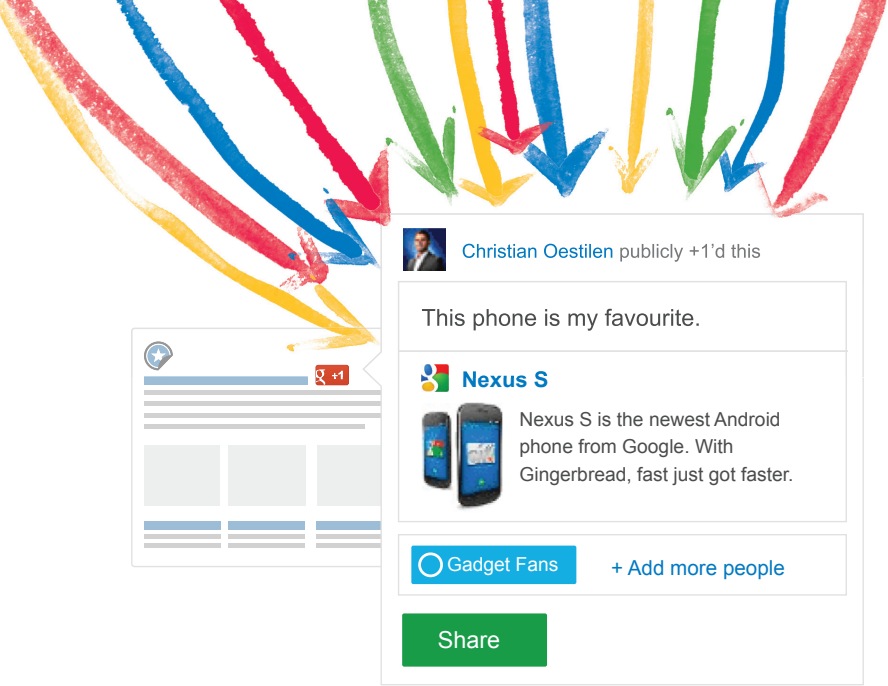
Google+ Your business and you

Getting started with Google+

What is Google+?

People make the web powerful and exciting today. We all contribute. With photos, videos, and blogs, we've turned the web into an incredible resource as we connect and share with others across the world.

By empowering each other to share interests, opinions, and recommendations, we make the web better. Better for people. And better for brands like yours. By adding the right people, Google+ improves all the marketing you do with Google.



The power of recommendations

People often turn to friends and family for help in making decisions. The +1 button combines the power of personal recommendations with the reach of Google. This makes it easy to start conversations and offer recommendations when they're needed most.

Take Anna, for example. She +1'd the Samsung site because she loves her phone. Now, her friends see her recommendation whenever the Samsung name comes up in search results, in search ads, or on the Google Display Network.

Create

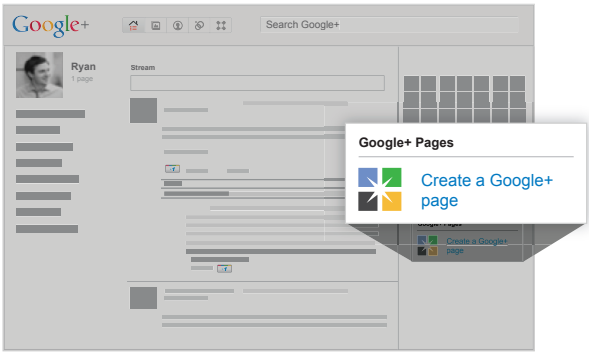
Google+ pages let you share exclusive content with followers and provide access to your brand. Let's see how to set up your page for success. Maybe you already have a Google+ page. If so, you'll already know much of what follows—but still might find a valuable idea or two.

Create your Google+ page

Setting up a Google+ page is easy, but be sure to spend some time getting it exactly the way you want it. Four simple steps will ensure that your page is optimized for Google+.

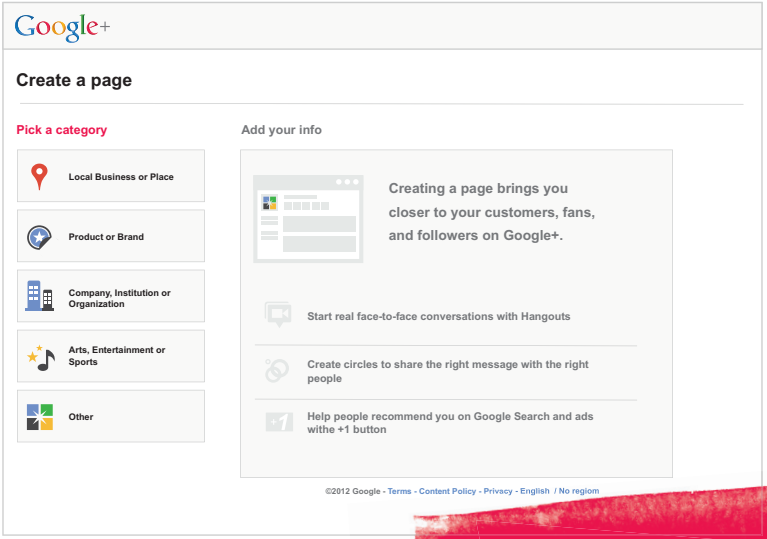
1 Sign up for Google+

Just go to **plus.google.com**. If you already have a Google+ profile, log in and click *Create a Google+ page* on the right side of your stream. If you don't have a personal Google+ profile, get started by creating one. (Either way, you need a personal profile to create your Google+ page.)



2 Create your Google+ page

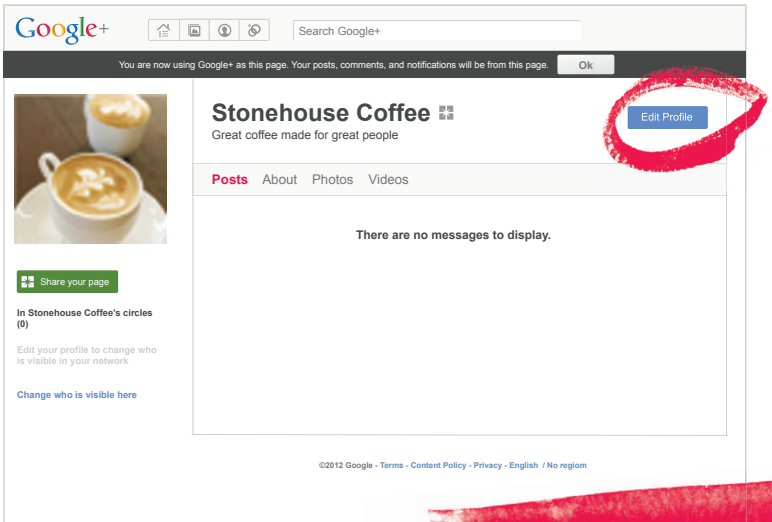
The instructions are simple. First, choose your page category. Next, you'll want a profile photo. And five scrapbook photos are optional. All photos should be 125 x 125 pixels.



Quick tip:
You can use animated gifs in your scrapbook.

3 Complete your page

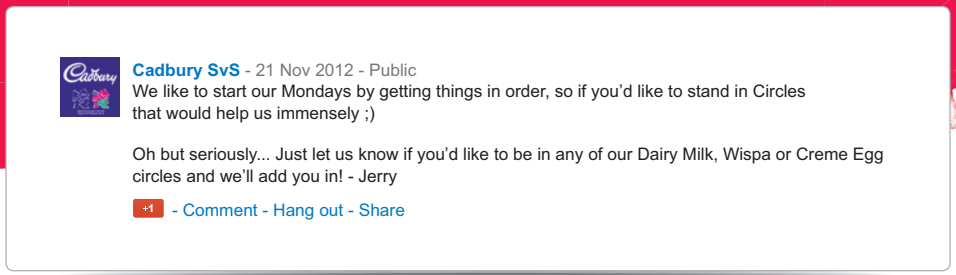
Include an *About* section. This shows the purpose of your campaign and your goals for your page. Add a profile, scrapbook, and product photos, plus videos such as commercials or short introductions.



Quick tip:
The video section is also a good place to host your Hangouts, if you choose to record them.

Quick tips on posting

- Don’t post everything at once. You don’t want to overwhelm your followers with content. If you publish three or four posts daily, post them throughout the day.
- Learn from others. Check out how UK chocolate maker Cadbury segmented its users. Ask your users which Circles they want to join. This helps you understand what content they want and lets you arrange your users by Circles.



4 Expand your reach with your +1s

We introduced the +1 button as a way to let customers recommend your brand across the web—on Google search, in your ads, on websites, and on mobile devices. Consumers can see all the recommendations your business has received, whether they're looking at an ad, a search result, or your page. This means your +1's reach not only the 90 million users of Google+, but everyone who uses Google every day.

All you have to do is add a snippet of code. Learn how to implement the +1 button and other useful badges at https://developers.google.com/+/plugins/badge/config.

That's it. With these simple steps, you'll ensure that your page is properly set up and fully connected with your website.

Next step? Start sharing your Google+ page and stay engaged with the users.

Promote

It's easy to start promoting your page online. Just follow our best practices below.

1 Install the Google+ badge on your website.

Say users want to be kept up-to-date on everything related to Nexus S. Well, just by clicking the brand badge, they add themselves to the Nexus S Circles on Google+, and opt in to having the Nexus S posts appear on their streams. Now, they'll never miss a thing.

Again, it's as simple as adding that snippet of code. Learn how to do it at https://developers.google.com/+/plugins/badge/config.

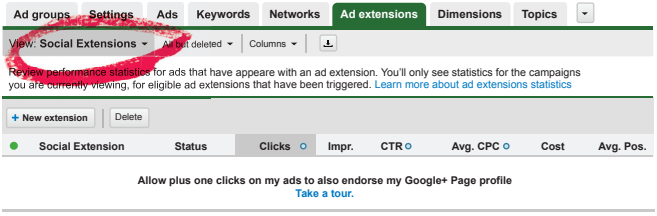
Adding a badge to your site not only links it to your page, but also helps you promote your page. In fact, for top sites using the badge, the badge accounted for an average additional 38% of followers, which could mean more recommendations across all your ads and in search.

2 Social extensions

Link your Google+ page to your AdWords campaigns. You can easily set up social recommendations for your ads. That way, someone searching for your products can see your ad, along with recommendations from friends.

Search ads with personal recommendations show a 5-10% increase in click-through-rate (CTR). By adding the power of recommendations, Google+ can improve the marketing you do with Google.

It's easy to set up. Simply log in to your AdWords account, go to your *Campaigns* tab, click on the *Ad extension* tab, and enable *Social Extensions*.



3 Newsletters and other social media channels

Make sure your followers know about your new Google+ page. Promote it in your other online communications... in your digital newsletters, for example, and in your other social media channels. It's as easy as adding a link and announcing your new page.

4 Offline marketing

Including your page in your offline marketing is a great way to create awareness. Try some of these ideas:

+ Promote your Google+ page in your TV commercials

+ Mention your page in your product catalogs

+ Add your Google+ page to your print ads

Learn more about our brand guidelines at
www.google.com/+/business/brand-guidelines.html.

Share

Share your brand, products and services with the world. Get tips on how to engage with your users to give them a reason to share your content.

10 tips on engaging with your users

1 Learn from others

Look around the Google+ platform. See what similar brands are doing and follow them. Learn from what others are doing and how users respond to their posts. Also, follow *Google+Your Business* at www.google.com/+/business for tips and advice.

2 Join the conversation

The best way to learn how people interact with your content and page is to track the notifications. If someone is discussing your brand, you might want to respond. It's also a great way of finding brand advocates—those vocal customers who deserve extra attention.

3 Keep your content fresh

It sounds obvious, but making sure that your followers can learn something on your page is very important. If you don't update your content, they'll stop coming.

4 Share exclusive content

Give your followers content they can't find anywhere else. This will give you a chance to interact with them. For example, see the special-edition chocolate bars that Cadbury created for its Google+ page.

5 Populate your page

It's never a good idea to promote something before it's ready. Still, you need to convince people that your page offers such great value that they'd be missing something by not following you.

6 Host hangouts

The perfect way to engage your followers directly is to invite them to a Hangout. Maybe they want to meet the community manager behind your page. Or maybe you have an important announcement to make. People appreciate the opportunity to meet the people behind your brand.

Hangouts offer a new way to give customers a behind-the-scenes tour, let them engage with top executives, or have their feedback heard. Fiat Nederland, for example, hosted a Hangout to unveil a new car design.

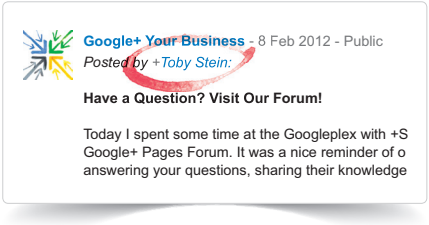
7 Use rich media

Rich media, such as photos, videos, or graphs, catches users' attention. That means people will be more likely to comment, share, or learn. Pepsi used its Google+ page to invite fans all over the world to send photos of themselves enjoying their favourite Pepsi drinks.

8 Be personal

Sign your posts with your name. This gives your page more personality and lets users identify with your content. The *Google+ Your Business* page does this with every post.

Simply add a '+' sign in front of the name of the person writing, and select the correct user profile.

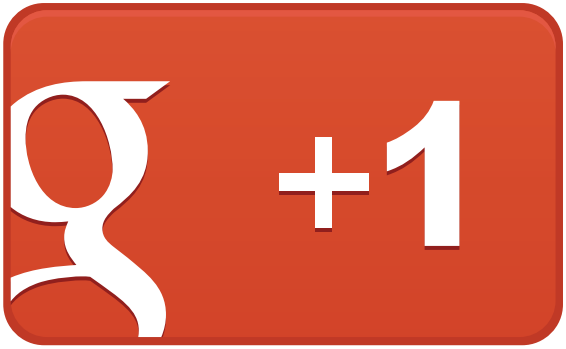


9 Ask questions

The best way to get comments is to ask a question and include a call to action in your post. For example: 'What kinds of posts do you most like seeing on our page? Please tell us!'

10 Make your website content shareable on Google+

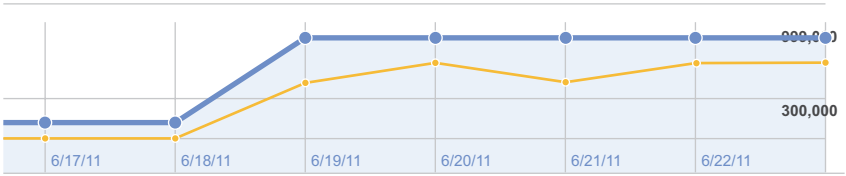
Add a snippet to your source code that lets your website visitors share your products and website on Google+. Besides being a great way to drive users to Google+, it's an excellent tactic for encouraging users to discuss and share your products online.



Measure

Measuring your performance is important to understanding how best to interact and learn from your users. You can gain meaningful insights, for example, by reviewing the data in your analytics account.

How do you measure performance?

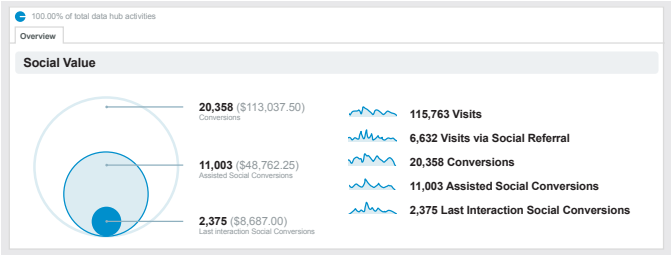


Google Analytics' suite of social reports makes it easy to answers questions like: "How does +1s affect user behavior?" Analytics measures +1s. It also shows how engagement on your site changes when personalized recommendations help your content stand out. Also read the aggregate, anonymized demographic information about Google users who have +1'd your site. Go to **www.google.com/analytics** and sign into your account to see that data.

What can I learn from the Social Reports available at Google Analytics?

The new reports bridge the gap between social media and the business metrics you care about allowing you to better measure the full value of social channels for your business.

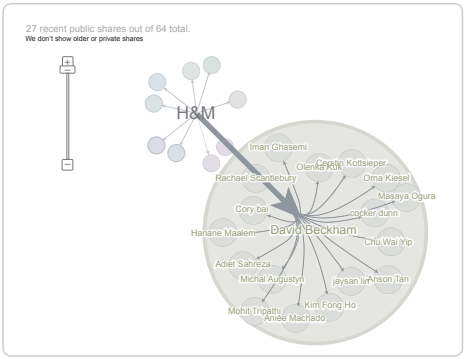
For instance the overview report provides an immediate, highly visual way to identify the impact of social on your business goals. Instantly see the dollar value social media has influenced along with the highest performing social networks for your brand.



Other reports help marketers see which social source related to their content drove a conversion on their site, how visitors to their site interact with social plugins, and how consumers are interacting with their content across the social web, including Google+.

Find your brand advocates with Ripples

Ripples lets you see your posts spread across Google+, who's sharing and resharing your content, and whose opinions matter. Use it to identify influencers and add them to a Circle. Or see how communities form around your content. The larger the Circles in Ripples, the larger the reach they might have. Every post you add to the stream can be shared. When posts are shared, use the menu in the upper right and select *View Ripples* to see who has shared your content and what they said.



You can clearly see in the above diagram the top influencers for H&M's David Beckham underwear collection, for example.

Google+