

Facebook and MPD

Ministry Partner Development is about relationships. We share with prospective ministry partners about God's call for our lives. We show the problem, cast a vision and solicit a response.

Because we value partnership in ministry over the "bottom line" (see "MPD is Not Support Raising," <http://staffweb.ccci.org/mpd/campus-crusade-philosophy/not-support-raising.aspx>) we train staff to approach MPD in specific ways. We believe in directly and personally asking individuals to partner with us financially.

There are fantastic networking opportunities available as we seek to gain referrals and ministry partners. Facebook and other social network websites are great forums to connect with people online and provide some of those networking opportunities. That said there are appropriate ways to go about using these sites in the MPD process....and there are inappropriate ways.

APPROPRIATE uses of sites like Facebook

- Helping you namestorm for contacts.
- Finding contact information (address, phone, email, etc.) for your current Facebook friends.
- Searching for people you've lost touch with that you'd like to pursue as potential partners.
- Keeping your friends updated on your ministry through notes, groups, events, etc.

INAPPROPRIATE uses of sites like Facebook

- Soliciting a response in a note.
- Creating a group that solicits a response in it. Examples: "Support Jason's Ministry!" or "Todd's Going to East Asia!" with a plea for financial support within the explanation of the group.

We want to make sure we are practicing Campus Crusade's MPD values and principles. A "Facebook" ask for financial partnership is not personal; it doesn't give you an opportunity to dialogue with your prospective partners in order to give a VACA-like presentation. Face-to-face appointments are the bread and butter of MPD. We want to sit with people (or at least speak directly with them on the phone if we cannot meet with them) and show the problem, cast a vision and solicit a response for finances and referrals. This will both:

- 1) Maintain the integrity of the ministry and our philosophy of MPD.
- 2) Ensure greater success in MPD over the long haul

Using Facebook groups and events in MPD

Campus Crusade for Christ is committed to professional excellence in training staff members in MPD.

Facebook is a very casual social network. It is an incredible tool to help us in our mission to reach the lost for Christ. And we acknowledge the significant roles it may play in MPD (see Appropriate uses above).

Our concern is that the appeal to the casual nature of Facebook may have a tendency to move us away from our professional MPD training and the time-tested principles for setting up appointments where we can show the problem, cast a vision and solicit a response (both financially and for referrals).

As mentioned under "Appropriate Uses of Sites Like Facebook" there are good uses for a Facebook group, event or note to promote your MPD efforts. Specifically, these kinds of things should lean toward either:

- Helping you gather names and contact info of people to contact.
- Providing a place to keep your Facebook friends updated and aware of your ministry.

An intern used Facebook to create an event about her Campus Crusade internship and simply asked people to “Join if you want my updates this fall or want to pray for me.” Use Facebook to give general ministry updates here, sharing things similar to your prayer letters (stories of changed lives, how God has called you to this ministry, illustrations of the need for you to be at your assignment, etc).

Here is a poor example of Facebook text in an event: “Here’s where I am with support. If you know people who might like to hear about what I am doing this fall, let me know.” We want to avoid an event or group with an update like this because:

- Financial progress updates are not visionary. Prayer letters or other pieces of communication (including websites) are not the appropriate venues to share your MPD progress updates. We want to cast vision when we communicate on appointments – this is why the VACA presentation is designed as it is. We’re not just people who need money to do our job. We are people who are facing an overwhelming problem; people who believe God has called us to be a part of the solution; and people who delight to invite others to partner with us in advancing God’s Kingdom.
- A Facebook-ask for financial commitment or for referrals is passive. We train our staff to be direct in soliciting a response. Ideally we do this face-to-face, and occasionally we will do it over the phone. Both of those methods give us an opportunity to be engaged with the prospective ministry partner in a live setting, to encourage an immediate response and to be available to answer questions they may have before they decide. If we ask through a web-based group/event/note, we lose all sense of urgency.

Although a personal Facebook page is ‘ours’ in many respects, we need to remember that we are spokespeople for Campus Crusade for Christ. How we communicate about MPD anywhere speaks something to others about our movement.