

# Social Media for Business: NING

## Building Your Own Custom Social Network or Online Community

### Getting Started

1. **Sign Up:** Go to [www.ning.com](http://www.ning.com) and follow the instructions to create your new network.
  2. **Choose a Web Address:** The web address ([webaddress.ning.com](http://webaddress.ning.com)) cannot be changed later.
  3. **Other Settings:** You can quickly choose your setting as they can be changed at any time.
  4. **Select Features:** Click "View all features". Simply drag and drop. Features can be changed later.
- Tip: Don't worry too much about getting your network perfect right away. You will most likely update and adjust your network as your online community develops.*

### 10 Great Things You Can Do Right Out of the Box

1. **Network Privacy and Membership Control**  
You have control over you can see your network and who can become a member.
2. **User Profiles, Inbox and Friends**  
Each member can manage their own profile page and the content on it. Members are able to friend each other and exchange messages with friends (like Facebook).
3. **Member Created and Managed Groups**  
Members can be allows to create niche or special interest groups within your network. Members are able to manage their own groups (membership, content, announcements) without creating more work for you.
4. **Member Generated Blogs, Video, Photos and Forums**  
You can allow your members to share media with each other adding value to your network. Also known as "user generated content".
5. **Commenting and Ratings**  
Just about everything within NING can be commented on (you can also turn comments off). Videos and pictures can be rated by members (useful for contests).
6. **Tagging**  
Tagging allows for content within your network to be categorized together. This makes sharing and discovering certain types of content such as "health tips" very easy.
7. **RSS Feed Publishing**  
Your network will publish multiple types of RSS feeds which can automatically update other sites like your website, or services like Twitter.
8. **Integrate External RSS Feeds**  
Your network integrates with external RSS feeds too. For example you could automatically post the latest headlines from your favorite news source or photos from a Flickr group.
9. **Network Announcements**  
You can send messages and updates directly to your entire network just like an email newsletter.
10. **Customize the Design**  
No HTML coding is required to upload and select your own colors, logo, header or backgrounds.

### 2 Helpful Resources

- <http://help.ning.com> – A very useful place to search for common questions and answers.
- <http://creators.ning.com> - A network of NING creators with a very active and informational forum.

Courtesy of ProWorks Corporation. Full service web design- development- marketing-strategy  
[www.proworks.com/blog](http://www.proworks.com/blog) | [@proworks](https://twitter.com/proworks) | [contact@proworks.com](mailto:contact@proworks.com) | 541.752.9885 | Corvallis, Oregon

