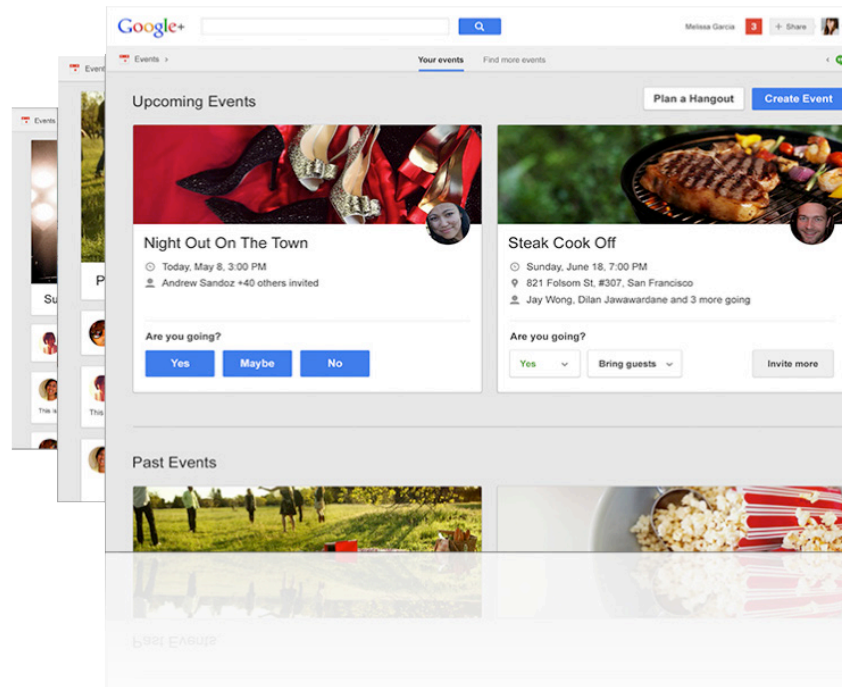




Google+ Partner Playbook



Welcome to the Google+ Partner Playbook!

We're excited to provide you with a comprehensive resource to help grow your audience on Google+. From time to time, we'll update this playbook with new features, success stories, and best practices. We hope that it helps you share high-quality content, grow your audience, and get the most out of Google+.

Best,
The Google+ Team

Table of Contents

Getting Started	6
8 Tips to get Started	7–8
Case Study: Tyra Banks	9
Features of Google+	10
Hangouts and Hangouts On Air	11–13
Google+ Communities	14–15
Photos	16–19
Events	20
Public Events	21
Case Study: Suite 709	22
Event on Air	23
Case Study: <i>Lucky Magazine</i>	24
Google+ and Search	25
Google+ and Search	26
Hashtags in Search	27
Pages in Search	28
Profiles in Search	29
Growing Your Audience	30
Growing Your Audience	31
5 Tips to Grow Your Audience	32
Google+ Growth Checklist	33

Table of Contents

G+ for Your Website or App	34
G+ Helps Businesses Grow	35–36
 Hangouts On Air Broadcast Guide	 37
Hangouts On Air	38
Case Study: The White House	39
System Requirements	40
Scheduling Your HOA	41–42
Promoting Your HOA	43–44
Preparing for Your HOA	45–46
Case Study: <i>NY Times</i>	47
Selecting Participants	48–50
Connect with YouTube	51
Embed Your HOA	52
Hangout Apps	53
The Days of Your HOA	54–55
Hosting Your HOA	56–58
After Your HOA	59–61
Metrics for Your HOA	62
Keep Promoting	63

Table of Contents

Google+ Communities Guide	64
About G+ Communities	65
Communities and Pages	66
Communities are Flexible	67
What They Look Like	68
Case Study: Cadbury	69–70
Getting Started	71
Great Examples	72
Create Your Own	73
Adding Categories	74
Nurturing Your Community	75
Engaging Your Community	76
Case Study: Knitting Lodge	77–78
Managing Your Community	79
Choosing Moderators	80
Moderator Responsibilities	81
Grow Your Community	82
Case Study: Mha & E	83–84

01 Getting Started

8 tips to get started:

1. Complete your profile

Make sure that your Google+ page is complete and interesting before you start promoting it, this can help people discover you when they search. Add a picture and fill out your whole profile. Include a link to your website and a clear, detailed description in the 'About' section. Add pictures and videos, if you have them.

2. Welcome users

Welcome people to your page with your first post. Include a link to your website, a picture, or a video. Also post the video in the 'Video' section.

3. Share exclusive content

Make sure your followers learn something new and unique from your page. Share content they can't find anywhere else.

4. Start a Google+ Community

Communities are a way to interact with people who share common interests.

5. Promote your page

Maximize exposure for your Google+ page:

- Encourage users to follow your page.
- Use the Google+ badge on your website, other social media, and in all your other online and offline communication.

6. Host Hangouts On Air

The perfect way to connect with your followers is to invite them to a Hangout On Air. This gives them a unique opportunity to engage with you, or meet the people behind the organization. It gives you the chance to get to know your followers even better. Fiat Nederland, for example, hosted a Hangout On Air to introduce one of its car designs.

7. Post often and keep content fresh

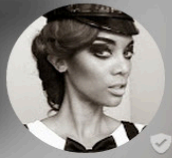
Post up-to-date content frequently to keep your followers engaged. But don't overwhelm them by posting everything at the same time. If you post more than once daily, spread your posts throughout the day. Distribute them across time zones too, if you have followers in various parts of the world. Make a content plan for each week, with a good mix of planned and spontaneous updates.

8. Test, experiment, and learn

Try different kinds of posts, questions, and Hangouts On Air and see what works best for you and your followers. Let the community's reaction to your content guide you and help you adjust. Have a look around the Google+ platform to find out what other organizations are doing, and start following them.

Please visit our help center if you have any questions.

<http://support.google.com/plus/>

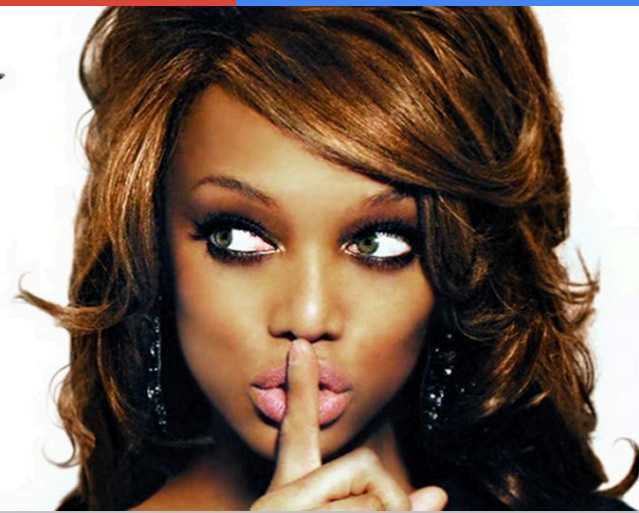
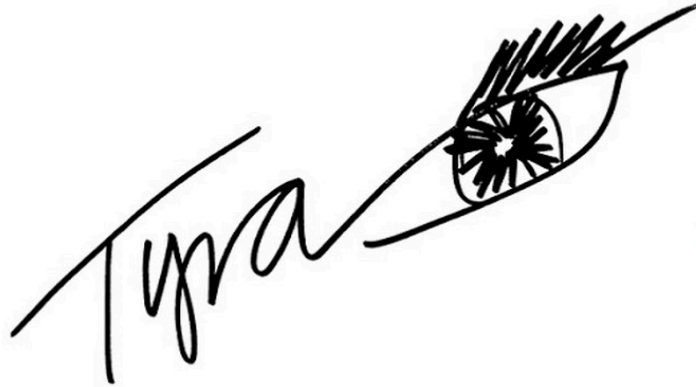


Tyra Banks

Works at The Tyra Banks Company

Add to circles

5,282,720 have her in circles



Case Study: Tyra Banks

Tyra keeps it fierce on Google+

Tyra Banks makes her presence known on Google+ by constantly posting fun and original content while using the various features of the platform to engage her audience. For example, after the America's Next Top Model season premiere a post-show Hangout On Air kept the audience's attention for another hour by getting them to tune into this second screen experience.

How Tyra works it:

- Her alluring profile and cover photos make it easier for fans to recognize her page, while giving it some glam.
- A verification badge and custom URL let fans know Tyra's page is the real deal.
- Tyra keeps the conversation fresh by posting at least once a day. Most of her posts are photos, which consistently receive the highest number of +1s, re-shares, and comments.
- She hosts regular Hangouts On Air and changes them up each time. Some Hangouts On Air are with fans, while others are with fashion bloggers and beauty experts. Every HOA is broadcasted on Google+ and YouTube so followers can always tune in.
- When planning a Hangout On Air, Tyra creates a Google+ Event so fans can RSVP, submit questions, and receive push notifications as reminders.
- Tyra promotes her Google+ presence across her social channels including: Twitter, Facebook and her own website. [Read more.](#)

02 Features of Google+



Hangouts and Hangouts On Air

1. Private conversations with up to 10 people

2. Broadcast to the world with Hangouts On Air

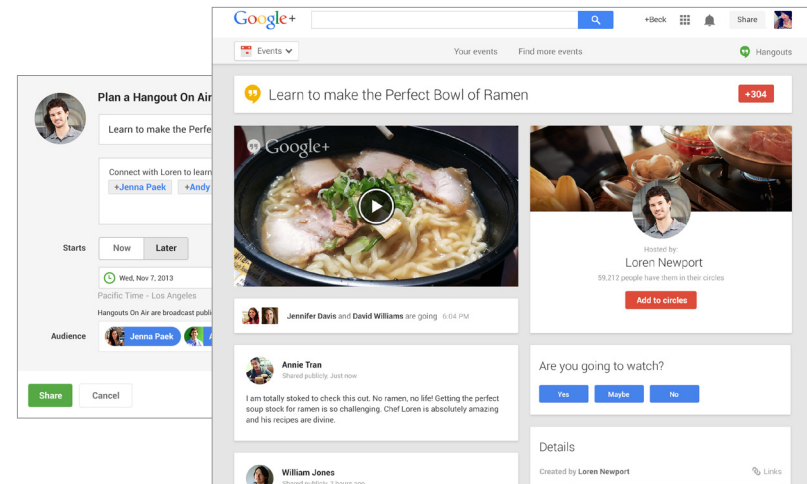
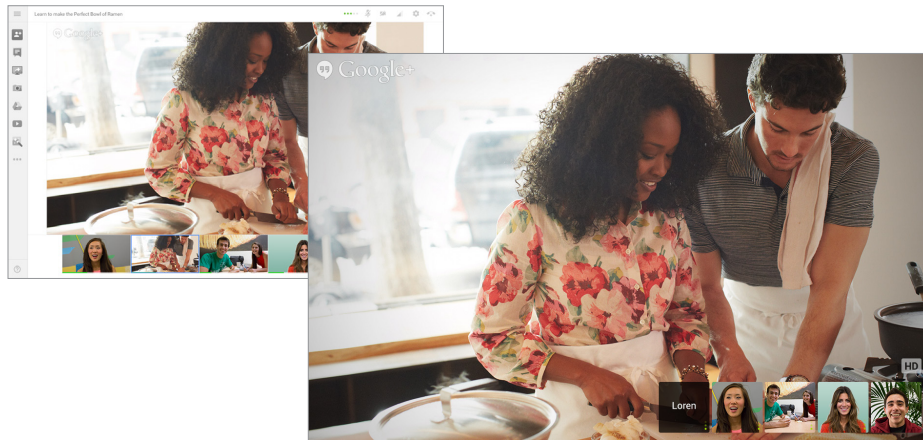
Broadcast your live Hangout On Air on Google+, your YouTube channel, and your website, and share the public recording once you're done. You can stream a virtual press conference, host a worldwide concert, or moderate a panel discussion with international experts.

3. Host a Virtual Meeting

Introducing new tools for better broadcasts

Schedule and promote Hangouts On Air

Schedule your HOAs before the show starts and start promoting them well in advance with a dedicated watch page. The broadcast will now be highlighted at the top of the watch page, and you can add pre-roll videos that automatically switch to the HOA when you go live.



Full screen video for better conversations

Full screen video calls

Enjoy fully immersive, edge-to-edge video calls across mobile and now desktop, where the buttons and controls stay out of your way until you need them. This new cleaner and uncluttered design helps you focus on what really matters: the conversation.

Look great with Auto-Enhance and Filters

Auto-Enhance and Filters

Sometimes your lighting is a little off, sometimes you just want to have a little fun. With automatic, real-time video enhancement and lighting effects that you can also choose to apply yourself, video calls in Hangouts have never looked so good. Besides fixing the lighting, you can also apply skin softening and contrast to make the video feed more clear.



Save time and have more fun in your Hangouts

SMS

You can now send and receive SMS right from Hangouts. No need to switch between apps anymore – all your messages are in one place and your conversations just flow.

Location sharing

The next time someone asks where you're at, you won't need to find and type an address. You'll now be able to send your exact location on the map with one tap right in your Hangout.

GIFs

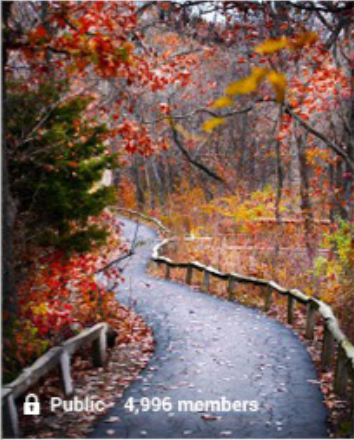
Say more than just words in your conversations. Hangouts now supports animated GIFs – in addition to photos and emoji.



Photography

All the things about photography

Notification on




Public 4,996 members

Search community

All posts (2201)

Gear talk (301)


Free conversations (56)



James Applewood

Free conversations 5 hours ago


I love the sunsets in Arizona! It's my favorite place to get time-lapse shots at sunset.



About Photography

"To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them that they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as a camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a subliminal murder - a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time."
-Susan Sontag-


[On Photography](#)



Amanda Plum

Free conversations 5 hours ago

Okay good people! Check out this fun shot I got of a colorful Mondrian-inspired house near the beach.



Google+ Communities

Google+ Communities are places where people can get together and talk about the stuff they're into. With Google+ Communities, your business, organization, or brand can create a place for your fans and followers to engage more deeply with each other.

With Google+ Communities, you can:

1. **Bring together fans and followers.**

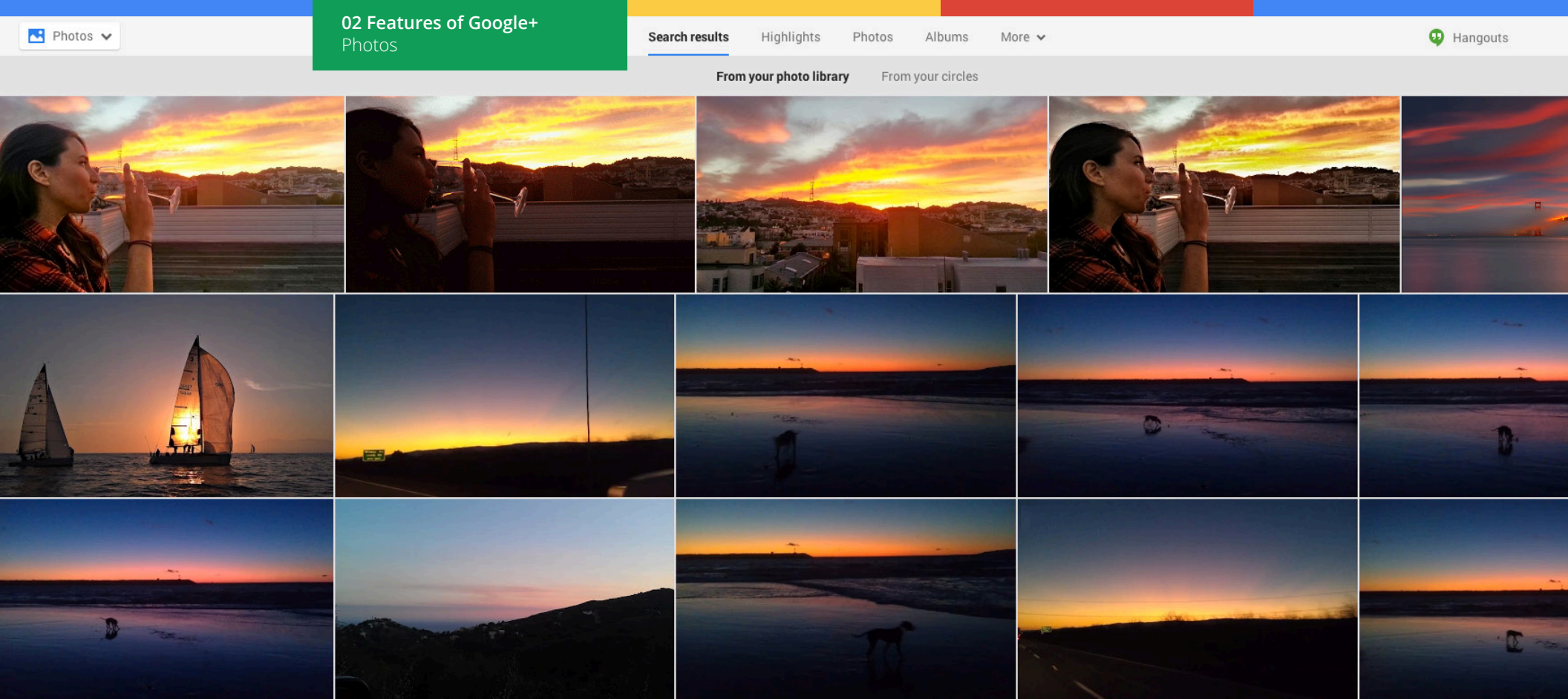
Example: If you're an athletic apparel company, you might create a Community for female distance runners to exchange tips, find out about upcoming races, share running trails, and find training partners.

2. **Raise brand awareness by participating in Communities with similar interests.**

Example: If you're an airline, you can join a community for frequent fliers at Chicago O'Hare International Airport and engage members by answering questions about ticket upgrades, sharing tips for stress-free travel, and inviting people to stop by your lounge during certain hours for free snacks.

3. **Learn from followers by keeping up with relevant Community discussions.**

Example: If you're a record label managing several up-and-coming bands, you might discover venues where similar bands have played in the past by spending time in music-oriented Communities, and then use this information to help plan tours.

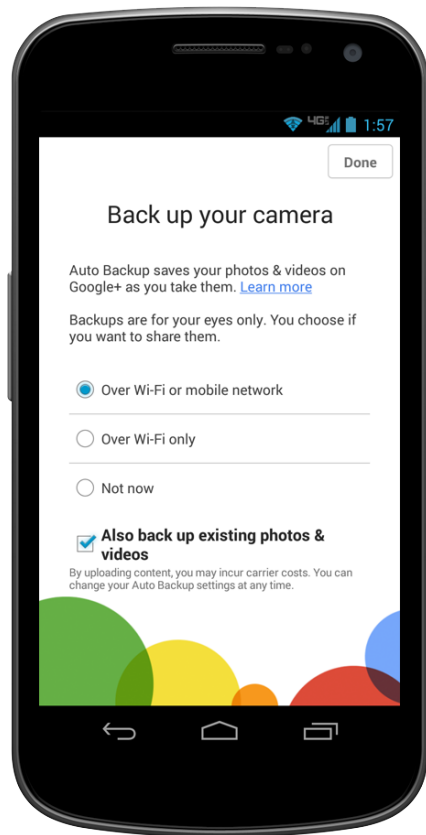


Photos: Capture the moment with Google+

Great photos deserve to be shared, and Google+ makes it easy to share with just the right people. You're in control of who sees your photos - choose individuals, entire circles, or email addresses. You can even get a link to send around or share on other sites.

Keep photos and videos safe and accessible with Auto Backup

Capture life's moments without worrying about where to save them. Google+ will automatically back up photos and videos from all your devices and store them privately. Auto Backup is available on Android and iOS so all your photos and videos are privately backed up in one place.



Auto Awesome creates new photos and videos that bring your experiences to life

Google+ gives you fun new moments to share, created from your existing photos and videos. You'll get short animations, panoramas, photobooth-style collages and more – all created automatically.



Smile – Great group shots created from the best expressions in two or more photos



Pano – Panoramic images created from three or more overlapping photos



Mix – Photobooth-style images created from three or more photos of faces



HDR – A single striking image created from a range of exposures



Movies (New) – Related photos and videos combined into a beautiful, editable short film



Eraser (New) – Landmark photos with distracting moving objects erased



Action (New) – A sequence of movement captured in one dynamic image

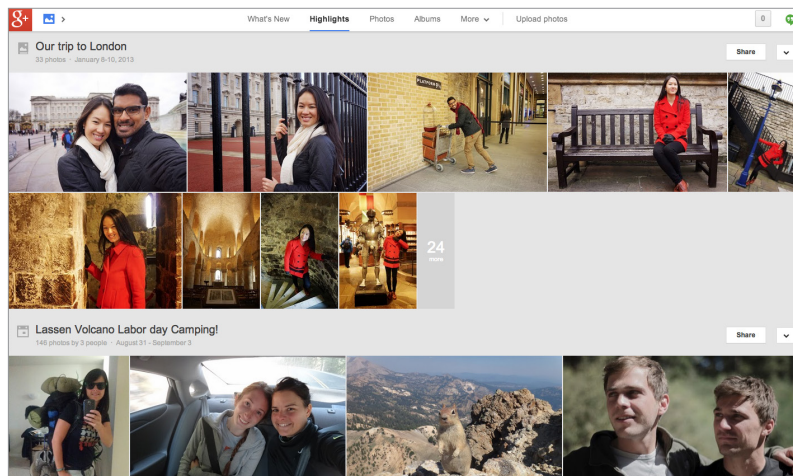


Motion – GIF Animations created from a sequence of five or more photos

Auto Enhance makes your photos look better with zero effort

Sometimes your camera doesn't quite capture the view you saw. Auto Enhance analyzes the objects in each image and makes subtle improvements (such as skin tone matching, noise reduction, tonal distribution and more) that bring out the natural beauty of the people and places in your photos.

You can adjust the level of enhancements you'd like, fine tune them for any photo, turn the feature off for selected albums, or opt out for your entire account. If you don't like the enhancements on a single image, it's easy to go back to the original.



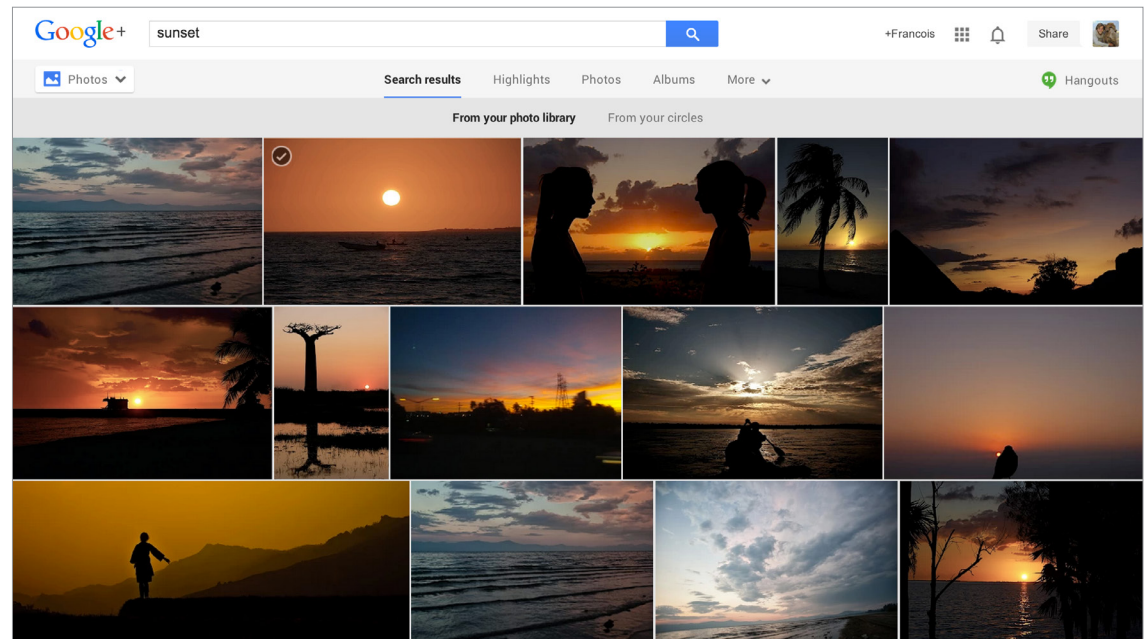
Auto Highlights helps you find your best photos faster

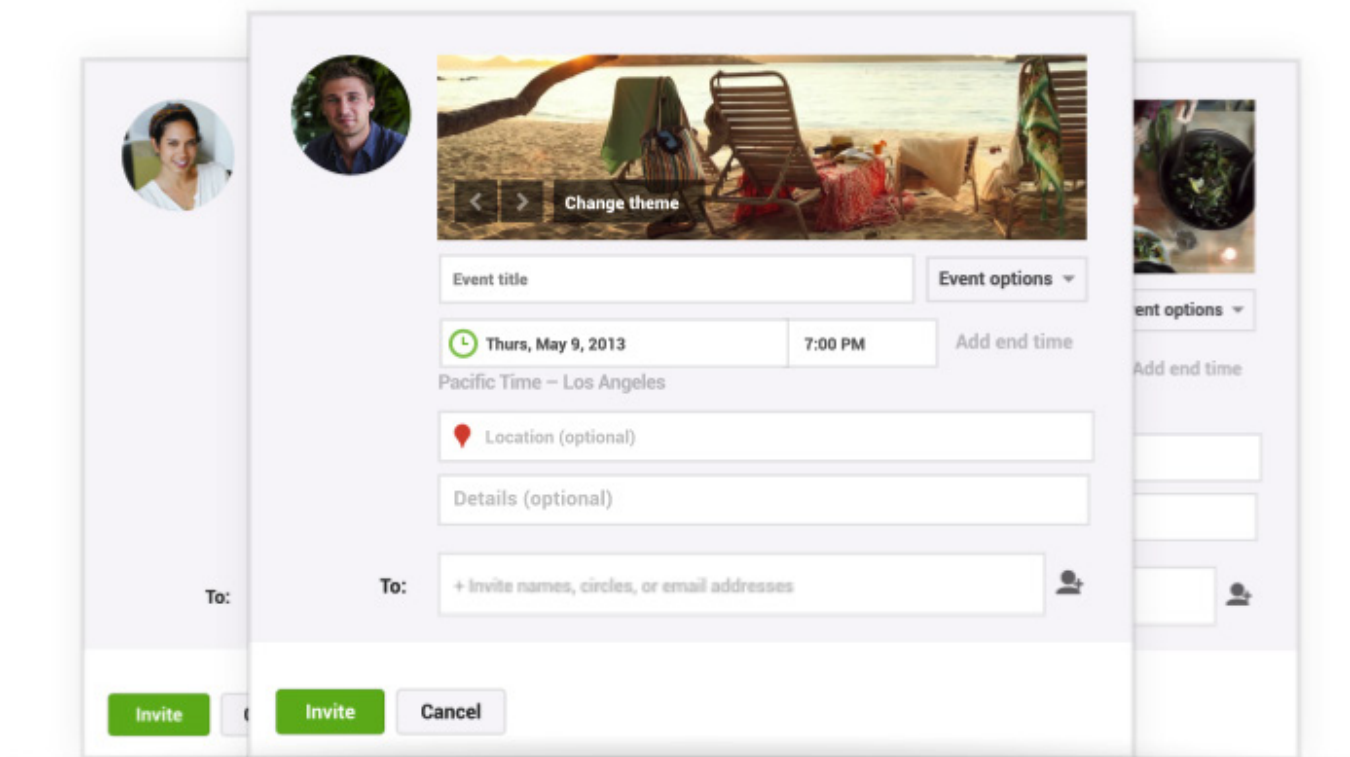
You've snapped a lot of photos but it's hard to find the time to sift through them all and find the best ones. Now, when you upload new photos we'll automatically show you a selection of highlights focused on people, places, and things that may be relevant to you. You'll spend less time sorting through duplicates and blurry images, and more time enjoying your favorites with the people that matter.

Searching for photos is a snap

Hunting through folders for a specific photo or video is a thing of the past. Now you can search photos and videos, and Google+ will help find the one you're looking for in seconds. Want photos from your trip last year to NYC, or perhaps a collection of all the sunset pics you've ever taken? Just ask.

1. Visit plus.google.com/photos
2. In the search box, ask Google+ what you're looking for and see what pops up. For instance:
 - [Sunset]
 - [New York]
 - [Photos from England]
 - [Photos of Maria]

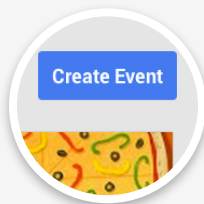




Events

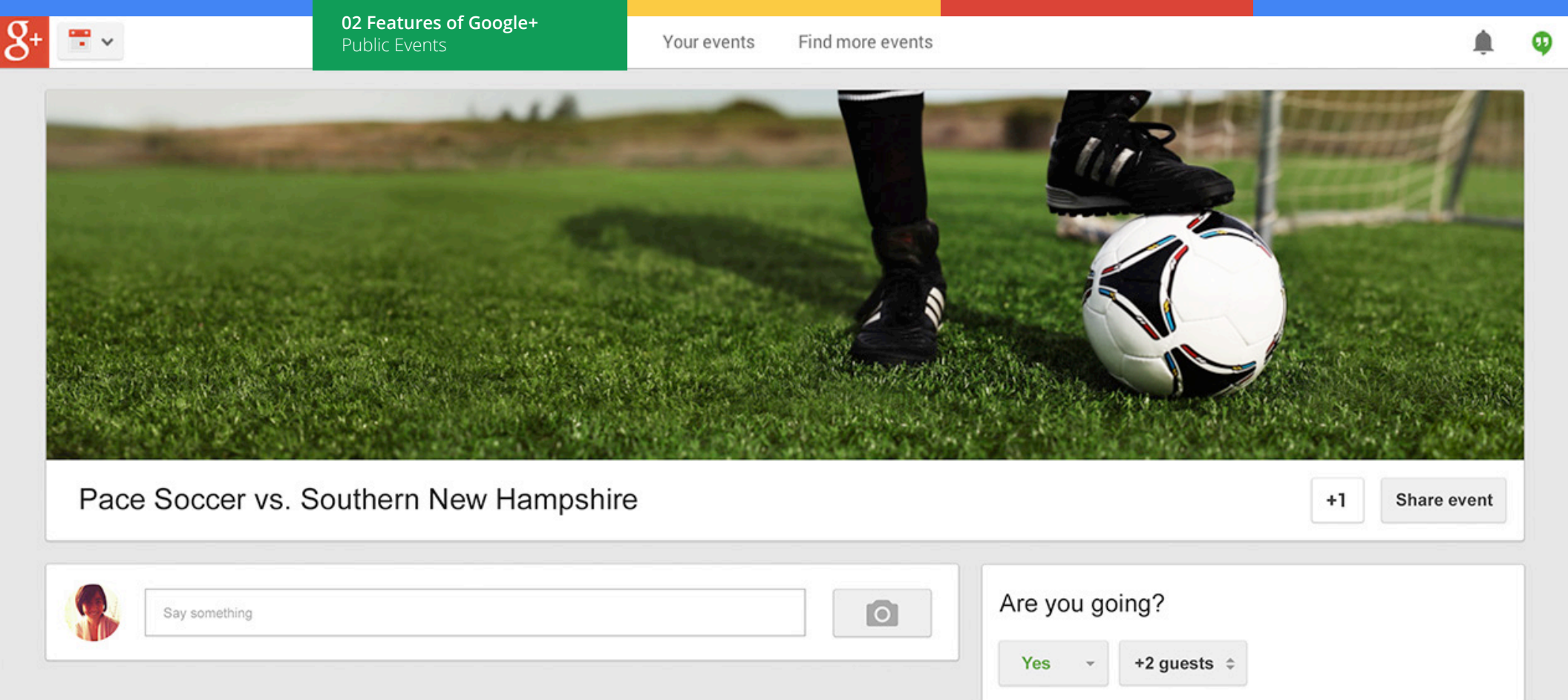
Create beautiful and customized invitations:

1. Go to the Events page and click on the Create Event button.
2. Pick an Event name, and give it a start time, end time and location.
3. If your Event is private or an Event On Air, invite the appropriate Circles. If your Event is public or you are scheduling Hangouts On Air, select 'Public' in the invite field.



Get started

- Schedule a Hangout On Air
- Collect photos, videos, and comments in one place
- Integrate seamlessly with Google Calendar and Google Maps



Public Event

Everyone can RSVP, comment, add photos, and invite others. Here's how:

1. Set up the Event.
2. In the 'Invite names, Circles, or email addresses' field, select 'Public.'
3. Click 'Invite.'
4. At any time you can disable or re-enable comments or photos.



Case Study: Suite 709

Suite 709 keeps the party going with Google+

Austin-based band Suite 709 use Google+ Events and Hangouts On Air to bring their live shows to fans from around the world. On tour, the band uses Events to promote upcoming shows and collect a unique perspective of each performance with photos uploaded via Party Mode. This unique form of marketing has helped album sales and concert attendance rise, while the band gained more than 280,000 followers on Google+ in less than six months.

How they rocked it:

- One week before each show, Suite 709 creates a Google+ Event and sends out invitations to fans, encouraging participation online and in-person.
- Band members interact directly with fans through the Event stream, responding to questions, encouraging followers to invite their circles, and posting pictures live via Party Mode at the Event.
- A few hours before each show, the band hosts a behind-the-scenes Hangout On Air to connect with fans and build engagement around the Event.
- At the concert, Suite 709 reminds fans to add photos to the Event using Party Mode, giving fans incentive to revisit the page after the show is over. [Read more.](#)



64th Primetime Emmy Awards

+1

Share event



Say something



Are you going?

Yes ▼

+2 guests ↕

Event On Air

Only invited guests can post photos and add comments, but anyone can +1 them.

1. Set up the Event.
2. Click on 'Advanced.'
3. Click on 'Make this an Event On Air.'
4. In the 'Invite names, Circles, or email addresses' field, select on the guests you want to give the ability to send photos and comment.
5. Click 'Invite.'



Lucky@NYFW

Case Study: Lucky Magazine

Lucky brings New York Fashion Week to the world

Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event On Air to give fashionistas everywhere a live look at New York Fashion Week. Influential bloggers, designers, photographers, and editors, uploaded over 240 photos from New York Fashion Week. Lucky was looking to help boost their presence on Google+ and ended up doubling their followers due to this Event.

How they did it:

- Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event and invited 20 fashion influencers to post photos and comments live from each event in New York.
- They broadcasted the Event publicly by selecting the 'On Air' option in the Events drop-down menu. Google+ users could follow the live photo stream and +1 their favorite content in real-time.
- Each influencer shared the Event across their social media networks, which helped Lucky reach a wide audience.
- Lucky also promoted the Event with posts on their Google+ page. [Read more.](#)

03 Google+ and Search

[Web](#) [Images](#) [Maps](#) [Shopping](#) [More](#) [Search tools](#)

110 personal results. 574,000,000 other results.

[StarWars.com | Star Wars - Episode VII, The Clone Wars & Games](#)
[starwars.com/](#)The official site for **Star Wars**, featuring the latest on Episode VII and The Clone Wars animated series, with regularly updated games, videos, and news.[Games - The Clone Wars - Play - Shop](#)[Star Wars - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars](#)**Star Wars** is an American epic space opera franchise centered on a film series created by George Lucas. The film series has spawned a media franchise outside ...[A New Hope - Sequel trilogy - List of Star Wars novels - The Phantom Menace](#)[Star Wars \(1977\) - IMDb](#)[www.imdb.com/title/tt0076759/](#)

Directed by George Lucas. With Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guinness. Luke Skywalker, a spirited farm boy, joins rebel forces to save ...

[News for star wars](#)[Star wars on the cricket pitch](#)

Times of India - 4 hours ago

The first two days of the Kalyan Jewellers CCL powered by Parle 20 20 were adrenaline-pumping and **star**-studded affairs.['Star Wars' writer Lawrence Kasdan wants to 'start fresh' with spin-off film](#)

NME.com - 12 hours ago

[Death Star not dead? Star Wars fans raise \\$380k for open source project, aim for ...](#)

RT - 1 day ago

[Star Wars: The Old Republic](#)[www.swtor.com/](#)

Official site. BioWare and LucasArts bring you the next evolution in MMO Gameplay.

Star Wars

Star Wars is an American epic space opera franchise centered on a film series created by George Lucas. [Wikipedia](#)**Characters:** Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Yoda, Obi-Wan Kenobi, [More](#)**Cast:** Mark Hamill, Natalie Portman, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, [More](#)**Directors:** George Lucas, J.J. Abrams, Irvin Kershner, Richard Marquand, Dave Filoni

Recent posts

[Follow](#)Character of the Week: "Attachment is forbidden. Possession is forbidden. Compassion, which I would define as unconditional love, is essential to a Jedi's life. — [Feb 10, 2013](#)

Movies

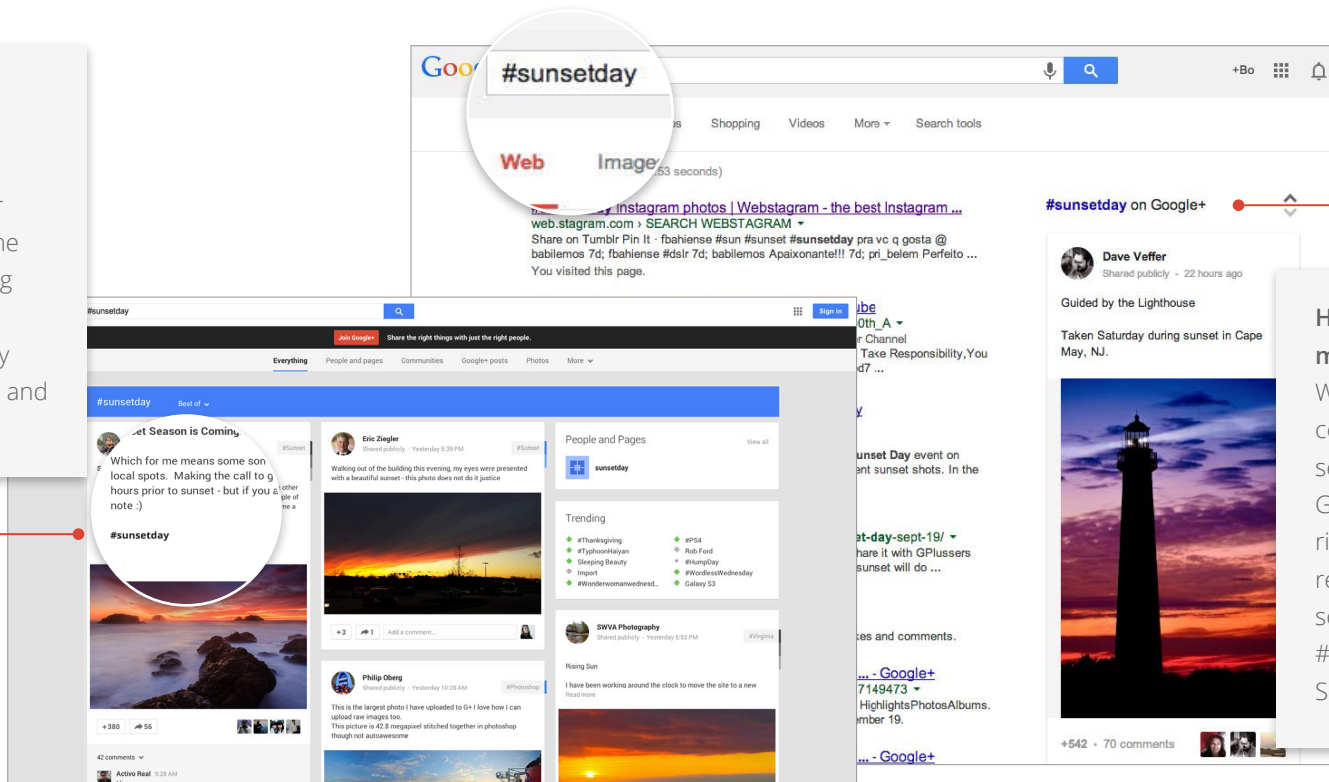


Google+ and Search

While many types of social media photos, posts, and content are buried by new content within hours of their posting, Google+ content can appear to a user in Search when relevant and shared with them (or public).

Hashtags in creative campaigns

you can tell your audience to “Search for #X on Google” to see the conversation happening on Google+. Users can join the conversation by clicking into the stream and posting on Google+.



Hashtags are now even more powerful

When users search for certain hashtags, they'll see a stream of related Google+ posts on the right hand side of Search results. For example, if someone searches for #sunsetday in Google Search, they'll see this:

Hashtags in Search

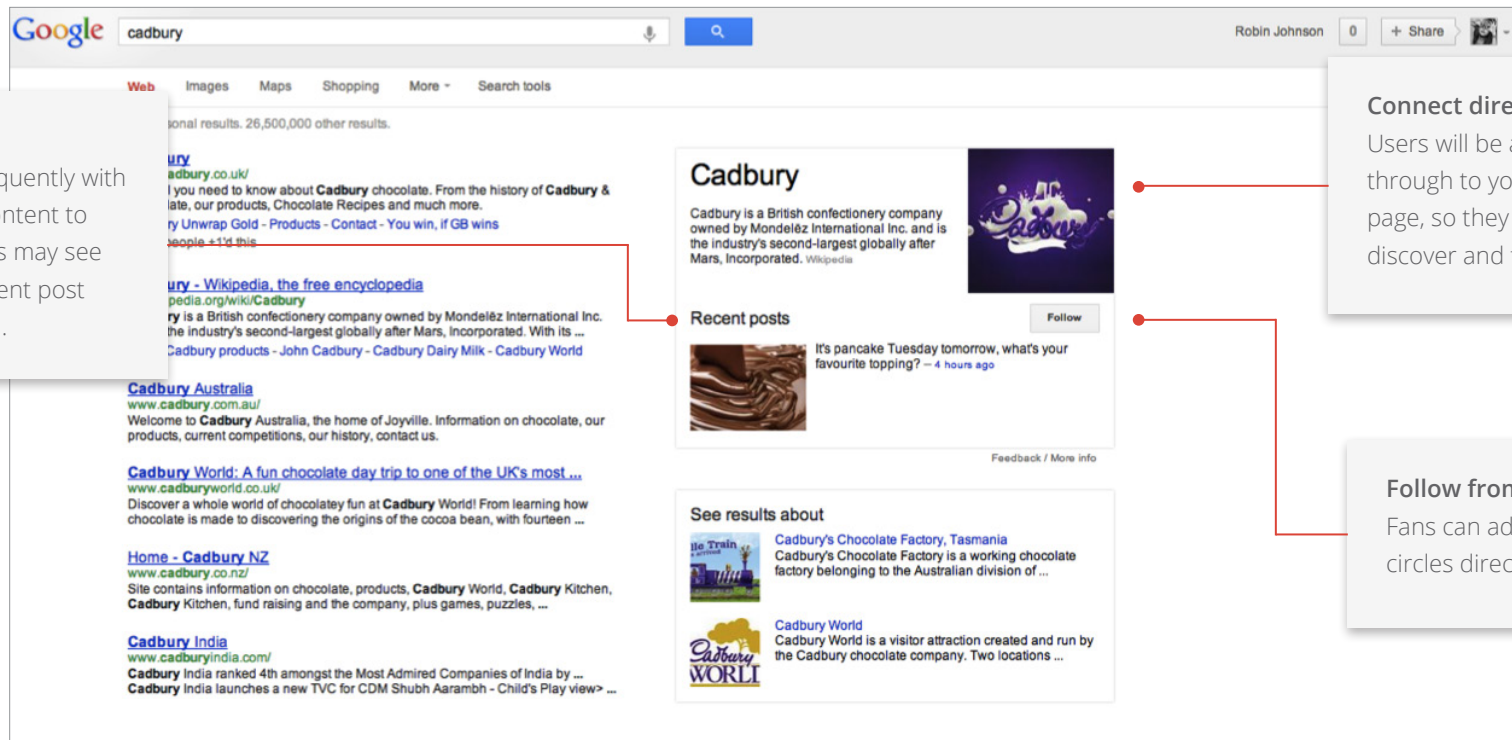
A hashtag – any word or phrase (no spaces) with a # preceding it – is a great tool for people to find and join conversations about a particular topic. Clicking on a hashtag shows related content.

How it works

Whenever there is enough detailed data, the Google+ post stream will serve up relevant public posts as well as those that

have been shared with circles. Follow best practices to see a hashtag trend on Google+ in order to have it appear in Search. Many hashtag searches will not trigger Google+ posts in Search if there aren't enough recent relevant posts.

Google is rolling this feature out in the US right now with international markets to follow at later dates.



Pages in Search

Influence how you appear in Search, in real time.

- Create a Google+ page with a photo and engage your followers frequently with high quality content.
- In the 'Website' section of your page's 'About' section, make sure that you include the green URL that appears in your search result snippet, exactly as it appears in Search; e.g., <http://www.cadburydairymilk.co.uk/>.
- Submit the request for verification using [this form](#), or contact your Google representative to get your page verified.

Authorship
Authorship lets you connect your site with your Google+ profile, allowing users to easily discover more of your content.

Real-time
If you post frequently with high quality content to Google+, users may see your most recent post right in Search.

Choose your picture
If you upload a high quality picture (not a logo), you may influence what users see in your Knowledge Card.

Follow from search
Fans can add you to their circles directly from search.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "Katie Couric". The results include a Knowledge Card for Katie Couric, a snippet from the Philadelphia Inquirer about her husband's defense, and a snippet from CBS News about her interview with Sue Paterno. Callouts point to specific elements: the authorship link in the CBS News snippet, the real-time post in the search results, the profile picture in the Knowledge Card, and the "Follow" button in the Knowledge Card.

Profiles in Search

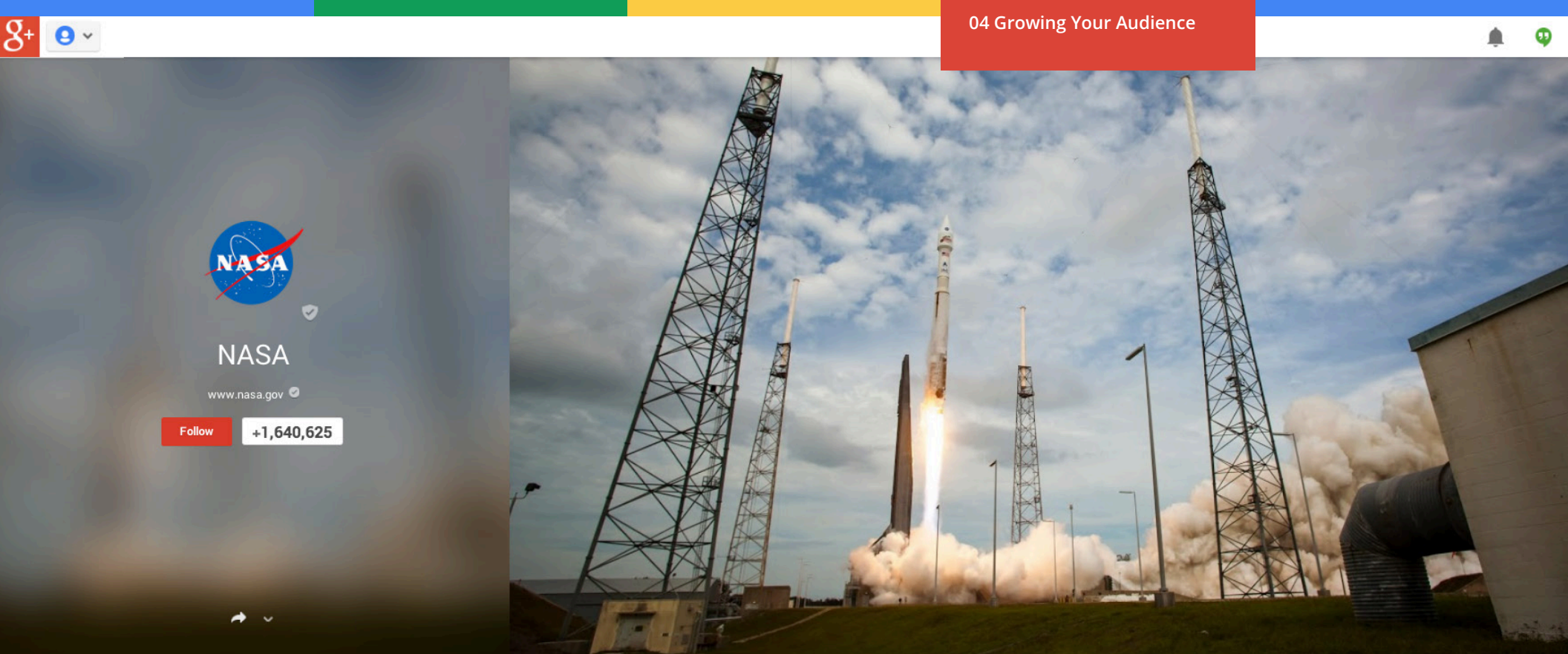
Influence how you look in Search, in real time.

- Create a Google+ profile with a photo and engage your followers frequently with high quality content.
- In the 'Contributor to' section of your profile's 'About' section, make sure that you include the green URL that appears in your Search result snippet, exactly as it appears in Search. ex: <http://www.davidbeckham.com/>

- Contact your Google representative to get your profile verified.

Pro tip: To enable authorship, link your Google+ profile to your website. [Learn More.](#)

04 Growing Your Audience



Growing your audience

Maintaining an active Google+ page is a great way to grow an audience and get the word out about your HOA. Focus on engaging your followers and getting them more involved.

5 tips to grow your audience

1. Circle up

- Welcome viewers and followers with a video greeting (e.g., [Bar Rafaeli](#) and Conan O'Brien)
- Give your viewers access to exclusive content
- Share public videos and podcasts on your Google+ stream
- Add a Google+ badge to your website to gain followers externally

2. Host Hangouts On Air

- Interact with fans in real time
- Broadcast live, save the recording instantly on YouTube, and share it on your Google+ stream

3. Share photos and videos

- Build unique photo scrapbooks/albums of behind-the-scenes content
- See fans comments and track which ones they +1

4. Get recommended with +1s

- Measure your impact across the web using [Social Reports](#)

5. Communities

- Increase discoverability in [communities built around shared interests](#)
- Build a place for your fans to engage around your brands (e.g., [+Star Wars Community](#))

Google+ growth checklist:

❑ Post regularly to your Google+ page

The more you post, the more likely users will find you in Google+ or when your content is relevant to their Google Search results.

❑ “Follow us on Google+”

Promote your Google+ profile, on your website, other social media channels and in email signatures.

❑ Link your Google+ page to your site

Link your website and your Google+ Page with the [Google+ badge tool](#) to help users find your +Page.

❑ Authorship in search

Link your content on the web to your Google+ profile and add an authorship byline to that content when it appears in Google Search results. [Learn more](#).

❑ Direct Connect

Create a direct pathway from Google Search to your Plus page by enabling Direct Connect. [Learn more](#).

❑ Connect Google+ and YouTube

Allow your HOA video to automatically post to your Google+ page and YouTube Channel.

To connect your Google+ **Profile** to your YouTube account, navigate to “Hangouts On Air” from your Google+ page. When you start your first Hangout On Air, you will receive a prompt to connect and verify your Google+ and YouTube account.

To find out how to connect your Google+ **page** to your YouTube account, click [here](#).

Note: After your Hangout On Air is complete, it will automatically appear in your YouTube channel as a video. Post your YouTube HOA video publicly on the web, on Google+, and other social channels to spread the word to all your potential viewers.

05 Google+ for Your Website or App

Google+ helps businesses grow

We have a number of features for your sites and apps to help grow your audience.

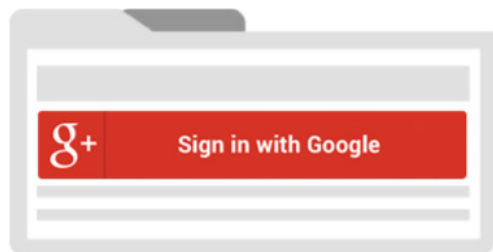


+1 Button

Let visitors quickly recommend your brand and your content.

Inspire site visitors to tell the world about your brand by adding a +1 button to your site. One click lets visitors recommend your content on Google Search and share it on Google+.

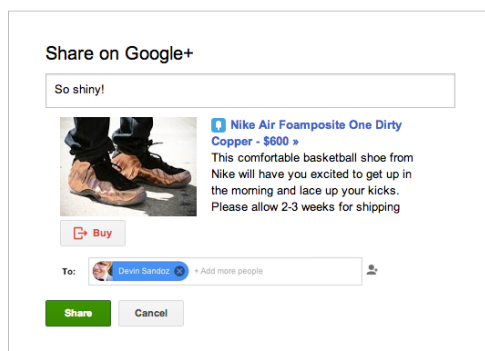
[Learn more.](#)



"Sign in with Google" Button

Create more engaging experiences and drive more usage across devices.

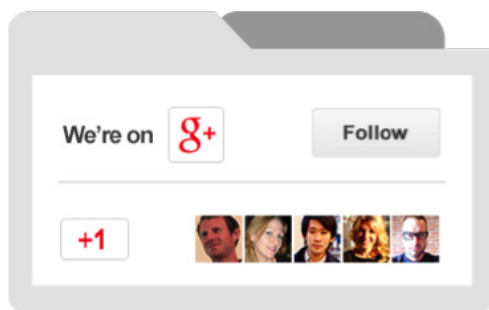
Users can sign in to your app with Google, and bring along their Google+ info for an upgraded experience. In addition to basic authentication, you can let web users instantly download and install your app to their Android device. [Learn more.](#)



Interactive Posts

Help users prompt friends to take specific actions in your app from a Google+ post.

Shares from your app can now include calls to action (like "listen," "RSVP," and "check-in"), custom thumbnails, and brand attribution – all of which help them stand out in users' Google+ streams. These posts deep link to a specific piece of content inside your app, further improving engagement. [Learn more.](#)



Brand Badge

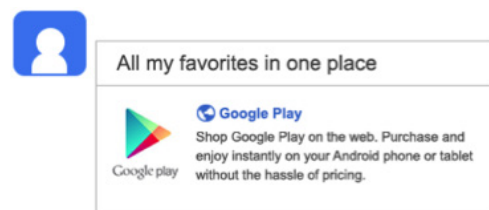
Help users prompt friends to take specific actions in your app from a Google+ post. Increase your Google+ page audience by driving traffic from your site with an official Google+ badge and get more recommendations for your site in Google Search. Brand badges allow people to easily find you on Google+ and add you to a circle directly from a website.

[Learn more.](#)



Share Button

Provide an easy way for people to share your content with their circles. Spread the word and widen your circles with the Share button on your Google+ posts. When users see something they like in their streams, they can click "Share" to shout it out to their followers. [Learn more.](#)



Snippet

Customize the text and image that people see when your content is shared.

A post to Google+ that includes a link renders a preview, or snippet, that contains the page title, a brief description of the page, and a thumbnail image. You can customize this snippet to make your content stand out and be more engaging. [Learn more.](#)

06 Hangouts On Air Broadcast Guide

Hangouts On Air

Broadcast your conversation to the world for free

[Start a Hangout On Air](#)[▶ Watch video](#)

Hangouts On Air

What is a video call?

Video calls are a simple and easy way to talk with up to 10 people at the same time. Face-to-face-to-face conversations can take place anytime, anywhere – and they're free (all you need is a Google+ account).

What is a Hangout On Air?

With Hangouts On Air, you can broadcast your conversation to an unlimited number of viewers and instantly upload it to your YouTube channel afterwards. You can even embed the live broadcast on any website, just like a YouTube video.



Hangout On Air with the White House

The Obama administration uses Google+ Hangouts On Air to drive citizen engagement around major policies and initiatives, while expanding their reach. Their live HOA with Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan attracted 70,000 concurrent online viewers, with even more views afterwards on YouTube and Google+.

How the HOA on mortgage refinancing became a success:

- The White House announced Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan as their featured participant, sparking national interest around the HOA.
- To reach a larger audience, the White House partnered with online real estate leader Zillow to moderate and promote the HOA.
- The White House attracted additional viewers with a blog post, call out video, and posts across all social media platforms.
- The HOA was live-streamed on Google+, YouTube, and Whitehouse.gov. Afterwards, the videos were made available for sharing on YouTube. [Read more.](#)

System requirements for video calls:

Supported browsers:

- Google Chrome 10+ [download](#)
- Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) 8+ [download](#)
- Mozilla Firefox 16+ [download](#)
- Safari 4+ [download](#)

Supported Operating Systems:

- Mac OS X 10.6+
- Windows 7
- Windows Vista with SP1 or later
- Windows XP
- Chrome
- Ubuntu and other Debian-based Linux distributions

Processor minimum requirements:

- Any 2 GHz dual core processor or greater

Bandwidth:

- For 1:1 connections we suggest a 1 Mbps/1 Mbps (up/down)
- For group video connectivity we suggest 1 Mbps/2 Mbps (up/down)

The bandwidth used by video calls is adaptive and will vary to provide the best experience for the given conditions. Here is a guide for the minimum and maximum bandwidth requirements and expectations:

Minimum bandwidth required

- Outbound from the participants: 1 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants: 2.5 Mbps

Ideal bandwidth for the best experience

- Outbound from the participants: 3 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants: 3 Mbps

With group video calls of more than 2 people you can expect bandwidth usage in ideal situations to be:

- Outbound from the participants in all situations: 5 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants in all situations: 5 Mbps

[Learn about the specifications and limitations of video calls.](#)



Picnic at Golden Gate Park

+1

Share event



Say something



Are you going?

Yes

+2 guests

Scheduling your Hangout On Air

One of the best ways to announce a Hangout On Air is by scheduling a Google+ Event. Events notify everyone you invite of your upcoming Hangout On Air and automatically sync with people's Google Calendars. Anyone who RSVPs for your Event will receive an email notification the night before and the day-of, reminding them of your Hangout On Air.

Hangouts On Air Event checklist:

- ❑ **Create a public Google+ Event well in advance of your Hangout On Air**

Events give your audience time to RSVP, and will automatically embed in their Google Calendar when they RSVP “yes.”

- ❑ **Be sure NOT to select ‘Google+ Hangouts’ in the Event options**

Selecting ‘Google+ Hangouts’ will automatically schedule a regular video call, not a Hangout On Air.

- ❑ **Choose a time and date that works for your audience**

If you’re hosting a nationwide or global Hangout On Air, keep time zones in mind.

- ❑ **Send announcements to get followers engaged and excited**

Creating an Event for your Hangout On Air sends an announcement post to all of your followers. Sharing an Event sends another announcement reminding them to RSVP for the Event. A few days before the Event, consider creating an engaging follow-up post as well. Be sure to direct your audience to your Events page to find the Hangout, since you will only receive the URL right before you’re about to start broadcasting.

- ❑ **Don’t stop there**

Continue promoting your Hangout On Air Event to maximize your audience. Make sure your messaging includes a call-to-action, such as an RSVP.

RESTORATIVE YOGA HANGOUT ON AIR AUG 29, 6 AM EDT



<http://goo.gl/yrNk5>

Promoting your Hangout On Air

Start promoting your Hangout On Air early. Posting several times about an upcoming HOA is a good thing as long as the posts are different and creative. Be sure to post across all your social and outreach channels (including your email lists).

Hangouts On Air promotion checklist:

❑ Start conversations

When you post your content to Google+, start a conversation w and what ideas they have for topics you should address.

❑ Encourage audience-generated photos and videos

Google+ is a rich multimedia platform – make a call-out for people to submit photos or videos to you directly so that you can expand your social reach.

❑ Track influencers with Ripples and make them your “correspondents”

Ripples allow you to track how your Google+ posts spread. See who your most influential followers are and make them your informal digital spokespeople. [Learn more](#).

❑ Post reminders

Remind your audience on the the day before and morning of the HOA to keep it on their radar.

❑ Use a hashtag

Include a hashtag for your HOA, like #helpdeskHOA, so your audience can follow and easily discover the conversation as the Hangout On Air broadcasts.

❑ Hype My Hangout

Hypemyhangout.com is an unofficial website that makes it really easy to create a 15-second video to promote your HOA. Post the video to Google+, YouTube, and all other media channels.



You'll enter the hangout as soon as the plugin is installed

Verifying Installation...

It's **free** and installs in seconds.
For Windows XP+, Mac OSX 10.5+, Linux

1. Click the file at the lower-left of your browser window GoogleVoiceAndVideoSetup.dmg.
2. Switch to Finder and double-click the Google Voice and Video Installer.

Preparing for your Hangout On Air

As always, preparation is key. Practice with your participants by doing a dry-run of your Hangout On Air before you go live. A rehearsal can greatly improve the flow of the conversation, shake out any last minute nerves, and catch any technical problems before you start.

Preparation checklist:

❑ Sketch out talking points

Though you don't want your Hangout On Air to appear scripted, you do want to keep the conversation going. Having a topic list and talking points helps.

Before the HOA goes live, tell your participants:

- What topics you will be covering
- How much time you will spend on each
- Whether or not there will be a Q&A session at the end

❑ Be prepared technically

While the HOA should feel spontaneous to viewers, you should be well-prepared on your end. Make sure to test your Internet connection, cameras, background lighting, mics, and other equipment well ahead of time. Remember that every device that joins a HOA must have the Hangouts plugin downloaded. [Download the plugin.](#)

❑ Choose the right participants

If you broadcast and record your HOA, give some thought to who you actually want to participate. While the Cameraman app allows you to hide select participants from your viewers, you will not be able to kick them out of your HOA.

❑ Practice using Hangout apps to add professionalism

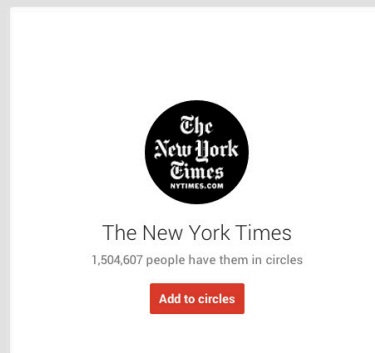
Apps are a great way to increase the production level of a HOA, but you should be comfortable using them before the HOA starts. Just using visual overlays from the Hangouts Toolbox to display each participant's name can really make a difference.

❑ Sharing videos

Make sure you have the video ready ahead of time. Also, decide who will be sharing the video. Remember you can control which window is featured while the video is playing.

❑ Have an agenda

When you start broadcasting, let the audience know what to expect from your HOA. Consider posting the HOA's agenda ahead of time on your Google+ page, Event page, website, and other social media platforms.



Case Study: NY Times

Breaking news with Hangouts On Air

The New York Times uses HOA to broadcast live breaking news directly from their website. Most notably was the HOA held just hours after the Supreme Court's monumental decision to uphold President Obama's Affordable Healthcare Act. The Times became the first major media outlet to discuss the decision via live web video.

How they made news:

- Anticipating the news in advance, The New York Times secured participants one week out to ensure a smooth HOA at a moment's notice.
- On the day of the HOA, the Times team created a graphic placeholder for the live broadcast on the NY Times Opinion Page. The placeholder promoted the HOA, and provided participant bios and links to the evolving news story.
- They embedded the HOA into the site with simple HTML code, automatically generated and copied directly from the HOA page. The HOA was also broadcasted on their Google+ page.
- A homepage teaser linked the Times' large online audience directly to the live HOA.
- After the live broadcast, the HOA was quickly edited on YouTube and uploaded to the front page of the NYTimes.com. [Read more.](#)

Selecting participants

We recommend engaging with your followers by sourcing participants directly from Google+

- ❑ Make a post announcing that you're looking for people to join your HOA.
- ❑ Ask folks to respond to your post with a thought-provoking question or a reason why they should be chosen.
- ❑ Make it clear that you're choosing a select number of people to join, but that the public will still be able to watch the Hangout On Air while it's happening.
- ❑ Initial screening: Select the best responses to your initial post and click through to their profiles for a quick screening.
- ❑ Create a shortlist: Chose a group of participants from the initial screening and schedule a quick video call with each one to ensure their bandwidth, audio and lighting meet the tech requirements.
- ❑ Create two circles of participants: a top picks circle and a backup circle in case someone can't join the HOA at the last minute.
- ❑ Make sure all the participants have downloaded the Hangout plugin, added you to their Circles, and you have added them. For a Google+ page, your participants must first add you to Circles, then you can add them.

Pro tip: Create a Google Form to source participants easily

Assigning participant roles

❑ Celebrity, expert or special guest

Who will be the focal point of your HOA? If you're doing a Q&A, it helps to have a person who people are joining to engage with. Is it the news editor, a politician, a celebrity, or the inventor of the latest and greatest technology?

❑ Moderator

We recommend bringing in a moderator who can carry the discussion forward. The moderator's job is to call on participants to get their opinions, help the host transition from one topic to another, and ensure there are no awkward pauses in the conversation.

❑ Participants

Who are the other people in your HOA? Bringing in fans, constituents, citizen journalists, bloggers, and excited Google+ users adds to the richness and variety of the conversation.

❑ Assign participant roles

As your number of participants increases, you will need to moderate the discussion more to ensure a smooth discussion. We recommend between four and seven total participants for a smooth conversation.

❑ Delegate production responsibilities

During a HOA, someone needs to be watching the comments, controlling who is muted and which window is featured, checking the stream, starting/ending the Event and interacting via social media. Before the Event starts, think about who is responsible for all these tasks.

Selecting who joins your Hangout On Air

Regulating who joins your HOA

You can invite individuals or your Circles to participate in your Hangout On Air, but you can't invite extended Circles or the public. It is very important to make sure you are careful about who you invite. You are ultimately responsible for the content of your broadcast. Accounts that violate our terms will be disabled.

Your participants will not see an option to invite others. However if they copy and paste the URL of the HOA from the browser window and post it publicly, or email the link to someone, anyone who clicks on the link can join the HOA if it's not full. It's very important that you clarify with participants that they should not share the link with anyone else.

If you're hosting the HOA from a Google+ page, participants must add you to their Circles before you can invite them to the HOA.

Connect with YouTube

How to feature your Hangout On Air on your YouTube channel

For a step-by-step guide on how to feature your HOA on your YouTube channel, [click here](#).

Important: Connecting your Google+ with your YouTube channel

Integrating your Google+ with your YouTube channel will allow you to automatically send your Hangout On Air to both your YouTube channel and your Google+ stream, saving you time and trouble. To learn how, follow our step-by-step guides.

- If you already have a YouTube channel and Google+ page, [click here](#).
- If you do not already have a YouTube channel and Google+ page, [click here](#).

Changing your linked YouTube account

Currently you cannot change which YouTube account is linked to a Google+ account, but you can invite multiple YouTube accounts to manage a Google+ page. Follow the instructions in the above link.

When to use Hangouts On Air vs. YouTube live streaming

Both are great ways to reach a large audience, but they do have differences. Refer to [this sheet](#) to know when to use HOA and when to use YouTube.

Also consider integrating HOA into your YouTube live streaming to both add to audience engagement and access the streaming quality of YouTube. Here's a great example from [Bruno Mars](#).

Embed your HOA on a third party site

Allow your audience to watch your Hangout On Air from a non-Google+ site

After you start your HOA, but BEFORE you start broadcasting, you will find the YouTube embed information by clicking “Embed” in your HOA, as shown here:

URL: <http://youtu.be/5NRvrBfHWDI>

HTML:

```
<iframe width="420" height="315"
```

[Embed](#)

Embed this on a website to allow your audience to watch live from there. Also, you can share the **URL** of the Hangout On Air stream to direct your audience to a YouTube view page to watch your HOA.

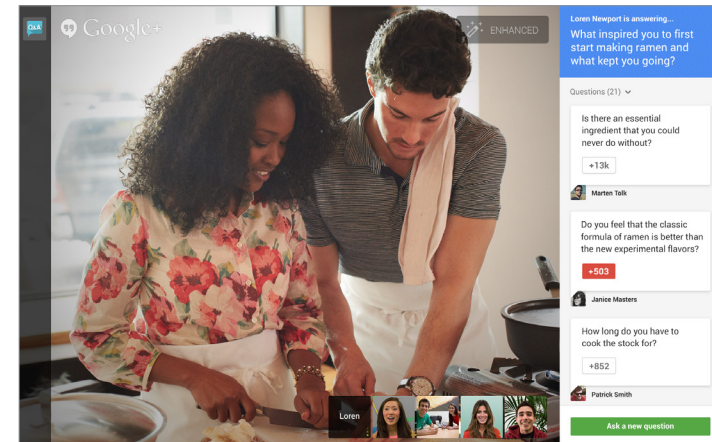
Management during and after Hangouts On Air

HOAs have many tools that allow you to manage your broadcast easily. To see what features you can control, [click here](#).

Hangout On Air apps

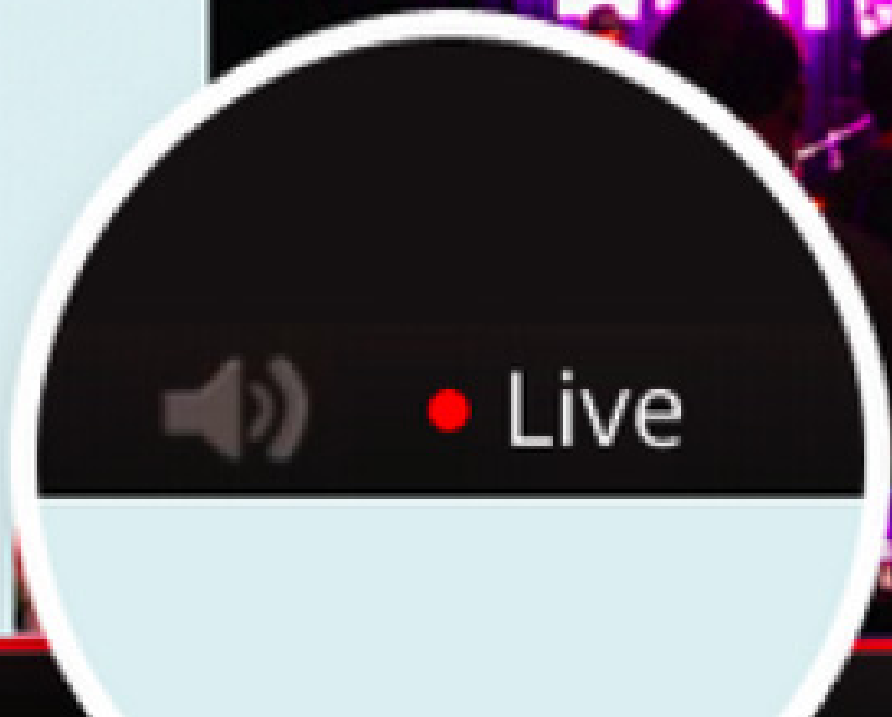
Answer audience questions

Drive engagement before, during and after your live shows with Q&A – a new app that allows you to collect questions from viewers before and during the HOA, and answer them live. Anyone can view and +1 the questions or post new ones to the list. As they're answered, questions are featured at the top of your HOA, and get timestamped for a smoother viewing experience after the fact.



Moderate your guests

The Control Room app allows you to moderate your video calls: from muting and unmuting guests' mics and cameras, to controlling their bandwidth and audio – even ejecting them from the call entirely, if necessary. Your participants will see a notification when they join letting them know the broadcast is being controlled by the moderator – you.



The day of your Hangout On Air

On the day of your HOA, get the word out on all your social media and community channels. Make sure your audience knows exactly when your Hangout On Air is happening, and how they can watch it.

Hangouts On Air day-of checklist:

- ❑ Post a reminder encouraging people to watch the HOA.
- ❑ Invite participants to sign on to the HOA at least 30 minutes ahead of the scheduled broadcast time. We recommend reminding them three hours before the start of the Hangout On Air, and testing their equipment 1.5 hours in advance.
- ❑ Once you have invited participants, remember to check the preview post in your stream to ensure the video looks good before you go live. Also check that your video and audio are synced. If not, reinitiate the HOA.
- ❑ If you want to embed the video or share the link, do this before you click 'Start broadcast.'
- ❑ If you created a Google+ Event, you will need to embed the Hangout On Air in the Event before you broadcast. Just copy the HOA's YouTube URL, go to 'Edit Event,' click on 'Advanced options' and 'Additional fields.' Paste the URL in the 'YouTube URL' field. You'll be set to go.
- ❑ When you're ready to go live, click 'Start Broadcast' to broadcast to the world. There will be a 2-10 second countdown before the broadcast actually goes live. Be sure to account for the delay before you start speaking.
- ❑ Monitor your HOA and ask any participants who are streaming unauthorized third-party content to stop. This includes, but is not limited to, unlicensed music, pictures, and video. It is the HOA operator's responsibility to block users misusing third-party content.

A warning will be given if we detect that copyrighted content is being broadcast live. Failure to stop broadcasting copyrighted material will result in the live broadcast being shut down and you will lose access to Hangouts On Air.



Conan O'Brien
Comedian



+12



Suite 709
Soul band from Austin

+1



Sarah Hill
Hangout host for Veterans United Network

+2



Daria Musk
Singer/Songwriter



Catlin Seaview Survey
Live from the Great Barrier Reef



Trey Ratcliff
Travel photographer

Hosting your Hangout On Air

While hosting your HOA, remember to smile, have fun and keep the conversation going. Great Hangouts On Air are unscripted and spontaneous.

1. Audience etiquette

Before starting the broadcast, double check all of your participants' internet connections, lighting and sound. You may want to do a "dry run" of the show beforehand. Be sure to remind your participants of HOA etiquette:

- The broadcast will sometimes pick up the sounds of keyboards typing and people moving around. Remember to tell participants to mute their mics.
- Participants should be ready at their computers to join the Hangout On Air at a specified time, and they should leave the HOA on a specified cue (i.e. if they are meant to leave the HOA to allow others to join).

2. Preview your video

Upon initiating the HOA, you'll see an invite and a 'video player post' in your stream. The video player post is a preview **only visible to you**. It gives you the chance to see what the video will look like before it goes live. If everything is running smoothly, invite your participants. If not, restart the HOA. When you've invited the participants, they will receive an invite in their streams.

3. Start the broadcast

Click the red 'Start broadcast' button to broadcast your HOA on your Google+ profile or page. Until you press 'Start broadcast', your HOA is private and will not be recorded. Once you initiate the broadcast, a recording of your Hangout On Air will start and a live stream will appear in your YouTube channel.

- Do not start before you are ready (i.e. while you are still adjusting your camera).
- Make sure no one has the stream open in another tab or window. This will cause echo and feedback.
- For more details about starting the broadcast of your Hangout On Air, [click here](#).

4. Time is key

Shorter videos are easier for a wider audience to digest. Try to limit your HOA to 15-45 minutes. If you have a lot of things to cover, consider breaking it up over multiple HOA. Also, consider rotating the participants in the HOA to spark new interest or to get more audience participation.

5. Use your apps

Apps greatly enhance the professionalism of your broadcast. If possible, have an app-savvy team member manage your apps during your Hangout On Air. If you are a one-person team, practice using apps before the day of your broadcast.

6. Maximize your reach

It's important to manage your social media during the broadcast. Post when the Hangout On Air starts and during your broadcast ask your audience to invite others to watch and comment the recording.

Pro tip: What do viewers see when they're watching your Hangout On Air?
Exactly what you see – minus the left-hand and top controls, chat and app controls.

If any of your participants Sticky Click someone, viewers will not see it. They will only see what the main broadcaster Sticky Clicks. If you block someone and see a black box in your HOA, that is what they will see.



After your Hangout On Air

Congratulations, you've hosted your Hangout On Air! Actively promote your HOA after-the-fact, and make sure it is easily discoverable for those that couldn't make the live broadcast.

After a Hangout On Air ends

When you click 'End broadcast' the HOA will stop broadcasting, but the participants can stay in the video call to debrief privately. After the broadcast, the video will begin processing on YouTube so users seeing your video (whether in their Google+ stream or an embedded player) can watch the recording.

Find the recording

After the broadcast, a recorded video of your HOA will automatically post publicly to your YouTube channel, your Google+ page and any website where you embedded the video beforehand. If you'd like to edit or make changes to the video, just head over to your YouTube channel.

1. Click your username in the upper right-hand corner
2. Click video manager
3. Select your HOA. It will have the same title you selected before going live.
4. Click 'Edit settings'
5. Once your video is done processing, you can preview it and make edits.

***Note:** The video will only be editable if it's less than two hours in length.

Edit and post your video

Don't forget that your HOA is available for replay (on Google+ and YouTube) immediately after it finishes. Encourage your audience to watch and check out what they've missed. Remember, if you hosted a long HOA, you can download it on YouTube, break it down into smaller segments, then re-upload to YouTube for sharing.

Ways to edit your Hangout On Air video

- Use the trim function to tighten any dead time at the beginning or end of your HOA recording
- Add a thumbnail photo
- Edit your title
- Add tags
- Download the video and edit it using third party software. You'll see this option in the video manager view of your recording.

Hangouts On Air video privacy settings

Uploads of Hangouts On Air recordings are public by default, but you can modify the settings and information. You have three control settings for who sees the video version of your Hangout On Air: 'public,' 'people who have the video link,' and 'private' (meaning only you can see the video).

Deleting a Hangout On Air video

To delete the video of your Hangout On Air, go to your YouTube channel and delete the video like you would any other YouTube video. In all the places where you embedded the video's URL, it will say, "This video has been deleted."

An alternative to permanently deleting the video, is setting the video to private via your YouTube channel video settings.

Metrics for your Hangout On Air

What metrics are available after a Hangout On Air ends?

With Hangouts On Air, you can see total Views* of your completed HOA via YouTube Analytics on your YouTube channel:

1. Go to your YouTube channel's Video Manager (youtube.com/my_videos)
2. Find the upload of your recorded Hangout On Air, and click the 'View counts' next to it ([screenshot](#)).
3. On the Analytics page, you can see views of the Hangout On Air ([screenshot](#)). The views represent total live and recorded playbacks of the Hangout On Air.

★ **Note:** Recordings created on or after July 12, 2012 will include both live + recorded Playbacks.

Keep promoting your Hangout On Air

Continue to promote your Hangout On Air

- Even Hangouts On Air that receive only a few live viewers can gain thousands of views after the Event. Post the YouTube video to all of your media outlets, and prompt your followers and subscribers to check it out.
- Ask them to subscribe to your channel, follow you on Google+, or send in ideas for the next HOA.

Post a highlight reel

A couple days after the HOA, post a 1-2 minute highlight reel of the best moments. Be sure to thank your participants and viewers. Tell them to stay tuned for future HOA.

Episodic engagement

One-offs rarely sustainably grow your audience. Set up episodic HOAs and regular postings so your audience continues to have reasons to engage and come back.

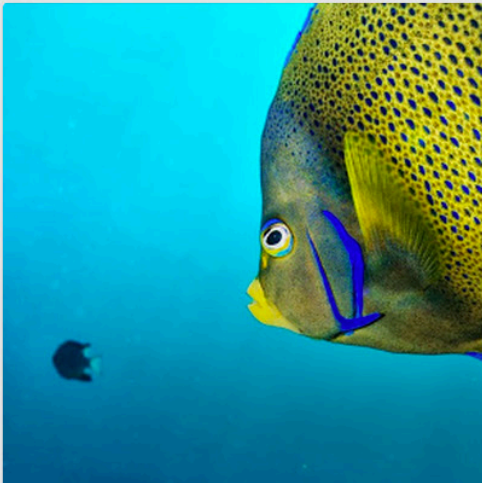
07 Google+ Communities Guide

Discover communities

Create community Search for communities



Cakes & Baking - The Cadbury ...
82,251 members 17,417 posts



Scuba Diving
18,964 members 4,572 posts



Maker Camp
16,409 members 3,841 posts



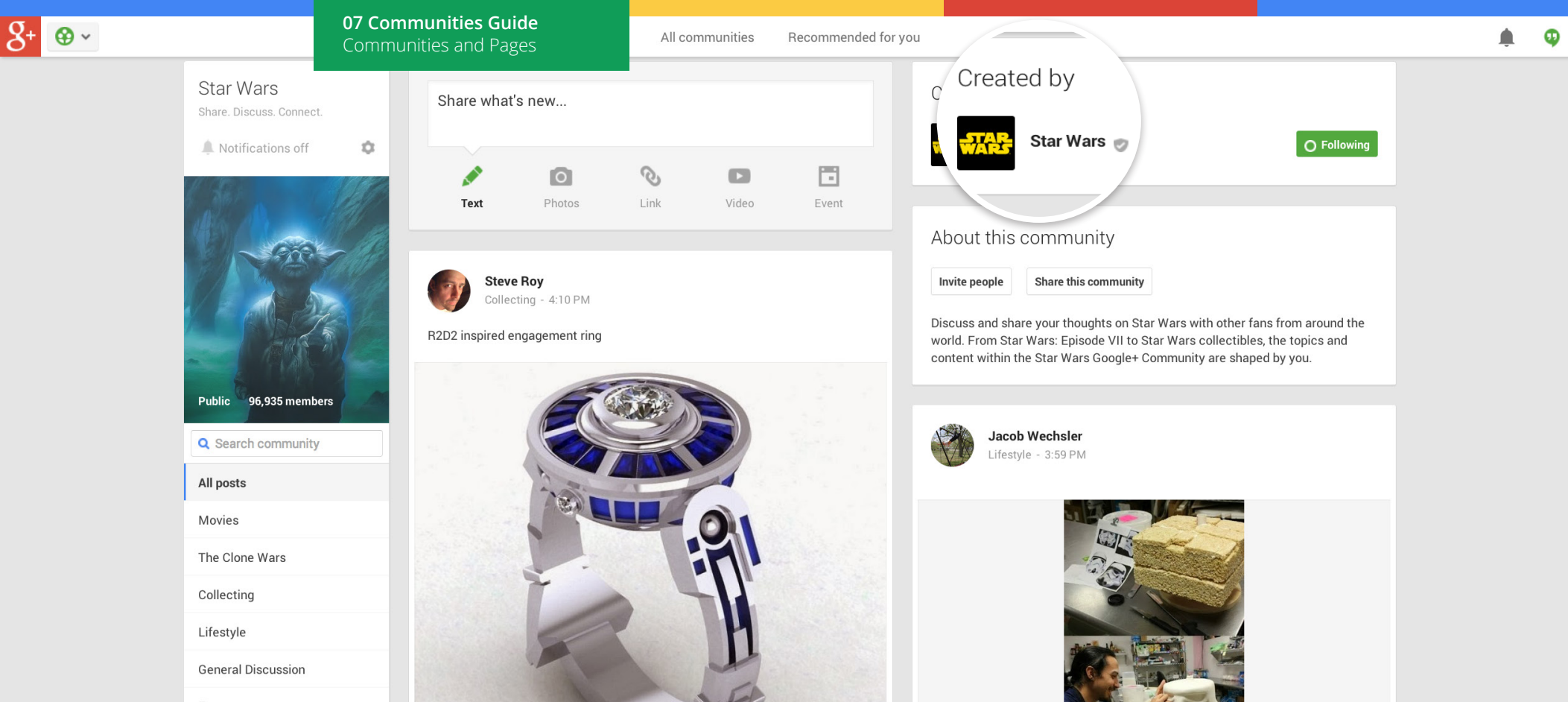
Deep Astronomy
15,133 members 2,239 posts

About Google+ Communities

Google+ Communities are where people come together to talk about the stuff they're into.

With Google+ Communities you can:

- Bring people together around a shared interest
- Join communities to meet interesting people and learn about something you love
- Spark conversations with your followers through community discussions



Google+ Communities and pages

Your page is where people can find you on Google+ and where you can share updates with your followers. By creating a community, you open the conversation so followers can talk to each other about shared topics of interest. Your community will appear on the right-hand side of your Google+ page, and likewise, your page will be featured on the right-hand side of your community.

With a Google+ page, you can:

- Create and moderate communities
- Be invited to join other communities
- Comment, +1, post, participate in and create Hangouts and create Events

Google+ Communities are flexible

When creating your community, think carefully about how people will use it and what type of content will be shared. You can create four different types of communities:

Best For...	Community type	Who can join	Who can see members and posts	Who can find your community
Connecting people on Google+ who share an interest Examples: Knitting, Black and White Photography, 49ers Football Fans, The Hobbit Fan Club, Support for Cancer Kids, The Rolling Stones	Public – Anyone can join	Everyone	Everyone	Everyone
Sharing content publicly, but limiting who can create and post Examples: Habitat for Humanity, OSU Alumni, Lincoln Park Neighborhood Businesses, Burning Man Organizers, Golden Gate Park Initiatives	Public – Moderator approval needed to join	Anyone, with moderator approval	Everyone	Everyone
Closed communities for publicly-known organizations Examples: Williams High School Band, Cedar Oaks PTA, Iowa State Fair Organizers, New Haven Community Theater	Private – Community can be found through search; users request to join	Anyone, with moderator approval	Members only	Everyone
Small groups with a need for specific discussions and communications ECON101 Study Group, Moss Dorm Floor 3, Friday Night Movie Club, Parkwood Neighborhood Watch	Private – Community is hidden from search	Only by invitation	Members only	Community is hidden from search results*

★ **Note:** The name and photo of a private community that's hidden from search will still be visible to those who directly access the community's web URL.

07 Communities Guide
What They Look Like

All communities Recommended for you

Education Revolution
We Are the Future of Learning

Public 34,189 members

Search community

All posts
General Discussion
Student Bill of Rights
Pedagogy
Social Learning
Self-Directed Learning
Game Changing Technology

Share what's new...

Text Photos Link Video Event

laurie corzett
Pedagogy - 2:46 PM

Dance World Takeover originally shared:
Considering the number of questions I get about teaching, I figured it was time to start answering some of them. Check out the latest installment in the DWT Q&A column:

New Dance Teacher? 4 Tips to Start Off Right
<http://rebeccabrightly.com/qa-4-tips-dance-teachers/>

+1

Add a comment...

National Education Association
General Discussion - 1:12 PM

About this community

Invite people Share this community

Thinking about how and why teaching and learning are redefined in the age of the Internet. Shortcut to this space: EducationRevolution.me.

I'm starting this community to have a dialog on the changes in education that are (and could be) taking place, and the ways in which we might influence those changes.

My "Hack Your Education" tour around the US the last few months has left me even more convinced that policy changes are not the answer, but that the change needs to come from us. That we need, as individuals, families, and communities, to reclaim the conversation around "learning," and to do so in such a way as to recognize the inherent worth and value of every student, with the ultimate goal of helping them become self-directed and agents of their own learning.

Associated with the FutureofEducation.com interview series.

Posting policy: self-serving links to commercial sites, or links or posts that are not relevant to the conversation here will be removed.
Read more

BOSSreaders
General Discussion - 1:50 PM

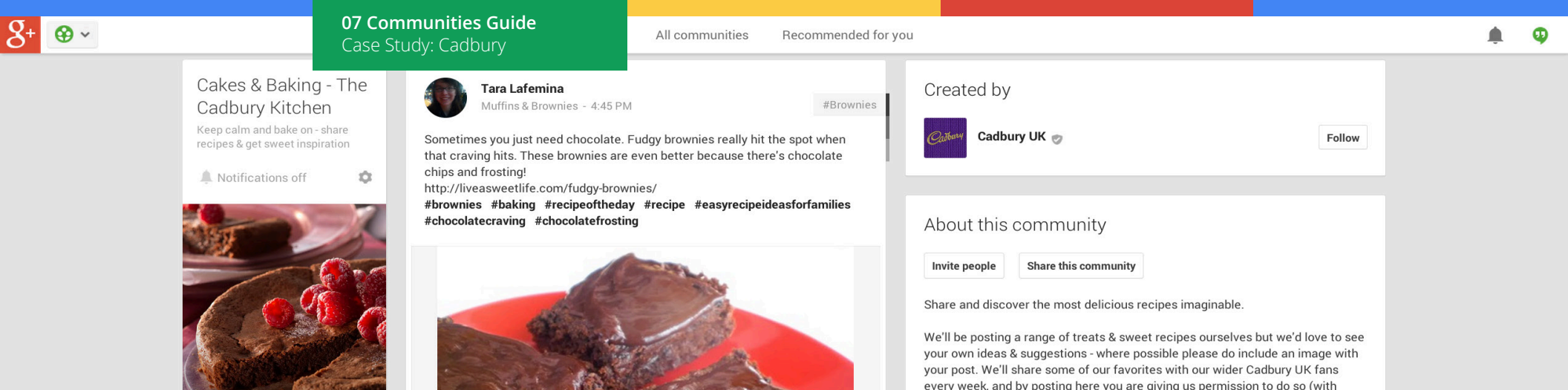
The BOSS Blend is a blended learning reading solution for students in grade 5 and up. Students set goals that matter to them, get honest and targeted feedback from their teacher and are inspired to be the BOSS of their learning.

#Education

What successful communities look like

There are lots of cool communities to join. Here are some things the best ones have in common:

- They have a clearly defined sense of purpose
- They serve the community members first, not the business that created it
- They have active moderators who help nurture the community
- They have consistent, high quality posted content and thoughtful member interactions
- They help build real life connections



Case Study: Cadbury

Cadbury finds sweet success on Google+

We are the UK's number one chocolate brand and our Cadbury Dairy Milk bar is the country's best-selling chocolate bar. We've always prided ourselves on creativity and innovation, so Google+ was a natural fit for us to extend the conversation with fans.

What role does G+ Communities play for Cadbury?

Google+ lets us host exciting events where we connect fans with Olympic athletes face-to-face using Google Hangouts On Air. We also hosted an event that featured chocolate experts. We make it possible to connect with people you wouldn't meet in your everyday life.

What have you found to be most effective in growing your community?

We try to think outside the standard channels. For example, we came up with unique ways to attract followers by creating and sharing exclusive content, like a special edition Google+ chocolate bar.

How has the community made an impact on your business?

When we were named the official treat provider for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we wanted to reach tech-savvy 18 to 25 year olds. Without an online community and an organic conversation, that wouldn't have happened. Google+ made it possible.

How do you use G+ Communities differently from other social tools?

We've found that using Circles makes it easier to tailor content relevant to specific groups. There are subgroups of our fans and followers and Google+ lets us talk to them on a more personal level, which makes for a more compelling conversation.



Results

- We boosted followers by 150,000
- We gained 10,000 new followers per day
- We've seen a 17% uplift in CTR across AdWords campaigns

"One of the exciting things about Google+ is everyday you log in there are new, fun things to try. As marketers, it's always powerful to have a new way to communicate and get your message across"



– Jerry Daykin, Social Media Community Manager, Cadbury





07 Communities Guide
Getting Started


All communitiesRecommended for you




Discover communities

Create community


Search for communities




Eating Right
33,783 members 7,428 posts




Macro Photography
58,320 members 51,539 posts



Tea Lovers
53,553 members 11,584 posts



foodies+
34,800 members 14,388 posts



Photography
128,108 members 159,287 posts

Get started in Google+ Communities

An easy way to get started with Google+ Communities is to join an existing one. Chances are, there's already a community for your interests.

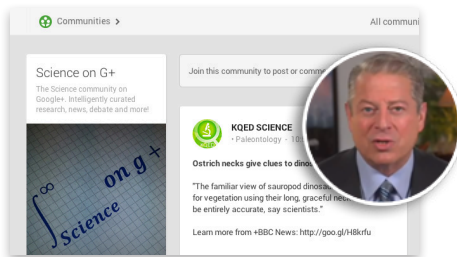
How to participate in existing communities:

- **Find the right community**
Choose a community whose members share your interests.
- **Add value to the community**
If you only talk about your brand or focus on gaining followers, your posts probably won't engage members and you could even be removed from the community.

Start participating by commenting on existing posts and answering members' questions.

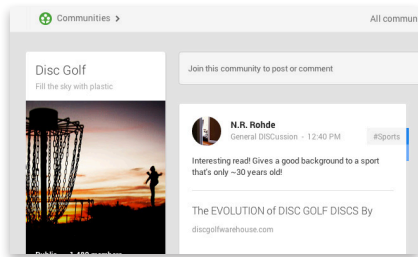
- **Quality over quantity**
Success is measured by engagement and discussion, so bigger communities aren't always better.
- **Delight the community**
Beyond commenting and sharing with the community, think about what you can do to make an impression. Host a Hangout On Air with experts, bring in celebrity guest moderators, invite members to a real-world event – anything that shows your passion and commitment.

Great examples of community engagements



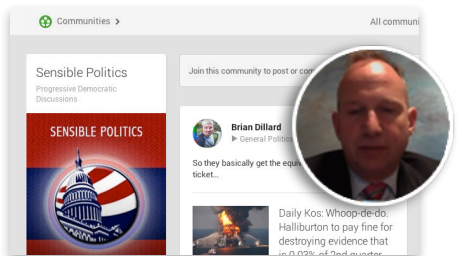
Create exclusive participation

Al Gore joins the [Science on G+ Community](#), takes questions from members, and invites a few lucky members to participate in a Hangout On Air.



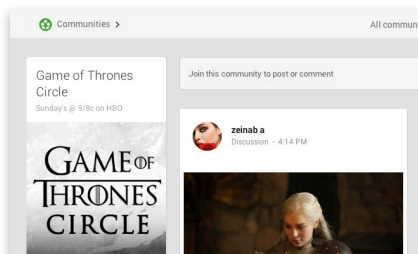
Team up with experts

Two of the biggest disc golf manufacturers – Innova and Discraft – join the [Disc Golf Community](#) and liven up the conversations with insights from professional disc golfers.



Involve the whole community

Delaware Governor Markell joins the [Sensible Politics Community](#) and hosts a Hangout On Air where he answers questions and talks about issues with members of the community.



Invite celebrities

E! Entertainment guest moderates the [Game of Thrones Community](#).

Setting up your community

It's easy to create a community around your interests. Here are some tips to get started:

Name

Pick a unique name that clearly communicates the purpose of your community, differentiates itself from similar communities, and differs from your Google+ page name to avoid confusion.

Tagline

Keep your tagline clear and descriptive to attract the right members.

Photo

Pick a photo that captures the spirit of your community and makes a good impression.

***Note:** The image dimensions are 220px x 265px.

About

This section is where new members learn about your community, so use this section to:

- Describe the purpose of your community
- Set clear expectations around posts and discussions
- Add any additional information or relevant links

The screenshot shows the Google+ community creation interface. At the top, a blue banner reads "Congratulations, you've started a community!" and "Now, just fill in a few more details. then click Done when you're finished." with a "Done" button. Below this, the form fields are: "Small Dog Lovers" (Name), "Mighty minis." (Tagline), a photo of a dog (Photo), "Your community is public. Privacy cannot be changed." (Privacy), "All posts" (Posts), "Discussion" (Discussion), "Add category..." (Category), "About this community" (About), and a text box containing "Little dogs can pack a lot of personality per pound! Share your small dog's adventures, antics, photos and videos here." (About). Red lines connect the tips on the left to the corresponding fields: Name to the community name, Tagline to the tagline, Photo to the photo, and About to the about section.

Small Dog Lovers

Mighty minis.

Pick a photo

Your community is public. Privacy cannot be changed.

All posts

→ Discussion

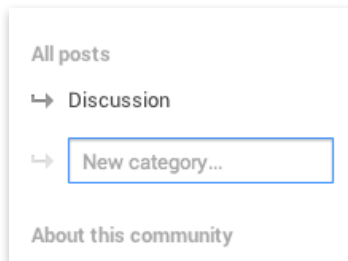
→ Add category...

About this community

Little dogs can pack a lot of personality per pound! Share your small dog's adventures, antics, photos and videos here.

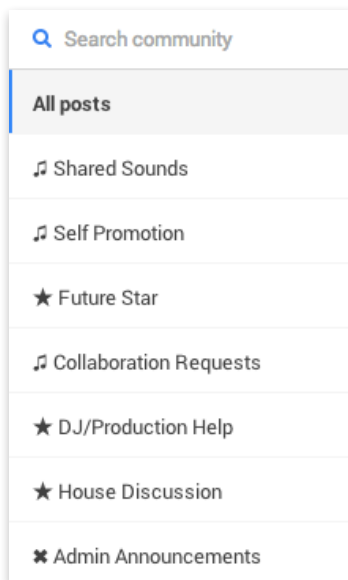
Adding discussion categories

Categories play an important role in your community's success. They guide discussions, give people an idea of what your community is about and help members find the topic they're most interested in. For example:



Stay current

Categories can be added, renamed, reordered and deleted, so don't worry about choosing the right category right out of the gate. Make sure your community's categories are kept-up-to-date.



Engage your fans

For example: If you're setting up a community for fans of a local rock band, you might have categories like:

- Upcoming shows
- Fan reviews
- Album releases
- Favorite songs
- Q&A

Note: Owners and moderators can reassign members' posts which are incorrectly categorized. This gives you flexibility to keep your community organized so members get the most out of your categories.

Nurturing your community

The early stages of your community are often the most important. During the first 2-4 weeks, you will lay the foundation for your community. Here are a few tips to getting started.

Invite people you know and trust

Solicit the opinions of peers who share the same interest. It's easier to launch a new community with people whose goals are aligned with yours. This way you can test what works in a small group before inviting others to join.

Welcome new members

As your community grows, welcome new people by commenting on their posts. Consider inviting them to a Hangout to get to know them. People are much more likely to return and participate if they feel acknowledged and engaged by others in the community. This will also create a sense of connection among your core members. You might also meet people you really like.

Actively moderate

If you have a public community, you may experience spammers or members who try to promote something. It's important that you quickly remove spam or off-topic posts and comments to preserve the integrity of the community. This allows members to feel safe sharing and participating in the community. As your community grows, you'll want to have additional moderators to help manage the community. You can also help move member posts into the correct categories if they forget. This keeps things organized.

Post content that will spark engagement

Inspire group discussions, start a community project, host a Hangout On Air, or anything that is participatory and actively brings your members together around a topic.

Engage your community through programming

A few weeks after launching you'll have a good sense of how the community is taking shape. Members are engaging with one another, the stream is active, members are posting interesting content and the community is spam-free.

To begin building momentum think of creative programming that can bring your community vision to life. Here are a few ideas that can help drive engagement and attract more people to join.

Hangouts On Air

Broadcast discussions among members about relevant topics. This is a great way to meet face-to-face and get to know the members in your community.

Community projects

Creative projects foster inspiration and build bonds among members. Post a project for everyone to participate in and invite your members to share their progress along the way.

Special guest appearances

If your community is about a topic of interest, consider inviting an expert in the field to join the community and answer questions or chat with members.

Current events & breaking news

Posts that are relevant to current events in the topic of your community will give people a venue to discuss things right when they want to.

Topic of the day/week

Consider using themes within your community to inspire fresh conversations and unique perspectives from your members.

Meetups

If your community lends well to a real life activity, you might organize member Meetups to help people build deeper friendships within your community.

Weekly member spotlight

Acknowledgment goes a long way. Reward your most active members by promoting something they are passionate about each week.

07 Communities Guide
Case Study: Knitting Lodge

All communities
Recommended for you

The Knitting Lodge
Sharing life's little projects!

Public 5,271 members

Search community

sue sunshine ugas
What I'm working on now - 5:06 PM

#Scarf

And on to the next scarf :-)

Created by

Yarn Mountain

Follow

About this community

The Knitting Lodge is connecting hand-crafters from around the world in a really fun way! Show us your personal talent and interests. We are really glad you are here. Join in and have fun!

Weekly Hangouts:

- "Knit Nights" Tues & Wed, 8pm EST
- TGIF Hangout, Fridays at 2pm EST (postponed til Fall)
- Breakfast Club, Saturdays at 8am EST (postponed til Winter)

Case Study: Knitting Lodge

Knitting Lodge: Sharing life's little projects

I've always been drawn to handcrafting – sewing, knitting, crocheting – you name it. And while I love my store, I wanted to grow my community and connect with a global group of hand-crafters, so I created Knitting Lodge.

What role does G+ Communities play for Yarn Mountain?

The community is the heartbeat of my business. The members build relationships with each other first, then get to know my brand and my people through interactions around various events and posts.

What's the best way to nurture your community?

I host weekly events and Hangouts where we forge real relationships. I allow the community to grow and flourish at its own pace, and I make sure we stay centered around the common activities that my customers enjoy.

How has the community made an impact on your business?

Online followers seek our retail location, and local customers have joined our online community. At the end of the day, “shop local” starts to mean “shop with who we know.”

How do you use G+ Communities differently from other social tools?

Our sales are deliberate, but we sell indirectly. For example, I’ll talk about a workshop that teaches a technique to help a knitter improve skills. The indirect sale is the supplies required.

Results

- My customers can share and I can see trends forming
- Online buying decisions are easier, based on established trust
- My shipping has expanded from 7 to 37 countries around the world
- Online followers seek out my store, and my local customers join us online

“G+ Communities have helped me to create a customer experience that gives them something great to share about and a reason to come back for more.”

07 Communities Guide
Managing Your Community

All communities Recommended for you

Thru-hiking
Hiking, Trekking, Backpacking

Public 5,614 members

All posts

Discussion

Appalachian Trail

Continental Divide Trail

Pura Aventura
Discussion - 3:19 AM

Pura Aventura originally shared:
#PuraQuote | I just wish the world was twice as big so half of it was still unexplored - David Attenborough
Punta Gallinas, Colombia

Quote

About this community

Whether you're a day hiker, weekender, section hiker, official thru-hiker or just a wannabe, you're welcome to join our Thru-hiking Community.

Anything and everything about hiking and backpacking - so post pics and vids, ask questions and share stories. This is a great place to share your adventures and support each other in our love for hiking.

BUSINESSES you may NOT advertise here. Come to join our Thru-hiking Community BUT you may NOT advertise tests, products or services through this Community - as outlined below.

GUIDELINES (PLEASE READ):

Here's the fine print to ensure this is a fabulous place for everyone.

1. Privacy: By participating you agree that all information shared will be publicly accessible through members of this community.

2. Conduct: By participating you agree not to engage in any illegal, unethical or otherwise ill-conceived conduct. You understand that any misconduct such as trolling, bullying, hate speech, intolerance, spamming, shameless self-promotion or advertising of your product or service or any deplorable behavior will not be acceptable. You may be banned or reported to Google with no prior warning.

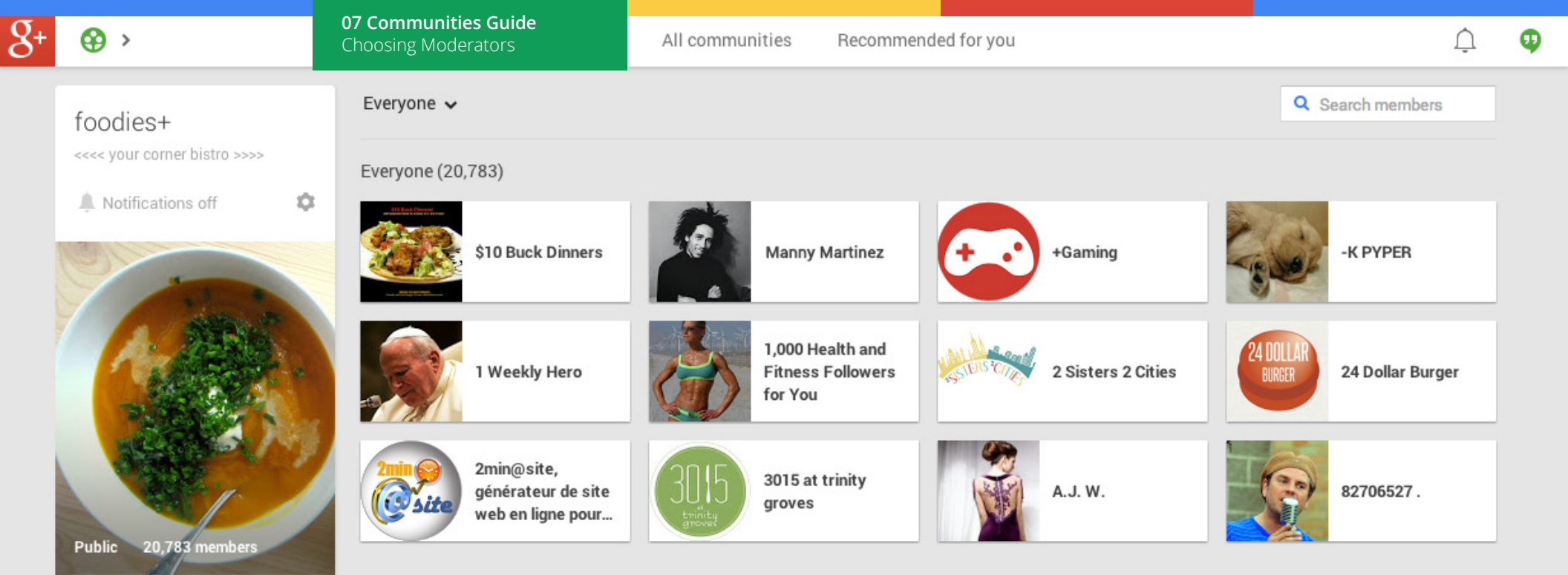
3. Moderation: By participating you understand that all content is moderated to ensure safety, preserve continuity and to prevent spam and unsolicited

Managing your community

Active moderation and community management, especially during the early days of your community, play an important role in your community's success.

How to manage your community effectively:

- Have rules and set expectations early
Make sure to include guidelines in your community's About section for all members to see.
- Be consistent and clear in enforcing rules
Kindly let people know when they break the rules, but be fair by giving people – especially new members – the benefit of the doubt.
- Recruit moderators to help manage your community
Having multiple moderators reduces the amount of work, and also increases the likelihood that the community is being actively moderated.



Finding great moderators

The best place to find good moderators is within your own Google+ Community. As you're building and nurturing your community, keep an eye out for passionate members who:

- Believe in the overall goals of the community
- Are deeply involved in the community
- Care about the community's key issues and members
- Welcome ideas to nurture and grow the community

You can also look outside of your community, contacting people you interact with on Google+ or people passionate about your community's topic. The number of moderators you choose depends on the size and type of community.

Moderator responsibilities

Set up and regularly update community

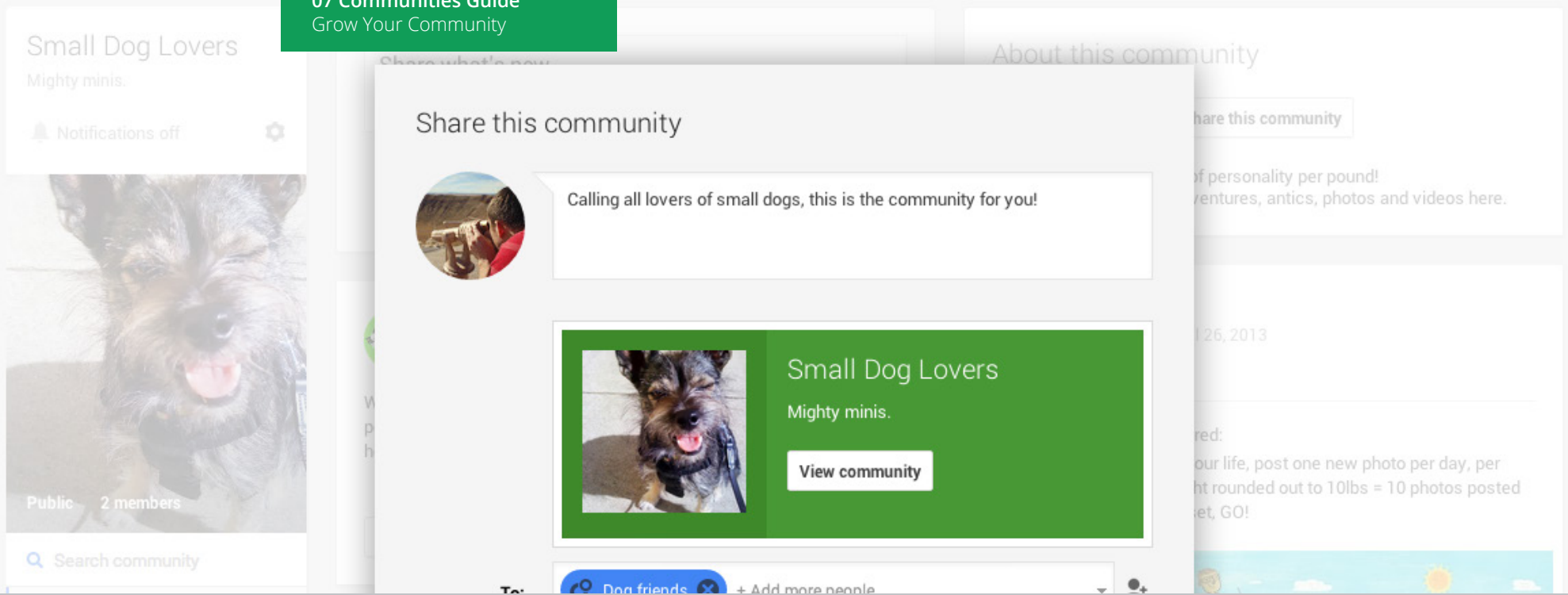
- Help define community rules and expectations, and update when necessary
- Share community news and updates with members
- Add or remove discussion categories when necessary

Manage posts and members

- Moderate proactively and keep conversations aligned with overall community goals
- Remove inappropriate posts
- Warn members when they break the rules, and remove or ban members if necessary
- Move posts to the correct category
- Resolve conflicts between members

Foster community

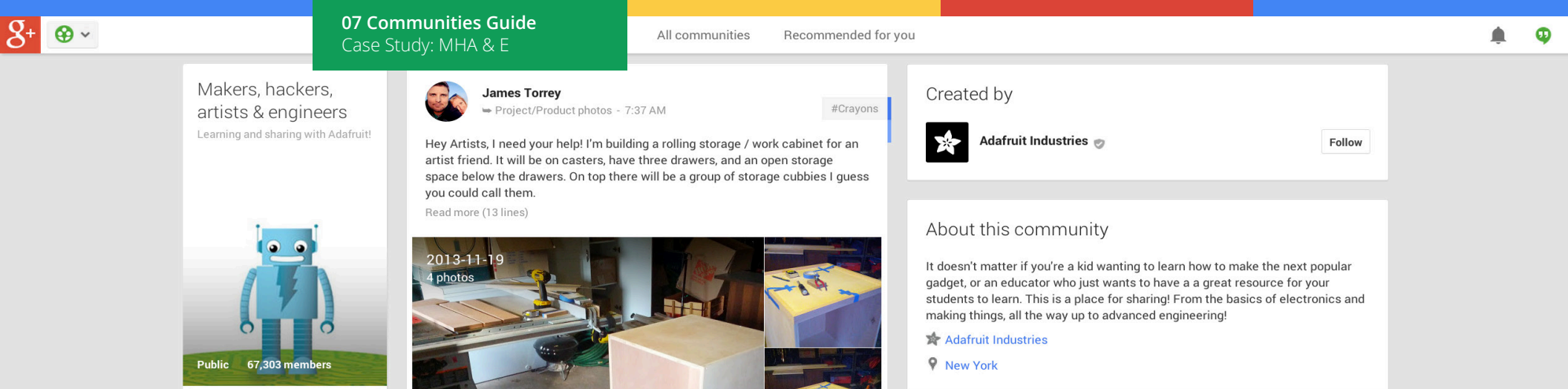
- Inspire members to invest in the community's overall mission
- Welcome new members and engage existing ones
- Help members find their way by connecting them with the right people or content
- Nurture the community by coordinating events, Hangouts, or guest visits



Grow your community

Once your community is up and running, make sure people know about it. Start by inviting those you know on Google+ who may be interested in joining. Some great ways to spread the word:

- Share the community publicly from your profile or Google+ page
- Select "Share this community" from the About section
- Send out emails announcing your community
- Promote the community on your blog and include a link
- Link to your community from your website
- Share community posts to the public
- Add a badge for your community to your website or blog
- Ask influential stakeholders to help promote the community through their social channels



Case Study: MHA & E

Innovators and creators look to Google+

We are makers, hackers, artists and engineers, who collectively celebrate people who make and share their passions. G+ is the “pulse” of our community around the world.

What role does G+ Communities play for Adafruit?

As a hub of innovation, we use the G+ Community to share photos, videos, events and projects. We’ve become a hub of sharing innovation and tinkering.

What have you found to be most effective in growing your community?

We post products in-progress. We support people coming together around causes, we share free stuff or discounts, and we socialize, talking about new ways of making and sharing.

How has the community made an impact on your business?

We host a daily conversation with our community and customers. We help educate and share learning electronics. By leading the conversation and creating space to support our community, people link their brands to our business.

How do you use G+ Communities differently from other social tools?

Facebook generally has “likes” but not a lot of in-depth discussion. Twitter is quick updates that come and go. The G+ tools are more media friendly: for photos, videos, comments, links, events and Hangouts in one click.

“G+ Community tends to be the social tool that is more meaningful and special than the other tools.”

Results

- Hundreds of makers of all ages share their projects each week
- Our community is 56,227 strong
- We get approximately 11 million page views per month with 2m uniques
- Our Adafruit G+ page has 1,139,482 people in Circles

