

Now **14°** Max **19°**
Perth [change]
Thunderstorms Full details
Perth Traffic Conditions



“Holding back cuts will only hurt the big four.”
Ian Verrender

WA News

Perth businesses using Facebook to find friends

Rania Spooner
June 6, 2012

Join the conversation
You're the only person reading this now. Tell your friends
Comment on WA Today.
1 comments
[Recommend](#)
[Tweet](#) 11



One in 11 WA consumers accessed social media more than five times each day.

Top WA News articles

1. Man charged in relation to girls death in Newman
 2. Fake cop 'fascinated' by police force
 3. MP Woolford's letter was 'not a smart move': Barnett
 4. Paint stripper car vandal avoids jail sentence
 5. East coast Finka boosting Rock Machine numbers?
- + More WA News articles

WA News Topics

- Places (12501)
 - All Places (12501)
 - Perth (7367)
 - Fremantle (843)
 - Royal Perth Hospital (744)
 - Kimberley (522)
 - Pilbara (506)
- More Places »
- Emergency Services (6847)
- People (6464)
- Crime (3285)
- Transport (1853)

Latest Comment

I used Facebook extensively to source suppliers for my wedding. It allowed me to find ...

Emily
See comments (1)

Story Tools

- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Email this story](#)
- [Print this story](#)
- [Reprints & permissions](#)

WA Today Jobs

Quality Manager - WA
\$90,000 - \$110,000 p/kg
Western Suburbs. ...
Judd Farris

Service Technician
\$60,000+
Perth Metro, WA
Adecco Services

Senior quantity Survey...
\$110,000 - \$130,000 p/kg
Perth CBD, WA 6000
Desian & Build...

Support Administrator
\$40,000+
Wagauap, WA 6215
Adecco Services

Learn More Earn More!
+25% Off IT Certs*
+TAFE Courses

As a growing body of research tells a tale of Australian consumers who increasingly rely on the internet to inform them what's on offer in their area, not all of Perth's small to medium-sized businesses have been able to log on.

But Facebook may be changing that by creating an "even playing field" – even if it's not a cure-all and is still not fully understood by some business owners.

Jacky Finlayson, the Small Business Development Centre's businesses services director, said many small to medium-sized businesses had been blind-sided by the sheer speed with which social media had risen to prominence.

"Social media really has just taken some businesses by storm and in a lot of cases some small business owners are so busy running their businesses they can't invest the time necessary to make it effective," she said.

"Others have really embraced it and they're doing brilliantly on it."

Yellow Pages Sensis data released last week revealed one in 11 WA consumers accessed social media more than five times each day, with the average person spending up to six hours on Facebook each week.

"It's clear that the rapid growth and power of social media is changing the way we live our lives," Sensis Group's manager of emerging business and innovation Simon Betschel said.

One in five of the national pool surveyed by Sensis reported using social media for commercial purposes, to find out about businesses and brands.

More recently, small businesses reluctant to spend the money and time to establish their own websites have moved to set up Facebook pages to connect with customers.

Ms Finlayson said Facebook was a good stop-gap for businesses to let consumers know they existed and was attractive to time and cash-strapped small operators.

"It's something that they can do fairly quickly without a lot of skill and without having to pay people to do it for them," she said.

"The modern consumer rarely uses printed directories, they use their smart phone to search for the type of business they are seeking and without some form of web presence a business can be invisible to online customers."

Sherryn McBride, the owner of her own small business, Marketing Talk, also works with businesses looking to make the move online.

Ms McBride said Facebook was a useful tool, but should not be considered an alternative to a website.

"There's not enough exposure through Facebook - you can't create your own database through Facebook and you're limited to the functions available through a Facebook page," she said.

"The database that you build on Facebook doesn't belong to you.

"You've got to think like Google these days."

Ms McBride said some of her clients had Facebook pages taken down after running competitions on them, without being aware of rules that prevented them using the social networking tool for this purpose.

"You feel like you're a little bit in the dark and we haven't got a great deal of money to go spending on websites," he said.

"Most places that you come across have lots of signs saying 'follow us on Twitter' or 'follow us on Facebook' and I've tried to do that.

"I'm not anti-technology but I find I spend quite a lot of time on it without feeling like I'm getting anywhere."

However, Mr Wilson said he believed it would be "arrogant" to ignore Facebook as a small business.

"I think the days when you just kind of met up with people on the street aren't necessarily gone," he said.

"But people communicate more online nowadays."

The SBDC has started running "Succeeding Online" forums in WA to help local businesses learn to develop an online presence.

[Follow WAtoday on Twitter @WAtoday](#)

smh.com.au	theage.com.au	brisbanetimes.com.au	canberratimes.com.au	WA today
Top 5 WA News articles 1. Man charged in relation to girls death in Newman 2. Perth council agrees to \$2.8 million tender plan 3. Nightclub assault leaves victim seriously injured 4. Midwife at fault Perth homebirth linked to three preventable baby deaths 5. Fake cop 'fascinated' by police force	Top 5 WA News articles 1. WA: Australia's 'poor little rich girl' 2. I can't smoke it all myself! granny bustled for cannabis crop 3. New fu strain headed to Australia 4. Judy Cate 'staying strong for kids' 5. Storms hit ahead of sunny long weekend	Top 5 WA News articles 1. Sexual favour for fares common: cleared bus driver 2. Think you're smart because you can read and write? Think again 3. WA: Australia's 'poor little rich girl' 4. Judy Cate 'staying strong for kids' 5. New fu strain headed to Australia	Top 5 WA News articles 1. Perth's worst rip-offs - readers have their say 2. Thought about getting a razor and cutting myself up so I could see a doctor? 3. WA: Australia's 'poor little rich girl' 4. New fu strain headed to Australia 5. Judy Cate 'staying strong for kids'	Top 5 WA News articles 1. Man charged in relation to girls death in Newman 2. Fake cop 'fascinated' by police force 3. MP Woolford's letter was 'not a smart move': Barnett 4. Paint stripper car vandal avoids jail sentence 5. East coast Finka boosting Rock Machine numbers?

lenovo FOR THOSE WHO DO! **ThinkPad X1** From only \$1259 [SHOP NOW](#)
Windows 7 works the way you want. Plus 30% OFF Microsoft Office 2010