How To Start A

Birthday Club

Website in Your Area

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By
Leo J. Quinn, Jr.

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Thanks for your investment in this program!

I think you'll enjoy being the owner of your own popular local website.

I've prepared a series of videos that walk you step by step through the process of setting up your website.

Rather than provide a link here which may be outdated at some point, I've included it in an email you received with this PDF.

If you find that I've changed the location of that page in the future, just drop me an email and I'll send you the updated link. ljq@leoquinn.com

Once I've installed the theme on your website, it's time to start filling it with birthday deals.

FINDING BUSINESSES FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY CLUB

This is very easy.

Start at this website that lists birthday deals at many franchises.

http://www.chacha.com/gallery/5795/what-free-food-can-you-get-on-your-birthday

Obviously I hope, only include franchises that have outlets in your area.

Next use Google and search for "birthday deals (your area)"

When I did that I found a couple old newspaper columns (2008-2009) that listed some local deals, which gave me a start.

And finally, I simply called the rest.

Now before you get nervous about doing this, realize you ARE NOT selling anything.

You are calling for INFORMATION.

It's the EXACT same thing as if you were calling to find out their hours.

There's a recording of me doing some calls on this page…

http://www.leoquinn.com/websitethanks/

Here's how you do it...

When they answer your call you say:

"Hi, I was wondering if you offer any special deals for people celebrating their birthday."

or

"Hi, I was wondering if you do anything special for people celebrating their birthday."

They will respond in one of 3 or 4 ways...

"Yes, we give XYZ" (Take notes on what they offer)

or

"No we don't" (Say thank you and hang up)

or

Uhhhhh (This probably means they are not sure what you mean)

In this case I'll help them understand by saying: "Some restaurants will give a free meal or dessert on someone's birthday?"

That jogs their memory and you'll get a yes or no.

The fourth kind of typical answer is:

"We'll bring out a piece of cake with a candle and sing."

You need to get a clarification on an answer like this because they didn't actually say the cake was free.

I'll follow up with, "I'm sorry...is the cake free for the person celebrating the birthday?"

That's it!

<u>I didn't explain what I was doing UNLESS they asked..."why do you want to know?"</u>

I was asked that once in about 150 calls.

In my experience 40% of the businesses I called did offer some sort of deal.

If the person answering the phone identifies themselves, I will make note of the name and the time I called. This comes in handy in case you can't read your handwriting and need to call back or if you hear back from a business...

"I am not sure who you spoke with but we typically do not offer this deal, I am sorry."

Because I took notes during my calling I knew the name of the person I spoke with and emailed back...

"I actually spoke with James who may have misunderstood my question. I've removed the listing."

No harm was done and I hope James didn't get in trouble!

I only called food related businesses although I'd love to get more non-food related businesses on my site and those will come over time.

I figured I'd be wasting my time calling non-food businesses. Birthday deals are very common at restaurants and not so common at other biz types.

The plan is to fill the site with restaurants and let the other businesses find it and add their own deals.

I tracked my calling and I could make 20 calls in about 25 minutes.

I got my list of businesses from Google...

Type in "(city) restaurant" and you'll get lists and lists.

Yelp and Trip Advisor would be good sites to search too.

As of this writing I have about 60 businesses on my site and I'm happy with that number.

It's plenty to give it credibility in the eyes of the media and any other visitors.

I made about 30 calls at a time, then I went to the site and added the deals.

Once I had a restaurant's deal listed, I'd send them an email if I could find the address on their website or Facebook page.

The sample email below assumes they give a free dessert after a meal on their birthday. If they offer something different, modify the email for the situation.

The email said:

SUBJECT LINE: Celebrating a birthday at (RESTAURANT NAME)

Last week I called and asked if you offer special deals for people celebrating their birthdays.

I was told that people would get XYZ on their birthday. and I wanted to confirm that is correct because I've added it to my directory of local birthday deals.

You can see your entry at:
LINK HERE

It's written up as only being available ON their birthday but you'd probably get more takers if you expanded that to be available during the "week of" or "month of" their birthday.

You're still getting the meal and few will come in and eat alone.

Please let me know if there are any changes or corrections you'd like made to your listing.

Thank you!

Your Name
Website
Phone

THIS IS A P.S. I ADD IF THEY OFFER A FREE DESSERT...

P.S. The National Restaurant Associate estimates the average "birthday table" is worth almost $80.

Most of the restaurant deals on the site so far offer a free dessert after a meal. You'd immediately stand out by offering a free entree.

Who dines alone on their birthday?

Birthdays are the number one special occasion that people celebrate in restaurants, according to a 2010 National Restaurant Association (NRA) survey.

55% said they dined out on their birthday,
30% dined out on their spouse's birthday
35% dined out on a family member's birthday.

Plus, many dine out for both lunch and dinner on their big day.

***

I also sent emails to businesses that said they didn't have any birthday specials.

That email said...

SUBJECT LINE: Celebrating a birthday at (RESTAURANT NAME)

I called last week to ask if you offered any special deals for people celebrating their birthdays.

I was told you didn't have any birthday policies in place.

The reason I asked is I've started a directory of birthday deals in the area.

There is no charge to list your birthday deal here.

SITE ADDRESS

There are almost XX deals listed there now and more are being added every day.

You can add the deal yourself by clicking here: LINK

or simply hit reply to this email and let me know what your deal is and it will be added to the site.

Thank you!

Best wishes,

Your Name
Website
Phone

***

I didn't hear back from most of the emails I sent but those responses were corrections or additions.

I had one owner ask politely to be removed...it was a very old, high-end restaurant.

Making The Listings

There is a video showing how I make the listings. You'll notice each of the listings on my site include a picture or two.

If you don't have Screen Capture software (taking a picture of something on a website is called a screen capture) I recommend Jing. It's free and you can get it from the link below.

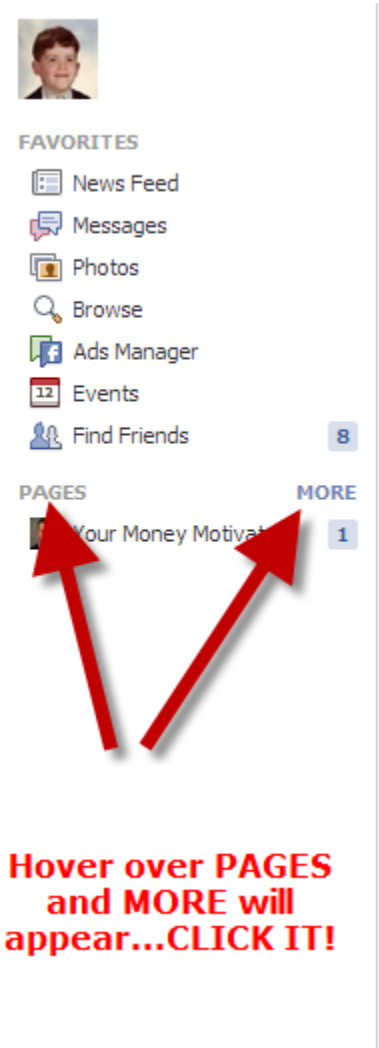
http://www.techsmith.com/download/jing/

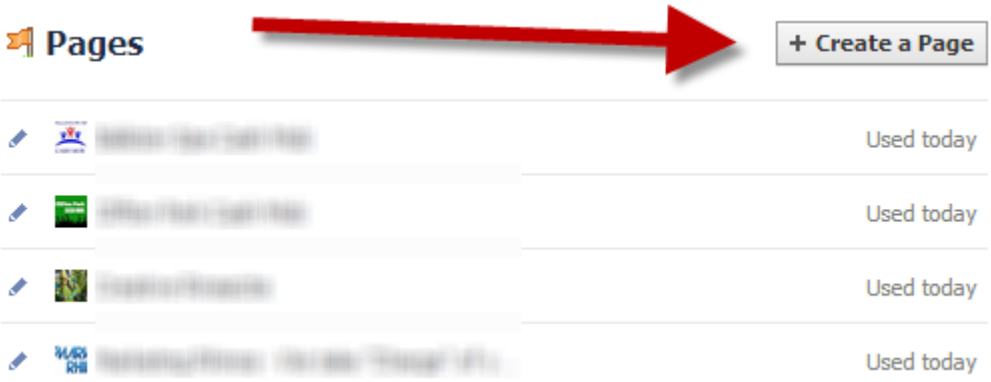
There is also a video showing you how to use Jing.

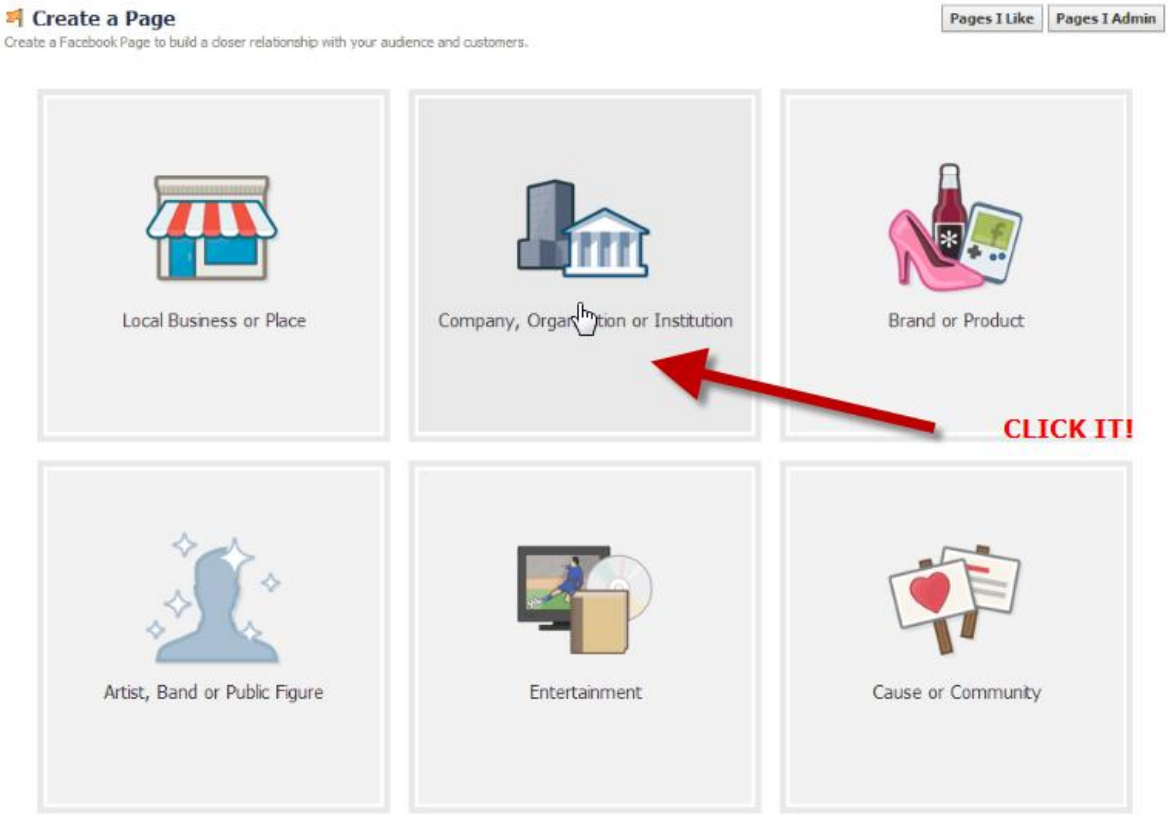
How To Make A Facebook Fan Page For Your Birthday Club Website

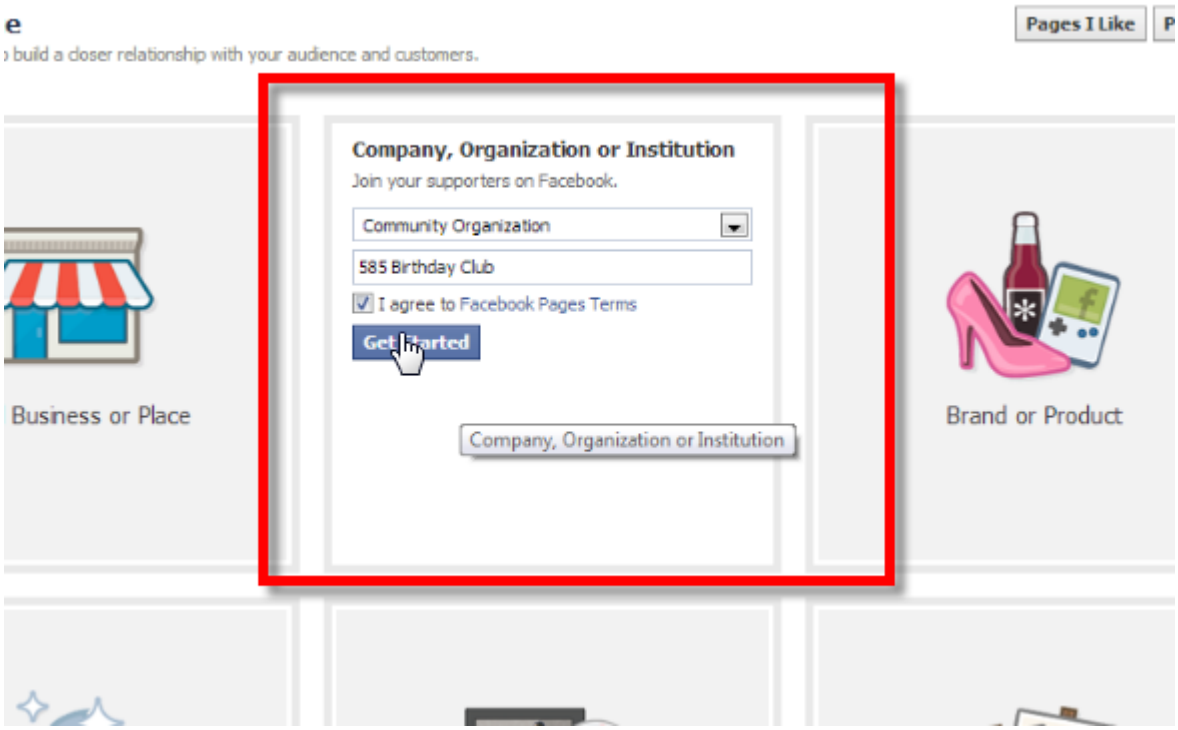
One of the best ways to get word out about your website will be Facebook.

You will want to start a fan page for your site and this is how you do it after you've logged into your FB account.

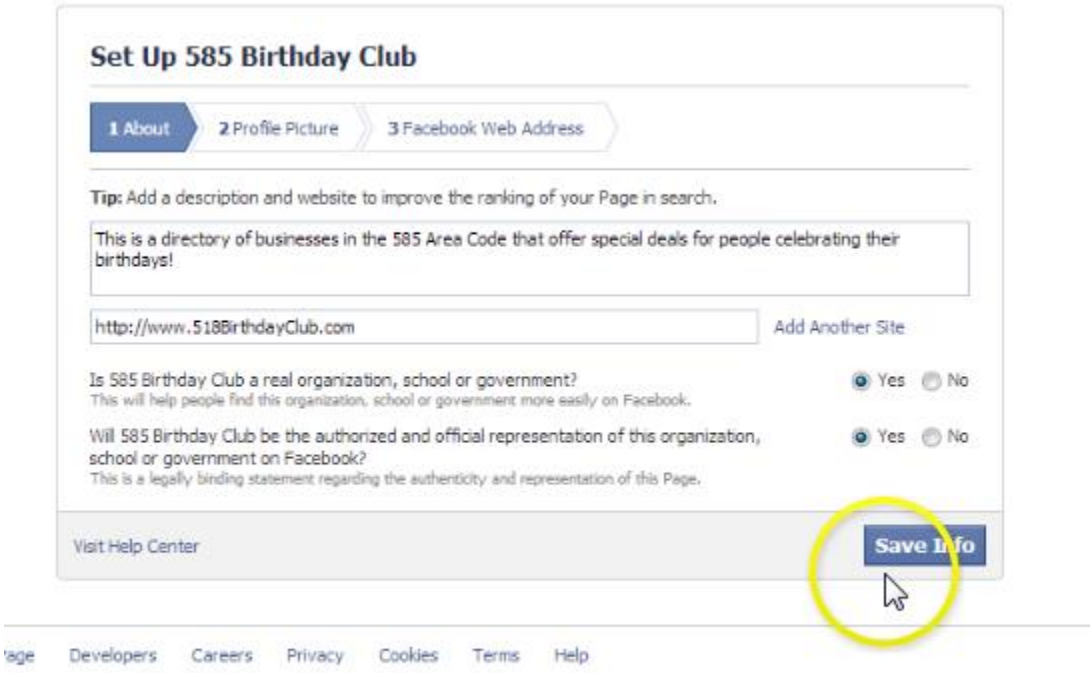



Pages
+ Create a Page
Used today
Used today
Used today
Used today


Create a Page
Create a Facebook Page to build a closer relationship with your audience and customers.
Pages I Like
Pages I Admin
Local Business or Place
Company, Organization or Institution
Brand or Product
CLICK IT!
Artist, Band or Public Figure
Entertainment
Cause or Community



Click GET STARTED then fill in a short description.



I use:

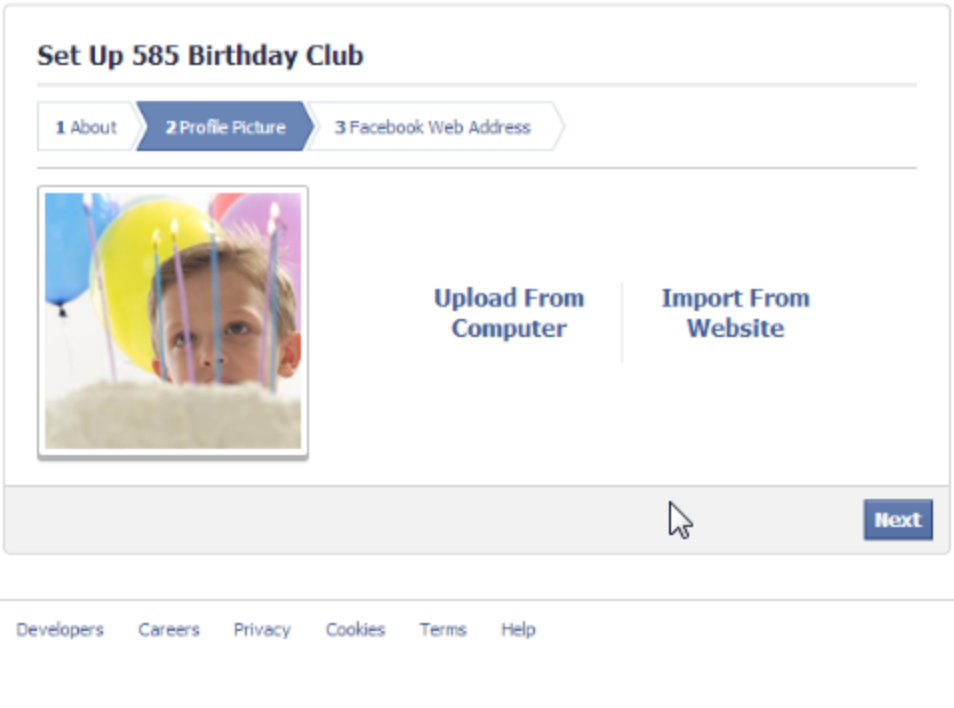
"This is a directory of businesses in the Capital District that offer special deals for people celebrating their birthdays! "

Then add your website.

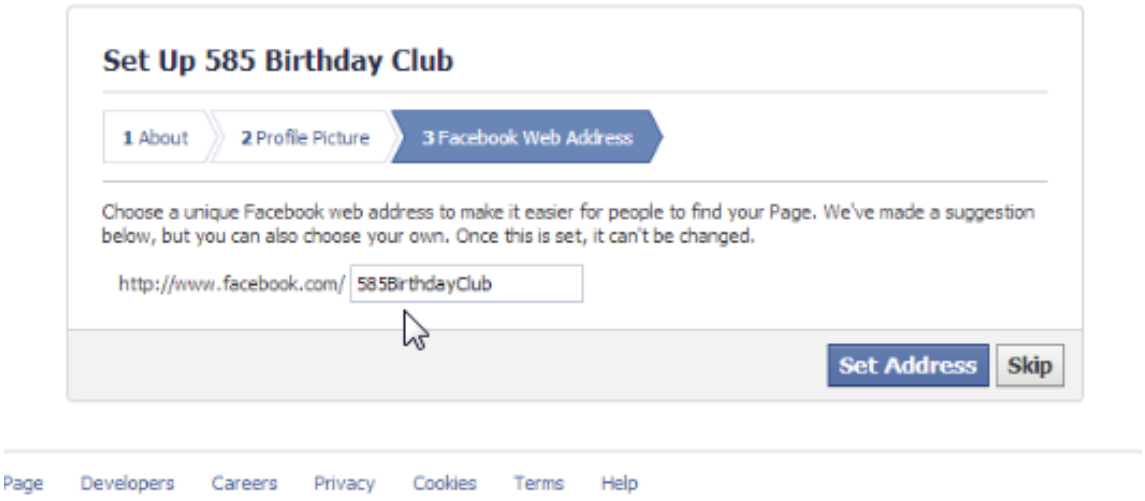
Click YES for the two questions.

And then SAVE INFO

Time to add a picture...a square picture preferably...



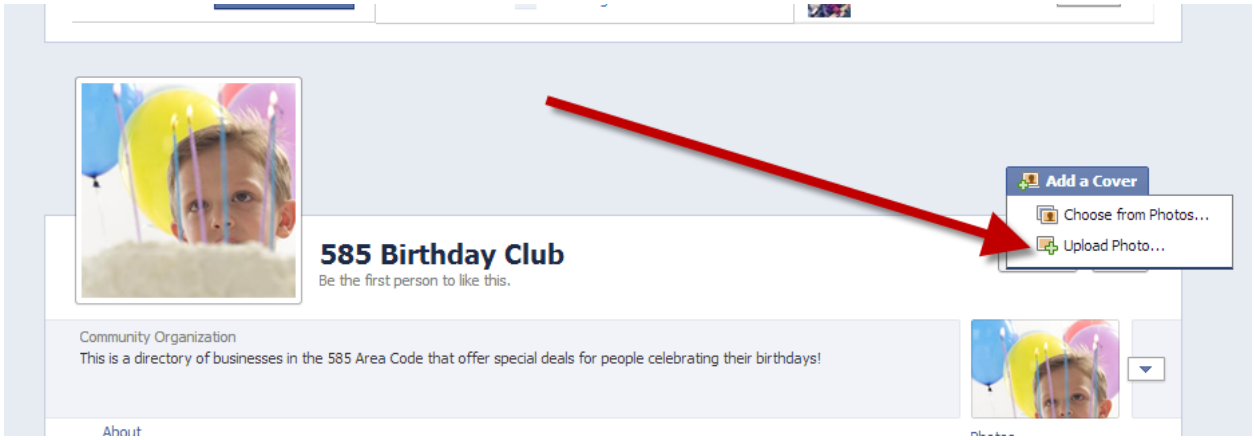
Then time to choose an address:



I make mine simple "585BirthdayClub" so when I'm speaking to people about my Facebook page it's easy for them to remember.

Click SET ADDRESS and your page is ready...

You next should add a cover and I use the banner that is on the top of my website...

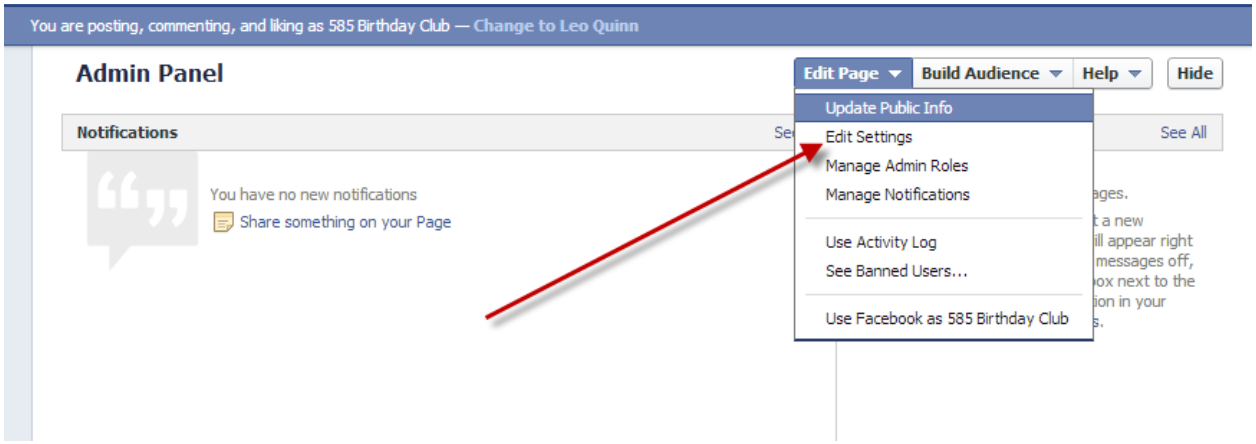


Choose "Upload Photo"

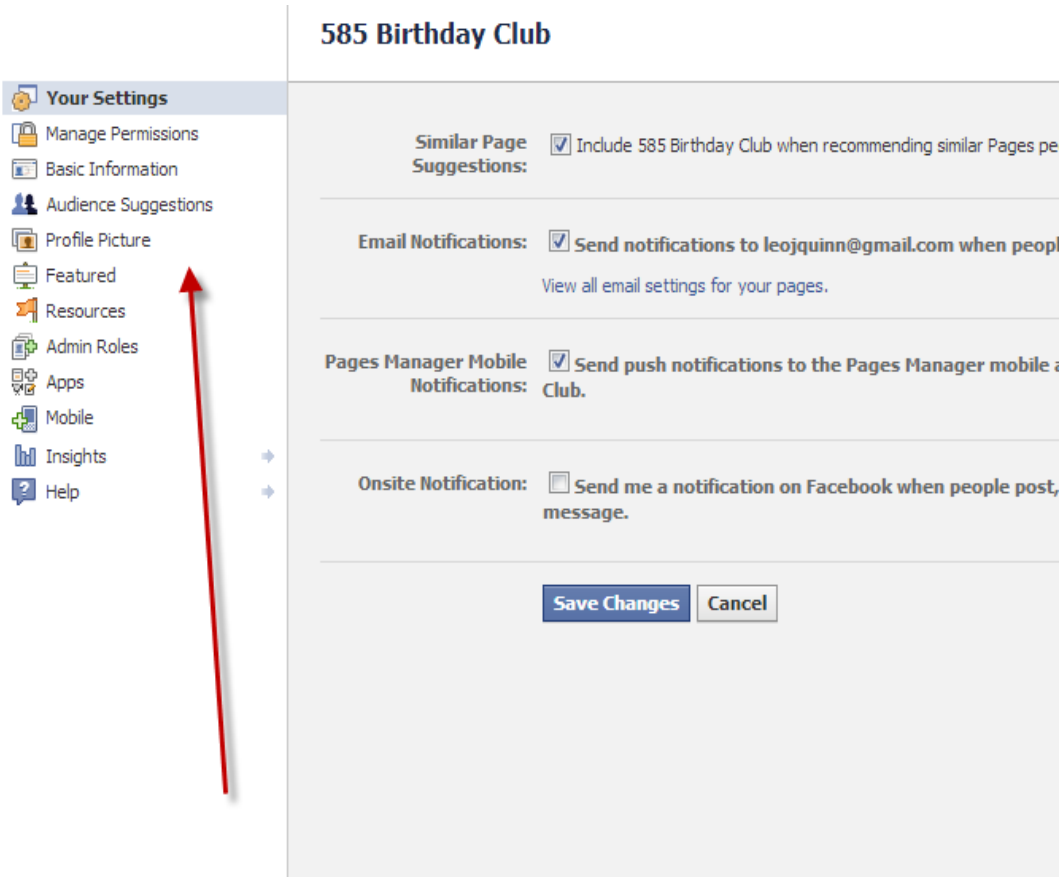
Find the banner on your computer

Click SAVE CHANGES and your fan page is ready.

To make any changes click that ADMIN PANEL button and choose EDIT SETTINGS



Then change whatever needs changing!



You should note that no one will know you've set up this page UNTIL you actually like it and have it ready for visitors.

You can get a look at the types of things I post by looking at mine but PLEASE don't LIKE it.

Weird request huh?

But I'd like to keep it a LOCAL fan base to be fair to potential advertisers.

Sure I could have 10,000 fans and that looks impressive but not if 9,900 of them are from Bangladesh!

So, please look and learn but don't LIKE!

Search FB for "518 Birthday Club" and you should find it easily.

Note...If you don't have a FB account and refuse to get one all hope is not lost. There are other ways to promote your site.

I have relatives with spouses in the military who don't have FB accounts for security reasons. I know teachers who don't have FB accounts because they don't want to deal with "friending" their students or parent's of their students.

People have their own reasons and that's fine.

Having said that, might I suggest a "pen name" for your Facebook account?

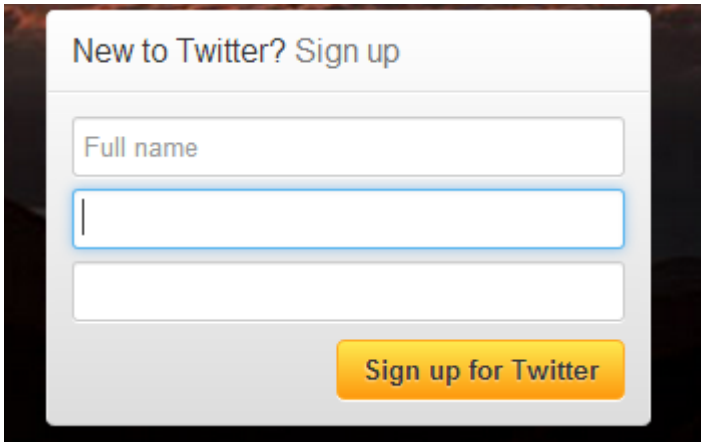
There is a guy around here who owns a Hotel complex by the name of Ken Desmond. I think that is an awesome name and if Hollywood ever calls my name, I'm changing mine to "Ken Desmond"

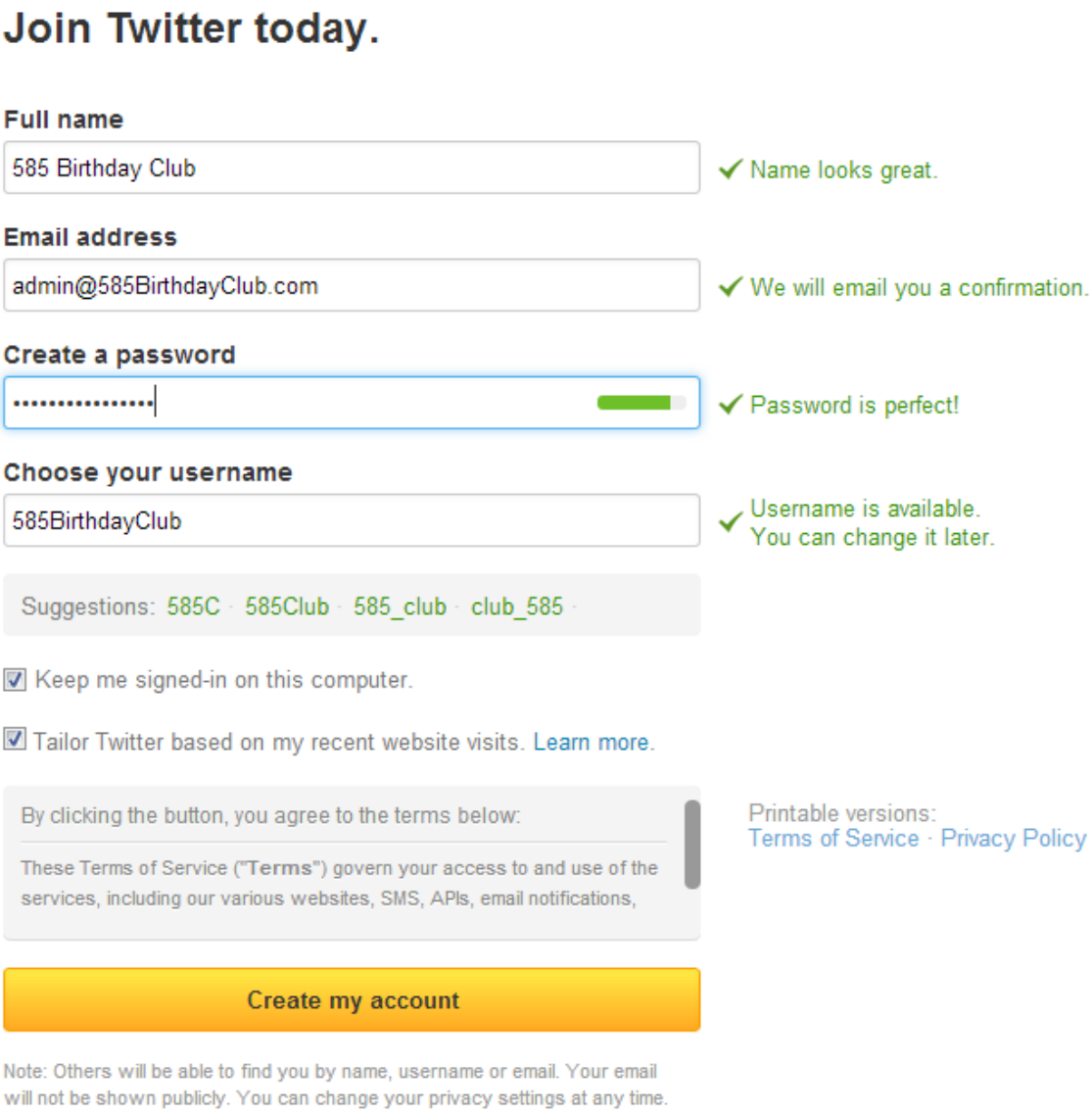
Go to Gmail.com set up a free email account using your new name and then set up a FB account with those details.

I'm sure FB frowns on this and you might lose your account and your Fan page if you get caught but it's a thought!

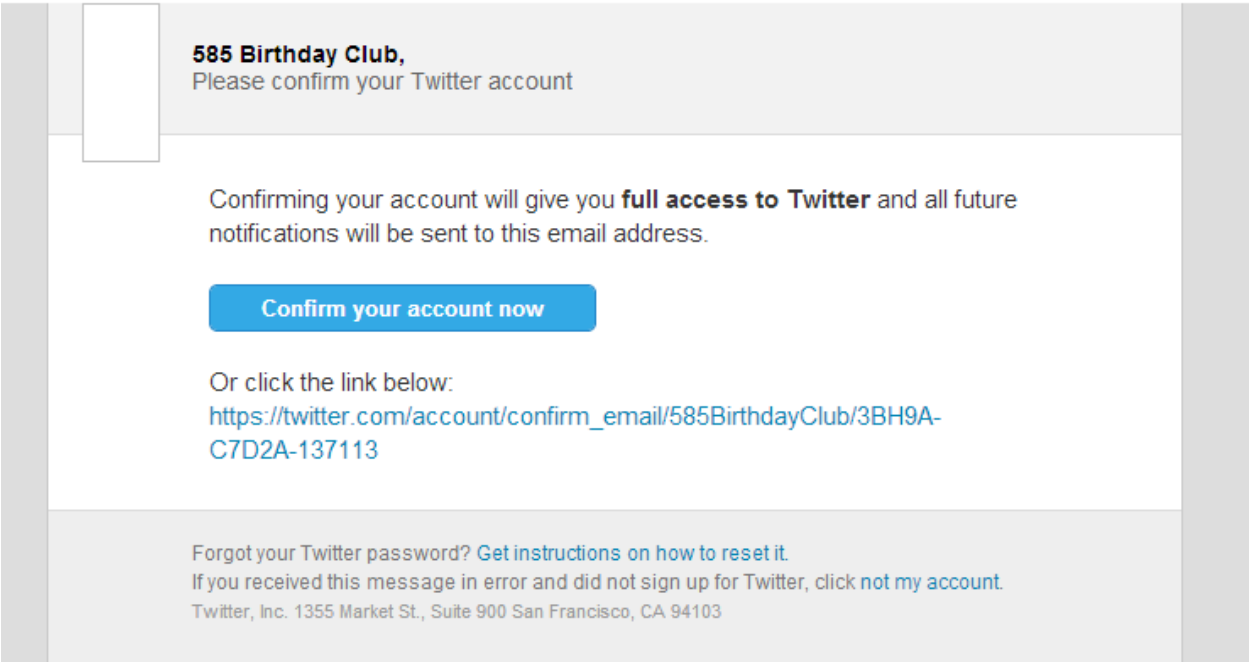
Now let's set up a Twitter Account...

http://www.Twitter.com

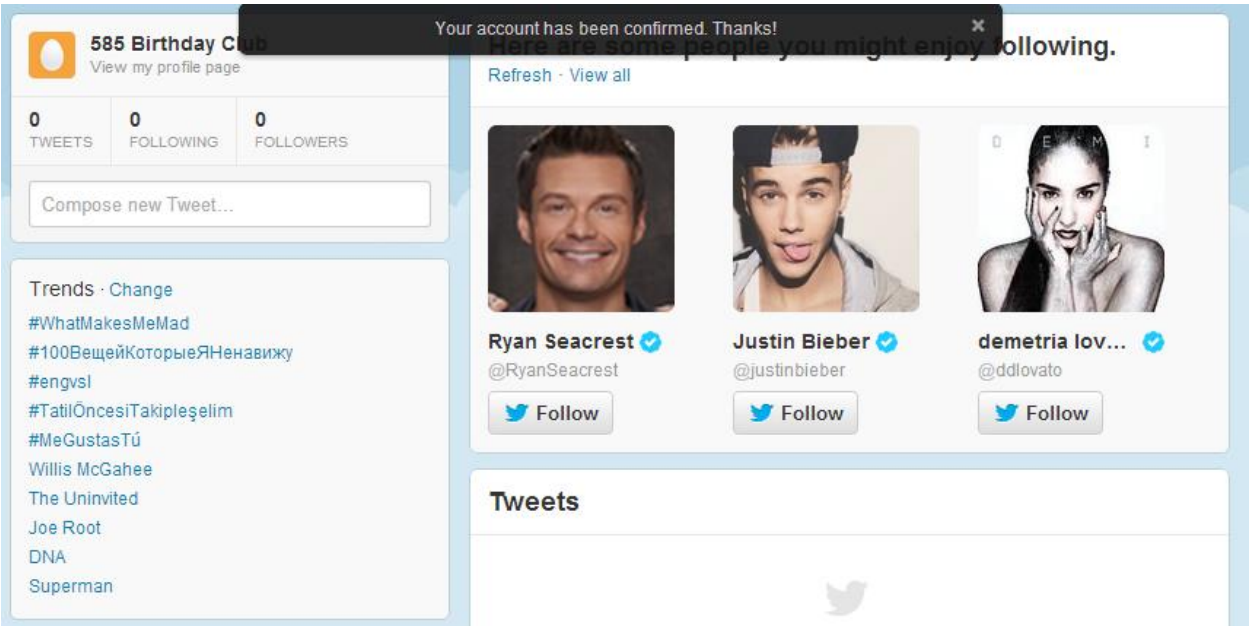

New to Twitter? Sign up
Full name
Sign up for Twitter



Check your email and click to confirm your account...



You are set to go...



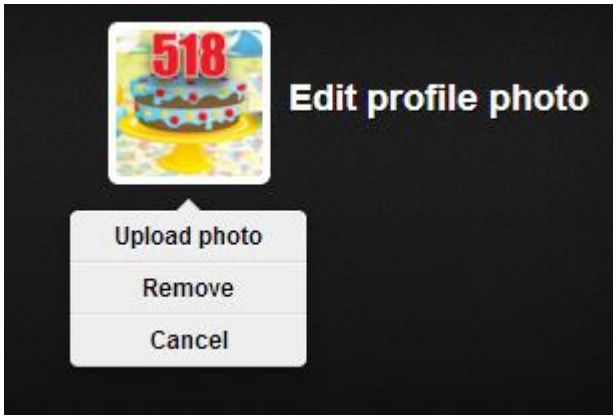
Finally you'll want to add a photo to your Twitter account.

What I did was take a screen capture of the cake part of my logo. It needs to be square to look good on Twitter.

You can do the same with Jing or any screen capture program.

Click EDIT PROFILE then hover over the egg.

Click UPLOAD PHOTO



Once you have your website set up with birthday deals then return to Twitter and start following all the businesses listed on your site and all the businesses that SHOULD be listed on your site.

Over time some of those that should be on your site will want to get there once they notice what you're doing.

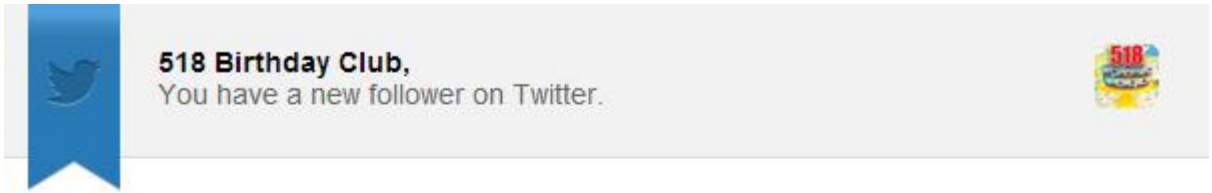
On Twitter you can, as of this writing follow 200 people a day. I am going to give you some advice here that I have not followed to this point...follow 100+ a day consistently.

Here is where I am as of this writing...

How am I doing now? http://twitter.com/518BirthdayClub

You will get followed back by a certain percentage of them. It's been 30% when I've done this with other accounts but it doesn't look like it will be that high here.

Twitter sends email telling you that you've been followed by someone.



LeoQuinn

@LeoQuinn

Financial Educator

Ballston Spa, NY · http://t.co/NspHKfZWKV

Curiosity will get you new followers.

So follow restaurants, reporters, newspapers, TV stations, columnists.

When you run out of business and media types to follow, start following people who follow local restaurants and media. These are mostly local people who celebrate birthdays!

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have multiple twitter accounts, BE SURE you are signed in as your birthday club before you start following!

Do the same with your Facebook fan page although following people is MUCH easier on Twitter.

And finally let's connect your Twitter and Facebook so when you post to FB it automatically gets added to Twitter.

It's all explained very clearly here:

http://www.digitalmarketinghq.com/social-media/auto-post-twitter-facebook/

Start at www.Facebook.com/twitter.

GETTING VISITORS TO YOUR SITE

USE CRAIGSLIST TO FIND FOLLOWERS AND FANS

I place ads for my Birthday club website on Craigslist and at the very moment I was typing this I got the brilliant idea to post ads directing people to my Facebook page too!

In any case I post ads in three categories...

"local news and views"

"general"

"small biz ads"

My ads look like this...

New website lists area birthday FREEBIES (Capital District)

http://www.518BirthdayClub.com links to dozens of special deals and freebies you can get on or around your birthday from great businesses in the Albany NY area.

Take a look and tell your friends!

Enjoy!

Having a birthday in Albany? (Albany, NY)

There are a bunch of businesses that will give you a free dessert or meal or drink on your birthday.

http://www.518BirthdayClub.com lists these deals from all over the Capital District.

Take a look and tell your friends!

"518 Birthday Club"

If you own a business in the area and want to make a birthday offer, you can list it on the site. Look for the big orange button

Own a business in the area? Offer your birthday deal here... (Albany, NY)

http://www.518BirthdayClub.com

On this site you'll find links to dozens of special deals you can get on or around your birthday from great businesses throughout the Capital District.

Birthday promotions are some of the most productive advertising you can do.

If you own a business in the 518 area code and you'd like to offer a birthday special, please visit http://www.518BirthdayClub.com and look for the big orang "Add Your Birthday Deal" button.

And of course, tell your friends about the club so they can get great deals.

Thank you!

Happy Birthday To You! (Capital District)

Got a birthday coming up in the area? (or know someone who does?)

http://www.518BirthdayClub.com will show you where to go to get some great deals for your birthday.

"518 Birthday Club"

Take a look and tell your friends!

Birthday Freebies from Dozens of Capital District Businesses (Albany, NY Area)

http://www.518BirthdayClub.com

On this site you'll find links to dozens of special deals you can get on or around your birthday from great businesses throughout the Capital District.

Every business has their own requirements for getting the deal and those deals are subject to change at any time so please let us know if you find something different.

The deals are organized by county and city/town/village but unless otherwise noted you don't have to live in a particular area to take advantage of a birthday deal.

Enjoy!

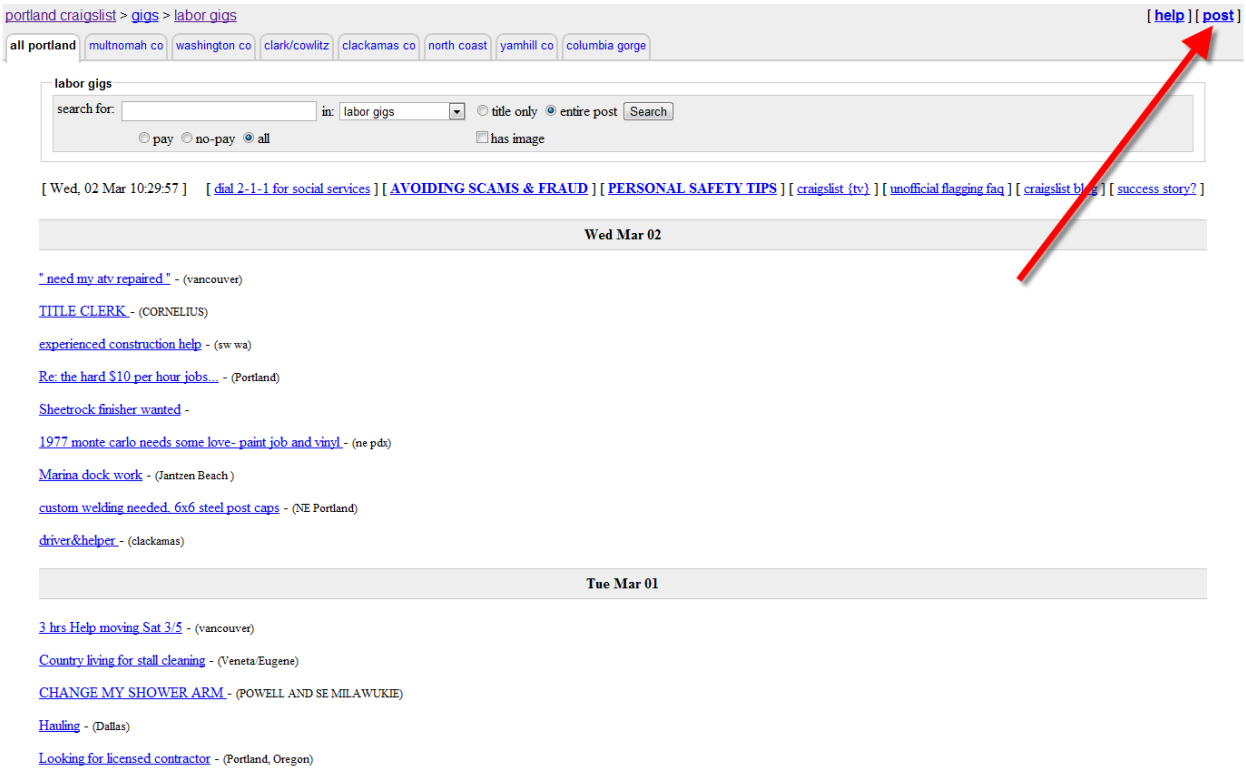
Every three days I login to my CL account and renew the ads.

Put it on your calendar!

REGISTERING FOR CRAIGSLIST

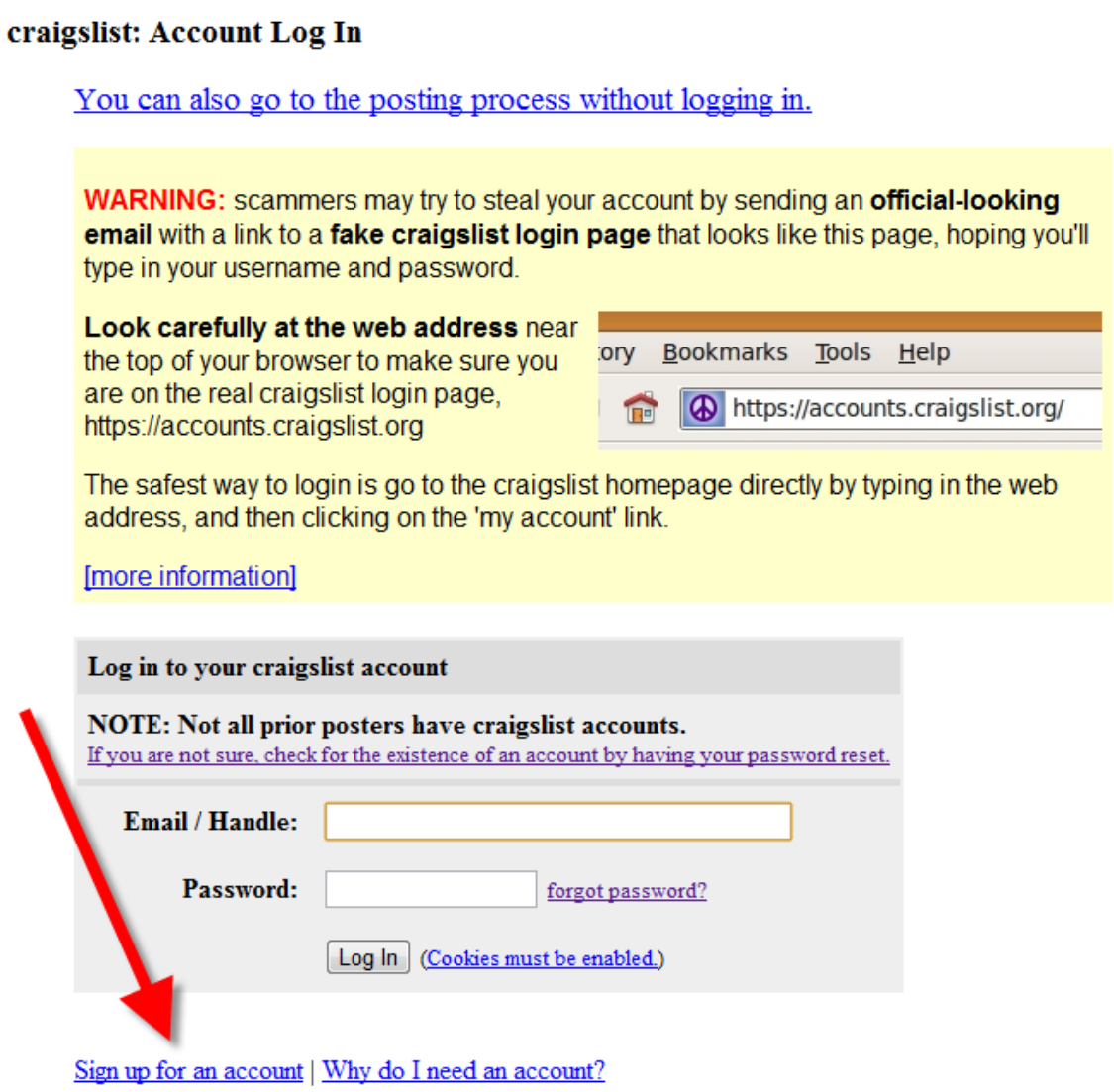
Before you can post on CL you'll need to register and it's a fairly simple process.

First choose the CATEGORY you want to put your ad in and click on POST



It will then prompt you to choose a CATEGORY to place your ad.

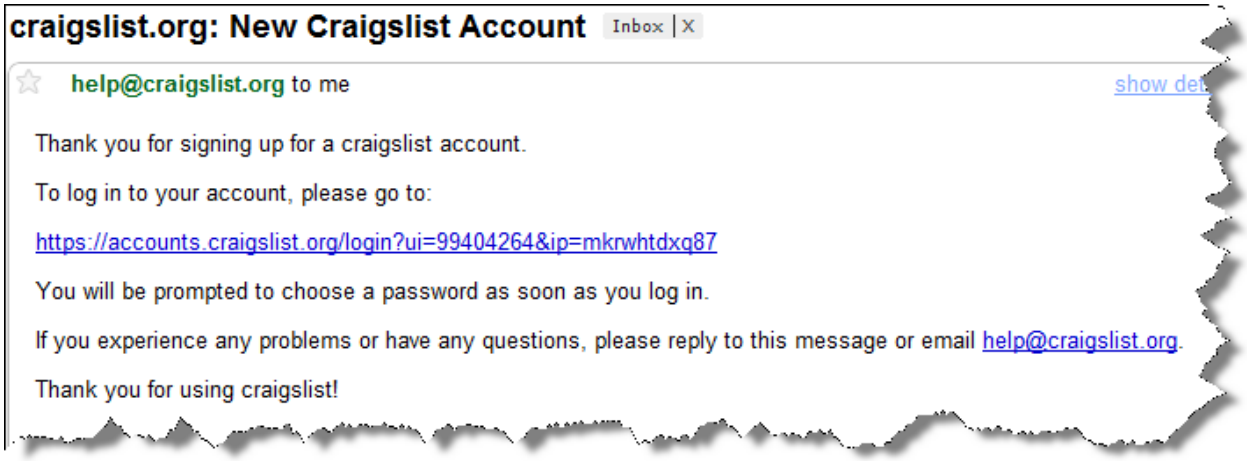
You'll then be prompted to SIGN-IN or JOIN.



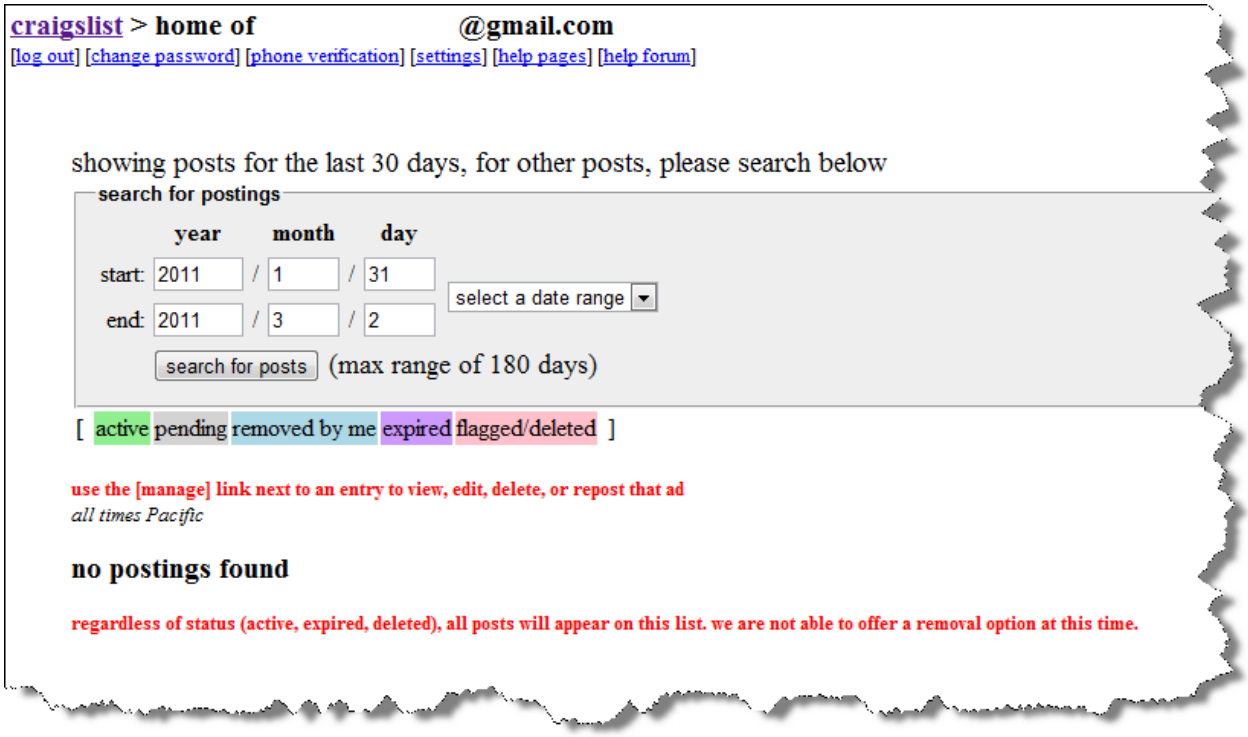
Joining is quick and easy but does require you getting a phone call. They do this to discourage spammers.

They will either call you or text you (your choice) with a code you'll need to use to verify who you are. No big deal. It's a small price to pay for all the benefits you get from CL.

This is the confirmation email you will get...



Once your registration is done and you are ready to post ads it will show you a summary of your ads (which are zero at the start)...



Choose the category where you'd like to place your ad...

portland craigslist > > **create posting**

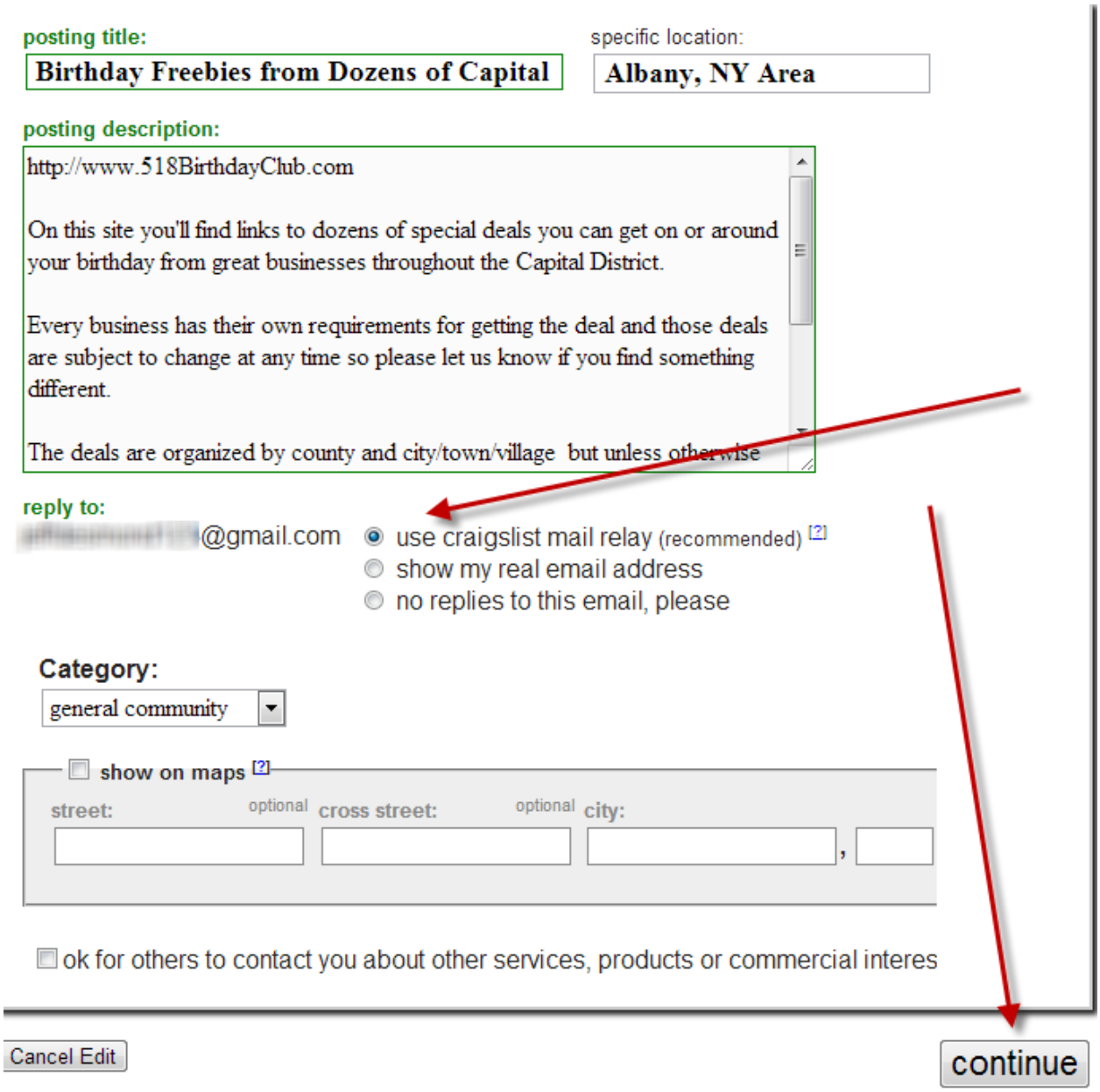
[logged in as i@gmail.com] [logout]

Please post to a single geographic area and category only -- cross-posting to multiple cities or categories is not allowed

What type of posting is this:

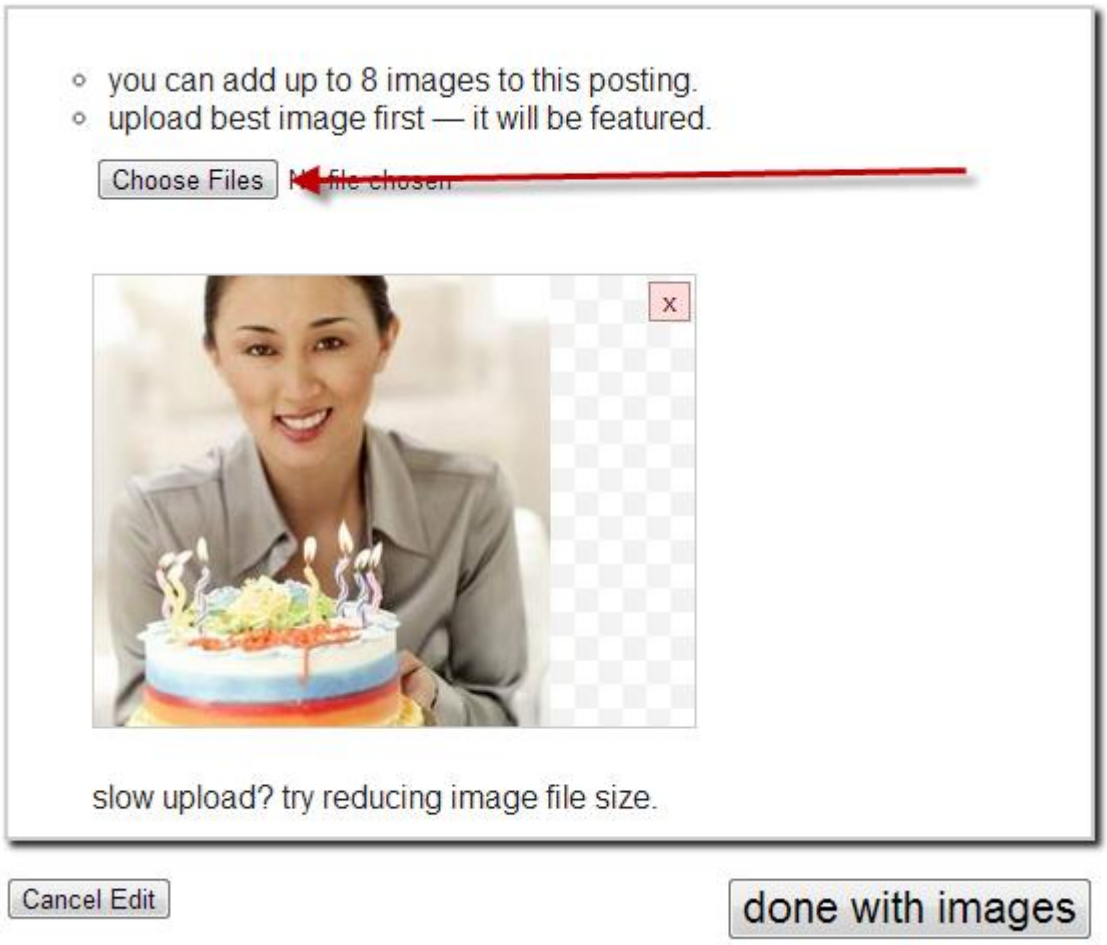
- job offered
- resume / job wanted
- housing offered
- housing wanted
- for sale (please do not post prohibited [?] or recalled [?] items)
- item wanted
- gig offered (I'm hiring for a for a short-term, small, or odd job)
- service offered
- personal / romance
- community
- event

Type in the ad copy...



I've yet to receive any email from these postings but I use the CL mail relay so my real email is not exposed.

When done, click CONTINUE to add an image...I add one but you can include more.



When you click DONE WITH IMAGES you are given another chance to change the text but when ready click PUBLISH and your ad will be live in 10-20 minutes typically.

They may want to auto-call or text you to verify your identity but no big deal. Type in the code you get and you'll be all set.

IMAGES

I get the royalty-free images from www.Pixabay.com

I just type in a keyword and see what pops up.

LOCAL BLOGS

Another great source of local visitors is local blogs. There are two ways to do this.

One is participate on the blog. Ask questions, answer questions, leave your opinion etc.

Make sure you fill out your profile and mention your site where and when appropriate.

The other way is to email the blog owner and let him or her know about your site.

Just a note that I think it important to NOT have advertising on your website at this point.

Why?

Sad to say, many people are militantly anti-advertising.

The thought that someone may be making money in a way they don't, makes it bad in their opinion.

Coincidentally, these people are usually broke but that's a topic for another day.

Actually I did write about this topic...

http://www.leoquinn.com/2013/05/02/do-you-need-a-moneytude-adjustment

So hold off on putting advertising on your site at the start.

Here is what I wrote to one of my big local blogs...

Hello!

I thought you and your readers might be interested in a new website I've started...

www.518BirthdayDeals.com

To date we have over 50 freebies and other deals people can get on or around their birthday in the Capital District.

We're adding more every week.

Let us know if we've missed any.

Thanks!

Leo Quinn

Did you see the boneheaded thing I did there?

I linked to the wrong site!

There is no 518BirthdayDeals website!

Luckily she wrote back and I was able to correct myself.

And she published it.

Birthday freebies and deals in the 518

Wednesday, June 5, 2013 *by:* **Shannon Fromma, Times Union**

Comments | E-mail | Print Tweet 0 Recommend 3 +1 0

Birthday deals abound, and Ballston Spa Internet entrepreneur Leo Quinn has compiled a lengthy list of local birthday deals on his website, **518BirthdayClub.com**.

On this site you'll find links to dozens of special deals – mostly dining – you can take advantage of on or around your birthday. I poked around a bit and was impressed by the volume of deals Quinn has compiled offered in all four corners of the Capital Region.

The site is organized by county, and then further divided by city, town or village. You'll find locally owned restaurants, including Bomber's Burrito Bar, The Barnsider, The Olde Bryan Inn, Sperry's, Ferrari's and more.

If you choose to become a member of the 518 Birthday Club (you only have to submit your name, birth date and email), you'll be sent extra special offers on and around your birthday and a few times throughout the year.

Quinn plans to update the site regularly, and encourages reader-submissions.

I'll keep in touch with her when I get any weird or wacky birthday deals for hopefully more free publicity!

PAID ADVERTISING

The only paid advertising I've done for my site is on Facebook.

Did you know that you can run ads that are shown only to people who have a birthday coming up in the next week in any town or zip code?

I've spent about $30 and as yet haven't found anything to write home about.

I'll keep testing and tweaking and let you know what's happening.

EARNING MONEY FROM ADVERTISING

Unless you intend to use your birthday club website as a foot in the door to get loyalty club clients, (and I think you should) advertising will be the way you make money here.

The easiest form of advertising to earn money from is called Adsense.

Adsense is a program that Google has which allows you to earn money when people click on advertising on your site.

You sign up for an Adsense account, choose the size of the ads that will run on your site, insert the code into one of the widgets and the ads will appear automatically.

Get more information and sign up for the Adsense program here:

https://www.google.com/adsense

Another type of advertising you can earn from on your site is for what's called Featured Listings.

As we have it set up now, the listings will appear on the individual pages randomly.

If a business wants an advantage over the competition, and remember a birthday table can be worth an average of $80.00 to a restaurant, they can pay for a Featured Listing.

Here's an example of what one might look like

A featured listing will always be at the top of any category.

Here is how a web site using the same theme we are explains their listings:

http://therealfoodguide.com/promote-your-business/

This is good for our information but a quick look through the web site doesn't show anyone who has a featured listing.

Note: If you have a friend who has a business that's listed on your website and you want to give them a featured listing, do it. That may lead to other businesses asking how they can be featured.

Next up...

Advertising in your newsletter. You will be starting a newsletter right?

As you can see from my website I am building a list.

At a minimum my list includes their name, their e-mail, their birthday and their zip code. Over time as this list grows it becomes more and more valuable because you can direct the message to people who are probably planning to do something for their birthday.

One of the perks as part of my featured listings will be that you can send an e-mail to people having a birthday in the same zip code as that business.

You could send that e-mail one week before their birthday and the day of to remind them.

I keep harping on this statistic " The average birthday table at a restaurant is worth $80" because it's true and because all they need is three or four birthday parties every month to pay your featured listings fee.

You can also send emails six months before a birthday...call it "halfway to your birthday" promo.

Make a deal with a restaurant to do that mailing for them.

$100-$200 a month.

Every one with a birthday in November will get an email on May 1 and May 15th reminding them to come in and celebrate "halfway to their birthday"!

You can have a lot of fun with birthdays for sure!

Another way to monetize the sites is by recommending Amazon products and collecting a small commission.

At this writing the commission is about 4-7% so you're not going to get rich but if you have a few hundred followers on Facebook and you recommend something, you'll make a few dollars and here's why…

And this is a little secret I'm sharing with you... if I send you to Amazon to look at something and you don't buy that but you buy something else during that visit, I'll earn 4-7%+ on whatever you do buy.

My 1149+ fans on Facebook earn me $50 to $100 a month and all I do is recommend free Kindle books.

What to recommend?

Books on throwing parties? Party supplies? Anything that would fit with a birthday.

Sadly, Amazon doesn't accept affiliates from all U.S. states. And obviously I'm not clear on how it works in other countries.

To find out if it works for you go here:

https://affiliate-program.amazon.com/

CONCLUSION

That's it for now.

You're on the UPDATE list so watch your email for regular updates from me and others who care to share what's working for them.

So get started making calls!

Good luck!

Leo Quinn