

How to Create a Book Tab for Your Facebook Author Page

by Vanessa Kier

If you have an author business page (also called a fan page) on Facebook, you may have noticed that one of the features of a business page that is different from a personal profile is the series of boxes underneath the page's image banner. Facebook calls these boxes tabs. The default tabs are Photos and Likes.

A tab allows you to add additional screens of content to your business page. For example, if you click on the Photos tab, you will leave the main business page and be taken to a screen that displays the photos the owner of that page has uploaded.

Authors can use a tab to create a dedicated screen that displays information about their books, including buy links. You might want to do this if you don't want to set up a separate business page, complete with timeline, for your books. A tab is similar to a website page. It contains content without a Facebook timeline section.

In order to customize a tab, you need to install a type of program that Facebook calls an app. Once installed, an app allows you to add a specific type of content to one tab. Some apps can be installed more than once so you can customize more than one tab. Note: You need to be using Facebook under the page's administrator profile before you'll be able to install an app. So, for me, I need to be using Facebook as my profile, Vanessa Kier, rather than my page, Vanessa Kier Author, if I want to install or edit my apps.

You can search for an app within the Facebook App Center, located on the left hand menu of your Facebook page, or if that doesn't bring up what you want, do an internet search.

There are a couple of apps that are aimed at helping authors set up a book tab.

Author Marketing app—This app allows you to put more than one book on a tab's screen. However, the format does not appear to be customizable, at least in the free version. For example, I couldn't remove the bio section. Also, while this app imports the book cover, description, and buy link from Amazon, I didn't find any way to add links to other retailers. Perhaps the paid version offers more customization.

BookPulse—This app makes it very easy to add links to your book from multiple retailers. However, the free version only allows you to put in information for one book. The paid version allows you to enter information for multiple books. The layout, at least in the free version, is also not fully customizable.

IFRAMEHOST – This is an HTML app. It lets you start with a blank screen and decide for yourself what content you want to display. This is the app that I used to set up my tab. For anyone who has edited a Wordpress blog, editing this tab will look very familiar. There is a source view and an editor view. In the editor view you can type text, add photos, add links to text and format the text. In the source view, you can link the tab direct to a blog or website so that the tab will display the same content as the other site's page, enter new HTML code, or edit the existing code.

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Once an app has been installed, you'll want to edit it. As long as you are using Facebook as the page's administrator, if you click on a tab, when the tab's screen comes up you should see an option for settings in the upper right corner. What you'll be allowed to edit and what the edit screen looks like depends on the app.

You can also change the image that is used for the tab's box on the main business page. I created a simple, custom image in Gimp that says SSU Trilogy in white on a black background. To change the image, go to your main business page. To the right of the tab boxes, click the down arrow. You should see another row of tabs open up. By doing this, if you hover your cursor over the tab you want to edit, you will see the editing pencil in the upper right corner of the tab. Click on the pencil to bring up the tab's menu. Choose Edit Settings. You'll get a pop-up window. In this window will be an option to Change the Custom Tab Image. This is where you can upload your new image. The dimensions of the image have to be 111 pixels by 74 pixels in order to fit the tab box.

You can also change the Custom Tab Name. Renaming the image changes the explanatory text that appears below the tab box on the main business page. I renamed my tab SSU Trilogy.

Once you've successfully added a book tab, think about what other tabs might be helpful, such as a newsletter signup tab, an upcoming events tab, a freebies tab. Up to twelve tabs can be viewed on the main business page, although you'll need to use the drop down arrow to see more than the first four. But these twelve are just your favorites. You can have even more apps installed.

So give it a try. Adding a book tab with buy links is another great way to connect readers to your books!

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