

Facebook

www.facebook.com

A social network that allows people to connect and share with their friends, family and colleagues

what is it?

Facebook is a social networking tool that connects people—whether friends, family, or colleagues. Once you create your free account, you can set up your personal profile, which includes the ability to add information about your life (e.g., where you work, hobbies, political beliefs, etc), pictures, videos, and much more. You then can join networks organized by cities, schools, or regions as well as personally select people to be your “Friend.” People you add as Friends on Facebook (and who accept being your friend) can then follow you on Facebook—which essentially means that they are notified (depending on their settings) when you update your status on Facebook (e.g., by writing something on your wall or posting new pictures). Facebook is currently the leading social networking site based membership.

educational use?

While companies like Blackboard are finding ways to synchronize with Facebook, educators are experimenting with how to use Facebook for educational purposes. There is no question that Facebook can connect people and learners but it’s unclear whether students want their “social” and “educational” spaces connected. Regardless, Facebook provides faculty and staff great ways to connect with other professionals in their field.

pros & cons?

Perhaps the best thing about Facebook is its overall popularity. It seems like every day more and more people are on it and as a result Facebook enables you to connect with just about anyone. It is also very easy to post and share pictures and videos on Facebook. Finally, Facebook enables you to start an instant chat with other people online in Facebook. Many of the strengths of Facebook, though, could just as easily be seen as drawbacks. For instance, the overall popularity of Facebook is likely to lead to its demise. And finally, Facebook can be a very open platform and anything you say on Facebook can be seen by your “friends.”

what’s it cost?

Facebook is free to use

alternatives?

Popular alternatives to Facebook are MySpace (<http://www.myspace.com>) and LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>).

Resources?

Social Networking in Plain English
<http://www.commoncraft.com/video>

Facebook for Educators
<http://vimeo.com/2310388?pg=embed&sec=>