring in relevant partners. Involve one to three co-hosts who have large Facebook followings to amplify your target audience and reach.
- **Content:** Though a Facebook forum is not as rapid-fire as an hour-long Twitter chat, things move quickly and you will be busy answering questions. It's critical to go into the forum with a script of content that has been proofread, fact-checked and vetted by all relevant brand personnel.
- **Monitoring and responding:** As with content, have a plan for responding to questions in a timely and accurate manner throughout the forum. This is a great opportunity to bring in a subject matter expert to respond to participants. Ideally, have a minimum of two set times per day to answer questions or you will lose participants' interest.
- **Evaluation:** Wrapping up this forum is the first step toward hosting your next one. Use Facebook Insights to track the success of your event and learn what worked—and what didn't—for next time