Expanding the Missions Field: Using Facebook API as a Ministry Tool

TJ Johnson
He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

Mark 16:15 NIV
Secular Tools Use in Missions

• Technology Neutrality
Facebook as Evangelistic Tool

• Core Functionality
  • Centralized Communication Hub
  • Walls
  • Profile Pages

• Groups
  • Fan Pages

• Applications
Facebook Apps

• What Defines a Facebook Application?
Tools I Used

• Hosting
  • GoDaddy
    • validbit14.com
    • SSL
• FTP
  • filezilla
• Editing
  • Notepad++

• PHP
• Graph API
• HTML5
• CSS3
Non-Canvas and Canvas
Facebook SDK

• IOS
• Android
• Javascript
• PhP

• Third Party SDK’s:
  • C-Sharp
  • Django
  • Flash (Actionscript)
  • HTML 5
  • Lua
  • Objective-C
  • Python
  • Ruby
Facebook Development Tools

• FML
• FQL
• Graph API
• Ad API

• Documentations
  • https://developers.facebook.com/docs/
Facebook Graph API ‘GET’

```
$user_profile = $facebook->api('/me','GET');

$friends = $facebook->api('/me/friends', 'GET');

foreach($friends['data'] as $value) {
    $c_friend = $facebook->api('/'.$c_id);
}

$fname = $c_friend['name'];
```
Graph API

- **Strengths**
  - Ease of use
  - Documentations
    - FB is really pushing its use
  - Learning curve is not as steep as FQL

- **Weaknesses**
  - Lightweight
  - Slower Access
  - Viewed as unnecessarily convoluted by many
Facebook Security

- SSL
- Login
- Permissions Request
- Individual Application Settings
Permissions

• Scope Field

```php
$login_url = $facebook->getLoginUrl(array("scope" => "user_religion_politics,user_birthday,user_hometown,user_location,
friends_religion_politics,friends_birthday,friends_hometown,friends_location"));
```
Friends App Settings

Apps others use

People on Facebook who can see your info can bring it with them when they use apps. This makes their experience better and more social. Use the settings below to control the categories of information that people can bring with them when they use apps, games and websites.

- Bio
- Birthday
- Family and relationships
- Interested in
- Religious and political views
- My website
- If I'm online
- My status updates
- My photos
- My videos
- My links
- My notes
- Hometown
- Current location
- Education and work
- Activities, interests, things I like
- My app activity

If you don’t want apps and websites to access other categories of information (like your friend list, gender or info you've made public), you can turn off all Platform apps. But remember, you will not be able to use any games or apps yourself.

Save Changes  Cancel
Deployment Environment

- https://developers.facebook.com/apps/707388209291824/dashboard/
Evangelistic Apps

• Salvation and Lesson Plans
Lesson
One Principle
Believe
Story
John 3:1-5, 16-18
saying?
Verse
Romans 10:9

1. What is this passage
2. What does it teach us about God and/or people in general?
3. What does it tell us to do?
4. What can we share with someone else?
Praise/Thanksgiving – Start the group by having each person thank God for what he has done over the past week. This is also a time to sing praise to God and/or remember Jesus’s sacrifice through communion

Review/Accountability – Remember what you studied last time. Have everyone take a turn to say in their words what the group studied last lesson and how they each obeyed. Did everyone obey what they learned from God last time?
Evangelistic Apps

- Mission Opportunities App
  - Locations and Work History based suggestions
  - Centralized computation
Evangelistic Apps

• Evangelistic Data-Mining App
Challenges

- Webhosting
- Facebook Permission Issues
- Web Template Issues
- Sorting Algorithm
  - Memory Leak
- Processing Speed
Big Question

• Is it alright to be invasive for evangelism?
My Application

• Two Functionalities
  • Search
    • Keyword Search Algorithm
    • Case Insensitive
    • Can process names (first and last), locations (current location and hometown), ages, genders and religion.
  • Friends List Sort
    • Sorting Algorithm
      • Religion
      • Location
      • Age
    • Personal Derivation of Bubblesort
Insert any search term you want. Examples include names (first, last or both), current location or hometown (city or country), age, gender or religion.

Keep in mind this searches your entire friends list. Processing time is dependent on size.

Amount of friends in friends list (After some filtering): 381

Search Input: male

Search
ID: 621474137
Name: Jordan Haskins
Page Link: Page
Gender: male
Birthday: 05/05/1991
Religion:
Hometown: Jackson, Tennessee
Current Location: Jackson, Tennessee

ID: 643511803
Name: Stephen Clement
Page Link: Page
Gender: male
Birthday: 03/10/1993
Religion:
Hometown: Chiang Mai, Thailand
Current Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand
Being Slightly Invasive for Jesus

Insert any search term you want. Examples include names (first, last or both), current location or hometown (city or country), age, gender or religion.

Keep in mind this searches your entire friends list. Processing time is dependent on size.

Amount of friends in friends list (After some filtering): 381

Search Input: Jackson

Search
ID: 1419420108
Name: Ben Horne
Page Link: Page
Gender: male
Birthday: 10/15/1991
Religion: Evangelical Christian
Hometown: Toledo, Ohio
Current Location: Jackson, Tennessee

ID: 1422877570
Name: Matt Cathey
Page Link: Page
Gender: male
Birthday: 12/05/1991
Religion: 
Hometown: Paris, Tennessee
Current Location: Jackson, Tennessee
Future Improvements

• Fix Memory Leak
• Explore ways to increase speed
  • Database implementations
  • FQL use instead of Graph API