



2011

Benchmarks *Extra:* Facebook

An Analysis of Facebook Metrics for Nonprofit Organizations

Authored by:



Benchmarks Extra: Facebook

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The 2011 eNonprofit Benchmarks Study looked at data from 40 nonprofit organizations and analyzed trends in fundraising, advocacy, email list size, text messaging, and social media. You can download the Benchmarks Study for free at www.e-benchmarksstudy.com.

Now, with this *Benchmarks Extra*, we're diving in deeper to provide more metrics for nonprofit engagement via Facebook.

In a medium that changes quickly, it is important that organizations determine what strategies and tactics are getting results – and where there is room for improvement. We hope these extra Facebook benchmarks help your nonprofit organization develop meaningful metrics to measure your social media efforts – regardless of your social media experience.

Note that we classified organizations by the size of their Facebook fan page for this Extra. That means the size classifications in this *Benchmarks Extra* are different than in the Benchmarks Study, where size classifications were based on email list size.

Key Findings

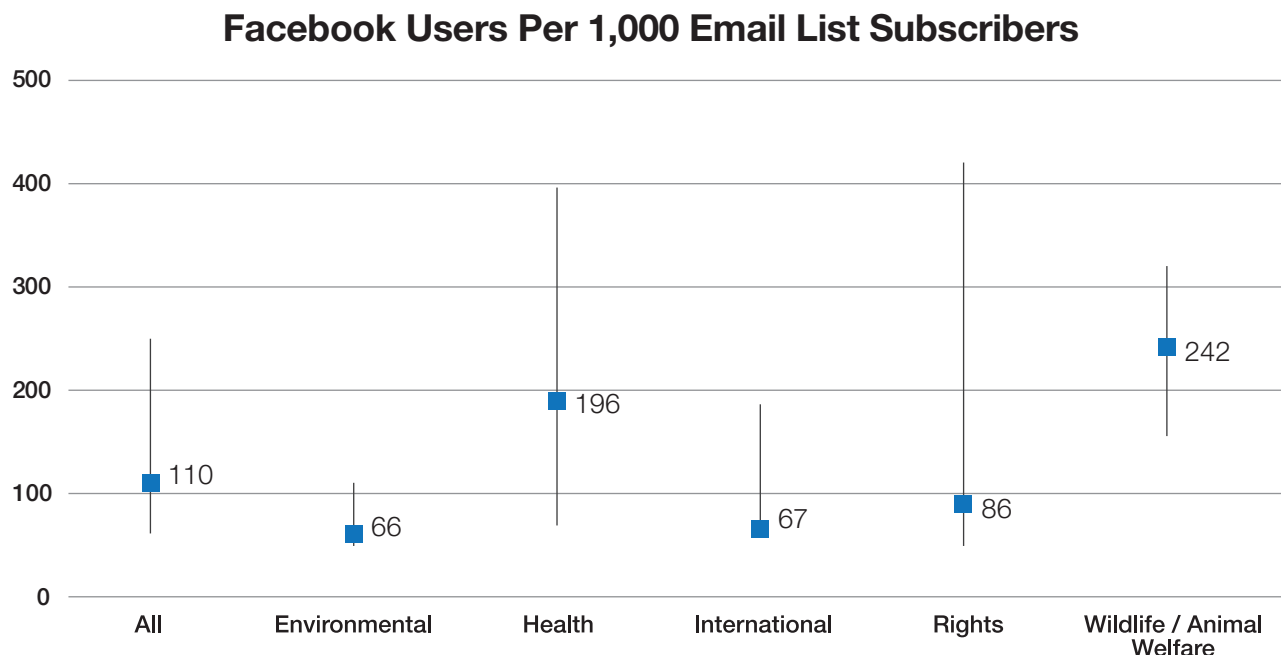
Our research revealed some interesting findings:

- On average, nonprofits involved in this study had 110 fan page users (people who “like” a nonprofit fan page) for every 1,000 email subscribers.
- Annual Facebook fan page churn was 14% in 2010.
- A strong correlation exists between the number of likes and comments on a post and the number of impressions it receives.
- The average fan page post received 2.6 likes or comments per 1,000 impressions – resulting in a Feedback Percentage of 0.26%.
- The average study participant’s fan page had 5 page views per 1,000 Facebook users.

How do Facebook and email audiences compare?

On average, nonprofits had 110 fan page users (people who “like” a nonprofit fan page) for every 1,000 email subscribers. It’s also worth mentioning that we saw a positive correlation between a nonprofit’s Facebook fan page size and the size of their email list. If groups had a lot of email subscribers, they tended to have lots of Facebook fans.

The Wildlife / Animal Welfare sector stood out for having an especially high ratio of Facebook users per email list subscribers.



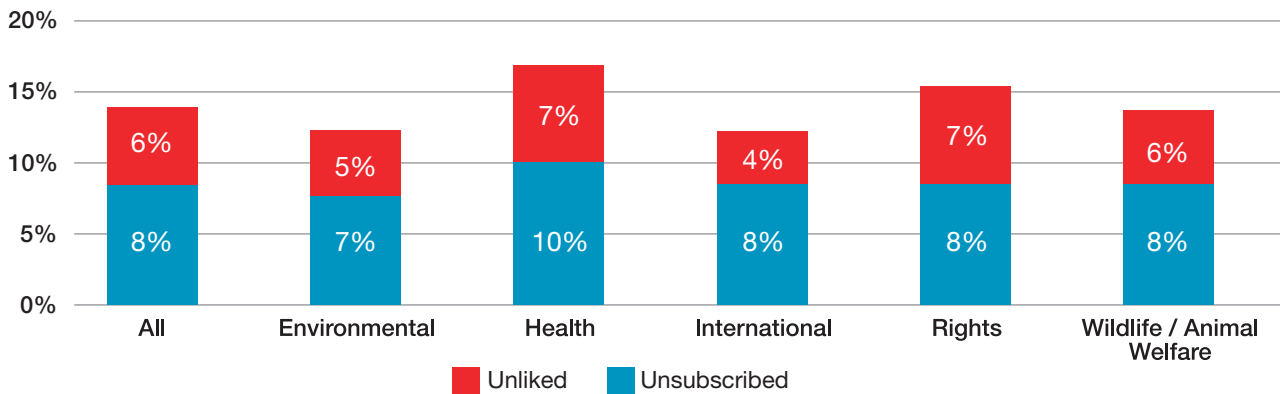
How many users opt out of receiving communications each year?

Like email, Facebook users can opt out of receiving your organization’s Facebook posts. In 2010, annual fan page churn – the rate at which fan page users choose to opt-out of receiving communications from a fan page – was 14%. Churn held steady across fan page sizes and sectors, with the exception of the Health sector, which had the highest annual churn at 17%. Just like email, the quality of your messages is incredibly important for reducing the number of users who opt-out.

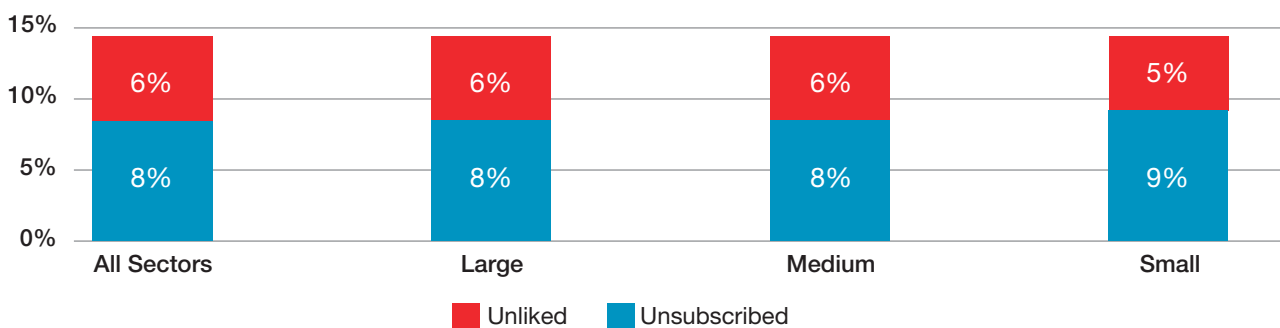
To get in the weeds for a moment on how we calculated churn on Facebook, in addition to “unliking” your fan page entirely, users also have the option to “unsubscribe” from your page’s posts by choosing to “Hide all by [your fan page].” Although Facebook still counts unsubscribes as part of your fan page size, the unsubscribed user will not see your page’s updates in their news feed.

To calculate churn, we divided the number of “unlikes” and “unsubscribes” in a 12-month period by the total number of users a fan page had during that same time period.

Annual Fan Page Churn by Sector



Annual Fan Page Churn by Size



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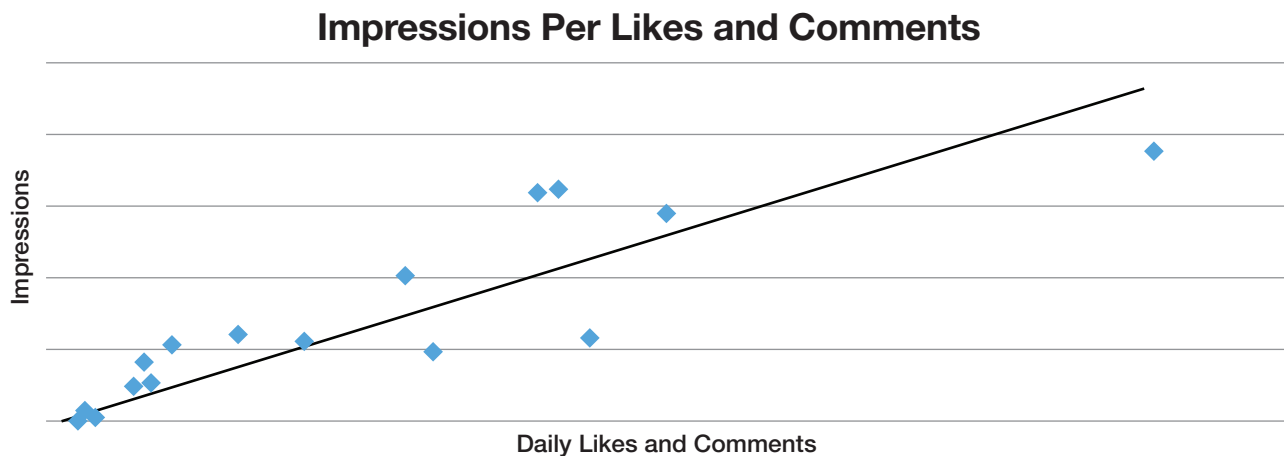
Do “likes” and comments lead to more post impressions?

Did you know that your Facebook news feed doesn't show posts from all of your friends and pages by default? If there have been a lot of new posts since you last logged in, your home page news feed will be set to “Top News” instead of “Most Recent.” Facebook uses an algorithm to prioritize wall posts and determine which ones appear in a user's “Top News” feed. The formula is made up of three parts:

- 1) Affinity:** The amount of interaction a user has had with a page in the past;
- 2) Weight:** The number of likes and comments on the post, as well as the type of content (photos, for instance, receive the highest weight – and manual posts receive more weight than posts by third-party apps); and
- 3) Time:** The amount of time since the post was published.

Essentially, Facebook's formula says that a post with more likes and comments should be more likely to appear in a user's Top News feed, meaning it should generate more impressions – which in turn should hopefully lead to additional likes and comments!

Our analysis confirmed that a strong correlation exists between the number of likes and comments on a post and the number of impressions it receives.



Our analysis also revealed a positive correlation between the number of fan page users and the number of likes and comments a post received; the more users a fan page had, the more users liked their posts.

It's also worth mentioning that even if a user clicks over to their “Most Recent” news feed, Facebook will only show them content from the friends and pages they interact with the most, unless they have changed their default settings. So regardless of what feed they are viewing, it is incredibly important for your organization to have high quality posts that encourage your users to like your content or leave a comment!

Here are two examples of posts that do a great job at encouraging user interaction:



Human Rights Campaign
Like this status if you support marriage equality. Then sign on to be one of HRC's Millions for Marriage!



Be one of HRC's Millions for Marriage
www.hrcactioncenter.org
We believe every American has the right to marry the person they love. Add your name in support of marriage equality.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

📅 May 31 at 9:37am · Like · Comment · Share

👍 7,894 people like this.



Oxfam America
Fill in the blank: food security means _____.

📅 May 12 at 11:45am via Thrive · Like · Comment

👍 26 people like this.

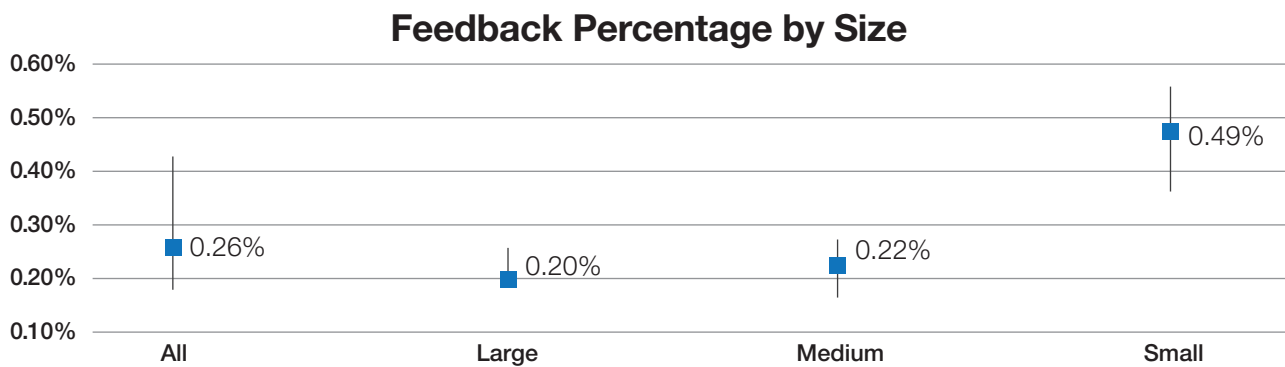
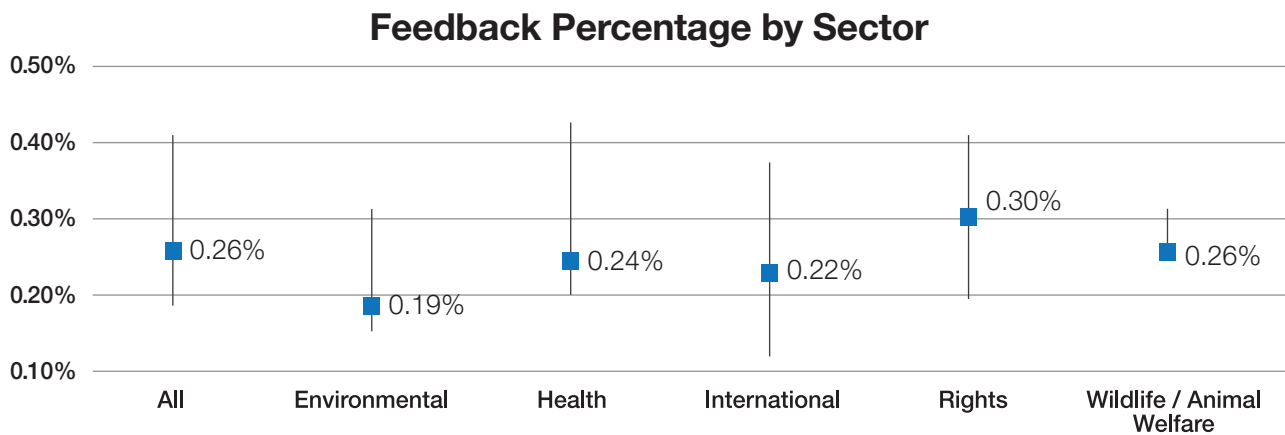
💬 View all 66 comments

How frequently do users interact with posts?

We've discussed *why* it's critically important for users to interact with your Facebook posts. But how often did users like and comment on content in 2010, and how can you measure the performance of your own page's content?

Facebook Feedback Percentage – calculated as the number of likes and comments on a post divided by the number of impressions for that post – is the primary metric Facebook uses to evaluate the success of an individual post.

On average, a fan page post received 2.6 likes or comments per 1,000 impressions – resulting in a Feedback Percentage of 0.26%. However, we saw a lot of deviation between groups within the same sector.



Small Facebook fan pages experienced a higher average Feedback Percentage than their Medium or Large counterparts.

Also, while certainly not a direct comparison, the eNonprofit Benchmarks Study advocacy response rate of 3.3% is noticeably higher than the Feedback Percentage seen here, despite a comparatively lower bar for taking action.

How often are users returning to your Facebook page?

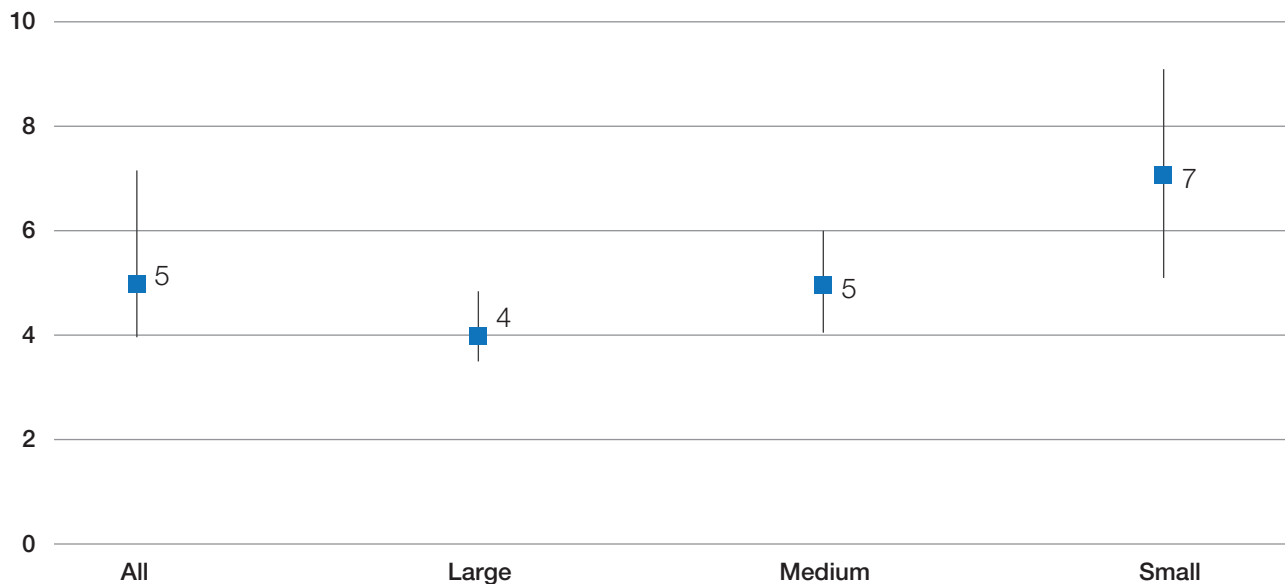
Many organizations invest a lot of time and money into creating custom Facebook fan page tabs, such as quizzes, games, slideshows, and more. But are users returning to the fan page to use those custom tabs?

Page views – defined as visits to your fan page by both users and non-users – were a rarity for most fan pages in the study. On average, a nonprofit had 5 page views per 1,000 Facebook users. This means most users are not returning to your actual fan page after liking it.

It appears that the best way to reach users is through the news feed. Based on these findings, we would recommend that organizations think about investing time and resources into reaching their users through the news feed - by posting high-quality, interactive content!

For fan pages with custom tabs, we recommend specifically sharing and promoting those tabs through your posts in order to drive users back to your fan page.

Daily Page Views Per 1,000 Users



Glossary

CHURN, ANNUAL FAN PAGE

Calculated as the number of “unlikes” and “unsubscribes” in a 12-month period divided by the total number of users a fan page had during that same time period.

FACEBOOK USERS

People who like a nonprofit Facebook fan page

FEEDBACK PERCENTAGE

Calculated as the number of likes and comments on a post divided by the number of impressions for that post. It does not measure any other actions (such as video plays or clickthroughs).

IMPRESSIONS

Similar to ad impressions, Facebook impressions are counted each time a post is loaded. These impressions can come from a user’s news feed, a visit to the Page, or through a social plug-in (such as a “Like box”).

LIKES AND COMMENTS

The number of “likes” and comments a Facebook fan page post received.

UNLIKED

A user who unliked your fan page will not see your page’s updates in their news feed and no longer counts towards your total number of fan page users.

UNSUBSCRIBED

An unsubscribed user will not see your posts in their news feed but still counts towards your number of total fan page users.

Methodology

This *Benchmarks Extra* collected data about Facebook from 34 U.S.-based national nonprofit organizations for the calendar year of 2010.

The average given for a metric is the median. To calculate the benchmarks metrics reported in this study, we first calculated a metric for each group and then calculated the median across groups, so that no single group had more weight than any other.

This *Benchmarks Extra* categorizes organizations by sector and the size of their main Facebook page at the end of the year. Organizations that started the year in the Small category and ended it in the Large category were re-categorized as Medium.

- Small: Under 10,000 Facebook users
- Medium: 10,000 to 50,000 Facebook users
- Large: Over 50,000 Facebook users

The *Benchmarks Extra* study participants were segmented by sector as follows:

Environmental	International	Wildlife / Animal Welfare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska Wilderness League www.alaskawild.org • Appalachian Mountain Club www.outdoors.org • Food & Water Watch www.foodandwaterwatch.org • Greenpeace USA www.greenpeace.org/usa • National Parks Conservation Association www.npca.org • Rails-to-Trails Conservancy www.railstotrails.org • Save The Bay www.savesfbay.org <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Diabetes Association www.diabetes.org • American Lung Association www.lungusa.org • Cystic Fibrosis Foundation www.cff.org • Diabetes Hands Foundation www.diabeteshandsfoundation.org • Easter Seals www.easterseals.com • Fight Colorectal Cancer www.fightcolorectalcaner.org • Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International (JDRF) www.jdrf.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Rescue Committee www.rescue.org • Oxfam America www.oxfamamerica.org • Plan International USA www.planusa.org • SOS Children’s Villages www.SOS-USA.org <p>Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) www.afge.org • American Rights at Work www.americanrightsatwork.org • Human Rights Campaign www.hrc.org • Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America www.iava.org • NARAL Pro-Choice America www.prochoiceamerica.org • Planned Parenthood Action Fund www.plannedparenthoodaction.org • Planned Parenthood Federation of America www.plannedparenthood.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defenders of Wildlife www.defenders.org • The Humane Society of the United States www.humanesociety.org • IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) www.ifaw.org • National Wildlife Federation www.nwf.org • People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals www.peta.org • San Diego Zoo Global www.sandiegozoo.org • United Animal Nations www.uan.org <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AARP www.aarp.org • Corporate Accountability International www.StopCorporateAbuse.org • Faithful America www.faithfulamerica.org