

Brazil's Christian Facebook: A better networking alternative?

by [Sarah Caspari](#)

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([The Christian Science Monitor](#)) A group of Evangelical Christians in Brazil launched a new social network last month called FaceGlória. Agence France-Press reports the site claims to be comparable to Facebook—but without all the sin.

FaceGlória has many of the same functions as Facebook, but information is filtered out that the creators have deemed inappropriate to make the site suitable for its Christian audience. In its first month, more than 100,000 users signed up.

"On Facebook you see a lot of violence and pornography," co-founder and web designer Atilla Barros told AFP. "That's why we thought of creating a network where we could talk about God, love and to spread His word."

On FaceGlória, instead of liking posts, users click an "Amen" button to express support. More than 600 words have been banned from the site, as well as content of a sexual or violent nature. Material relating to homosexuality is also explicitly forbidden.

It is the job of 20 volunteers to keep FaceGlória clean. Photos depicting alcohol and tobacco and people in suggestive poses or clothing are subject to removal by these monitors.

Policing content, however, is not as challenging as users of other social media networks might think, one volunteer, Daiane Santos, told AFP. This may be because the FaceGlória user base is self-selecting.

"Our public doesn't publish these kinds of photos," she said.

The public Santos refers to is the more than 40 million Evangelicals that currently live in Brazil.

While still home to the world's largest Catholic population, Brazil has seen a surge in recent decades in the number of Evangelical Protestants. According to AFP, Evangelicals account for between a quarter and a fifth of the total Brazilian population today, whereas in 1980 they made up only 6 percent.

Evangelicals are set to become the majority by 2040, by which point Barros hopes FaceGlória will have long since become the primary social network in Brazil.

"In two years we hope to get to 10 million users in Brazil," he said. "In a month we have had 100,000 and in two we are expecting a big increase thanks to a mobile phone app."

While it may have gained support more quickly than some of its rivals, FaceGlória is not the first alternative network created to filter out impiety. The creators of Christian Faithbook had a similar idea—from the name's nod to Facebook to its standards for content. But with fewer than 900 users, Christian Faithbook has not seen much success.

Ummaland, a social media network for the devout Muslim community, embraces the same concept. Launched in 2013, it currently has over 300,000 members, according to the BBC. The site offers stricter privacy settings for women, Islamic inspirational quotes, and aims to eliminate trivial posts to avoid wasting users' time.

Acir dos Santos, the mayor of the city where FaceGlória was founded, who made out-of-pocket contributions to support the site's creation, told AFP that while FaceGlória is available only in Portuguese right now, the company plans to expand to accommodate speakers of English and other languages in the future.