

A 'Facebook' for dogs - it's grrrrreat!

A COOKSTOWN man has created the first 'Facebook for dogs' which allows canine lovers to connect through social networking.

Diarmuid Scullin from Coolnafranky set up K9 Friends United to provide dog owners all over the world with a place to chat, swap tips and meet new people.

And such is the success of his website www.k9friendsunited.com that word has spread and people are now logging on from as far afield as Argentina, New Zealand, the USA and China.

A lifelong dog lover, Diarmuid's site, which is completely free, incorporates a gallery where you can show off photographs of your pooch as well as upload videos.

The Cookstown man explained that the inspiration for the site, based on the Friends Reunited concept, came from his daily job.

"I'm a long distance lorry driver and when I'm out and about I noticed a lot of people

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were out walking their dogs on their own. So I decided to do something about it and I set up the website. And within hours of going online, I'd received messages from all over the place.

"So now, when I'm taking a break, I can log onto my laptop by the roadside," he said.

Dog lovers who register will have complete control over their own webpage and can edit the content at any time. In addition, anyone who registers can chat with others in real time, or post a blog, if they have something to say.

There is also a lost and found section, should your dog have disappeared, and a poignant memorial page which will allow

you to pay tribute to a deceased pet.

The Tyrone trucker's job entails spending long hours away from home across the UK and Ireland, and is the only reason why he does not currently own a dog. He hopes to see the site expand as more and more dog lovers register their pooches.

There is also a petition to stop puppy farming - an issue in which Diarmuid believes wholeheartedly.

"It gives people an alternative to the glossy magazines. They can swap ideas, meet like-minded people and talk about their dogs," he said.

So if you dog is envious of your own page on Facebook, why not allow him or her to join in by logging onto www.k9friendsunited.com - you'd be barking mad to refuse.

Diarmuid Scullin busy on his increasingly popular K9 Friends United website. mm0209-101a.

