I'm sorry, Barack, we're through

Obama may make a good president, but he's a bad MySpace friend.

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DESPITE BEING 43 years old, I was talked into starting a MySpace page to help promote my book. However, in my scramble to collect friends, I’ve set up some fairly rigid guidelines: pretty girls, yes, but no strippers; comics I’ve met, yes; comics I haven’t, no; anyone who confuses “you’re” and “your,” you’re out.

Then, while perusing a sea of tiny head shots on MySpace, I saw him. It was a no-brainer. I clicked on “add to friends,” crossed my fingers and waited. The following morning, my prayers were answered. He said yes! Barack Obama and I were officially pals. Although I had no idea what a pain he’d be.

In case you’ve never experienced the majesty of MySpace, here’s the deal. If someone with a MySpace page has an important event coming up — say a heavy metal band performing at a dive bar in Chico — he sends out a bulletin to all his “friends.” But it better be important. Because everyone knows that valuable computer time should not be interrupted by spam and frivolous announcements. Everyone except Obama.

Here are some of the bulletins he’s bombarded me with recently:

Subject: new videos

Barack announced that he “just put two new videos” on his page. Which isn’t really a reason to brag. I mean, I have five videos on YouTube and don’t feel the need to tell everyone in my address book. Plus, at the end of the bulletin, he adds that he’s “working on getting some podcasts back on the page.” If you can’t figure out MySpace, are you ready to run a country?

Subject: We’re on our way to 100,000!

I had no idea what this meant, but it piqued my curiosity enough to click and read on. He’s getting all cocky about the number of “friends” he’s approaching. Hey, I’m approaching 100,000 friends — albeit really, really slowly. Save this bulletin for when you have half as many acquaintances as Dane Cook.

Subject: faces for Obama

The “urgent news” this time is that Obama wants to create a photo mosaic with 1,000 supporters. And then what happens to this magnificent creation? You frame it and sell it in the MoMA gift shop, Barack? How many of those would you sell? My guess is way under 1,000 (which, based on your shabby logic, is also “on your way to 100,000”). If I had my druthers, I’d rather you abandon this picture-taking fetish and concentrate on convincing the administration the Bible’s not a science book.

Subject: MoveOn members?

*Please vote in their online poll!* Ease up, Barack! We just had a big election before Thanksgiving, and we’ve got another one coming up in a year and a half. If I were you, I’d lay off on the voting stuff now so you don’t burn people out in 2008. Remember, it’s a marathon, not a sprint. (Or is it the other way around?)
Subject: Atlanta folks?

OK, OK, OK. You're going to be in Atlanta. However, if you read my profile, you'd know that I'm in Los Angeles. I mean, I read your profile and know that you're straight and looking for "networking and friends." What kind of friend are you that you don't know where I live? It hurts.

Before a potential bulletin about "What a Delicious Dinner" or "My Dog Just Caught a Frisbee" appeared on my screen, I called up Obama's profile, clicked "delete" and dropped him as a MySpace pal. Bottom line: I think he'd make a great president. But as a friend, he's a little too high maintenance.

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