

Google+ for Brands: Tips & Strategies



Welcome to the Google+ Tips and Strategies Guide for Brands

Make your brand more visible and engage your customers like never before with Google+. This comprehensive guide shows you how customers can discover your brand more easily, and how you can spark meaningful conversations and grow your audience across the web.

Best,
The Google+ Team



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01 Getting Started

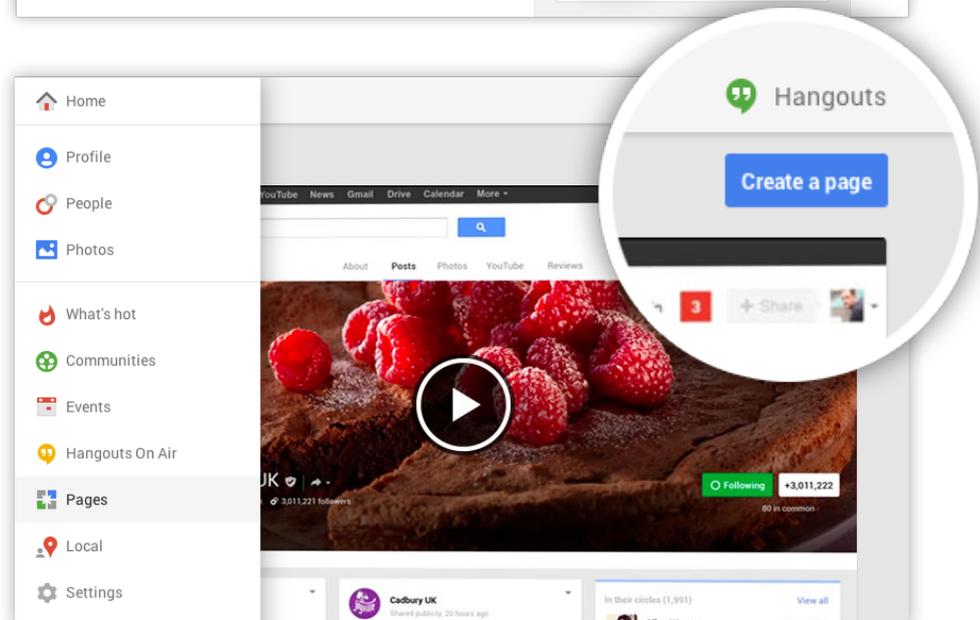
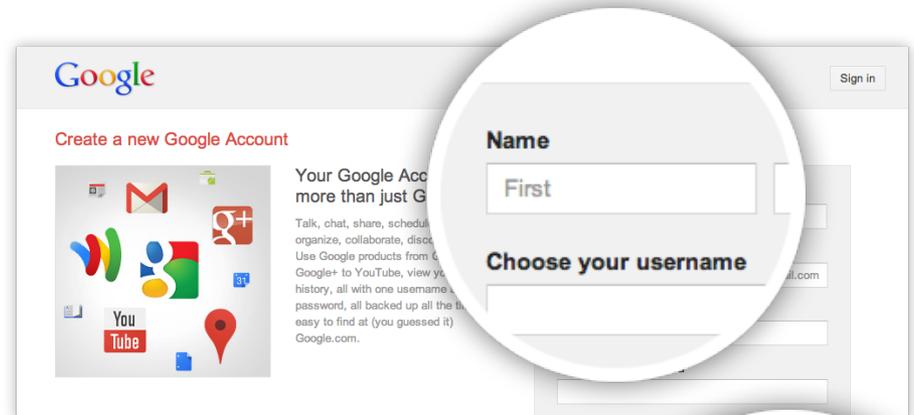
Create a Google+ page

Your brand's presence starts with a Google+ page

Every Google+ page begins with a profile. This profile is usually for the administrator, the person most responsible for the content of your Google+ page. If you don't already have a profile, you'll need to [create one](#). Next, you can set up your brand's page by following these steps.

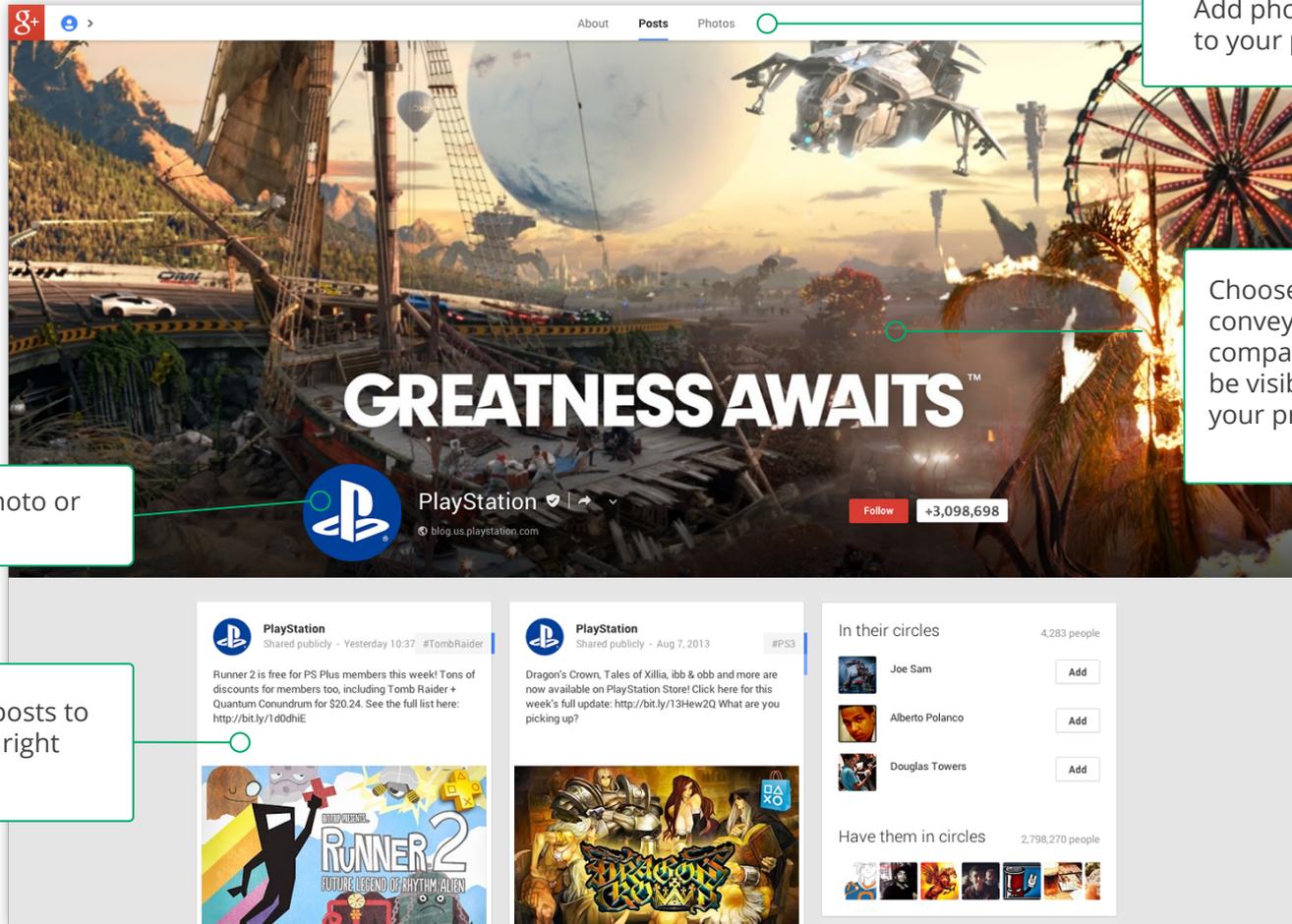
Steps

- From Home screen click on **Pages** icon
- Click **Create a page**
- Follow on-screen directions
- Complete your page with [photos](#) and information about your organization, including your website's URL



Customize your Google+ page

Tips & Strategies



Add photos or videos to your page

Choose an image that conveys the spirit of your company. This image will be visible at the top of your profile page

Add a profile photo or logo here

Prepare 10-20 posts to get you started right off the bat

Verify your Google+ page

A verified business page builds trust

People are more likely to recommend and follow a Google+ page they know to be authentic. A verified Google+ page also unlocks some great features. You'll know that a Google+ page is verified by its checkmark in the header. There are two types of verification:

Website verification unlocks features such as higher visibility in Google Search and including social annotations in ads. [Linking](#) your company's website to a verified G+ page also qualifies you for a custom URL and a RHS search social card.

Name verification benefits users by allowing them to know which Google+ page is your brand's official page.



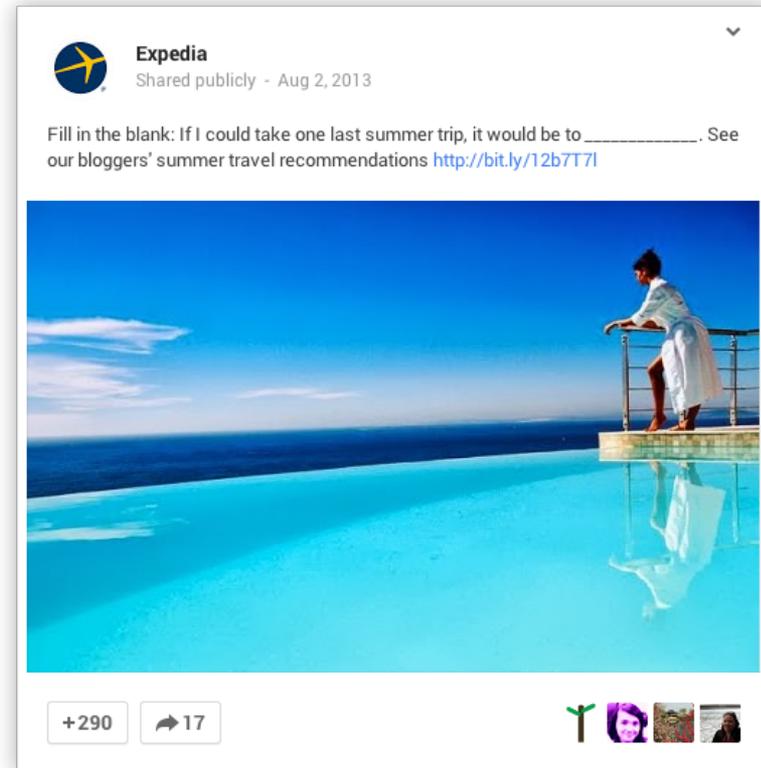
Test and learn which content works best

Keep your followers engaged

The best way to keep your followers engaged is to give them a steady flow of relevant content. Post frequently, mixing planned content with more spontaneous posts. Experiment and try different kinds of posts, questions and Hangouts On Air to see what works best. Let your followers' reactions guide you in what you post and what you share.

Learn from others

Have a look around Google+ to see what other businesses are doing. Follow those who are posting interesting content and learn from them.



PRO TIP:

Videos and photos are much more effective in getting a response (comment, +1, or reshare) than a simple post.

01 Getting Started Checklist

- Create a Google page
Every Google+ page starts with a profile
- Verify your Google+ page
A verified business page builds trust
- Customize your Google+ page
Add a profile image, photos, and 10-20 posts to get started
- Test and learn what content works
Keep your users engaged and learn from others

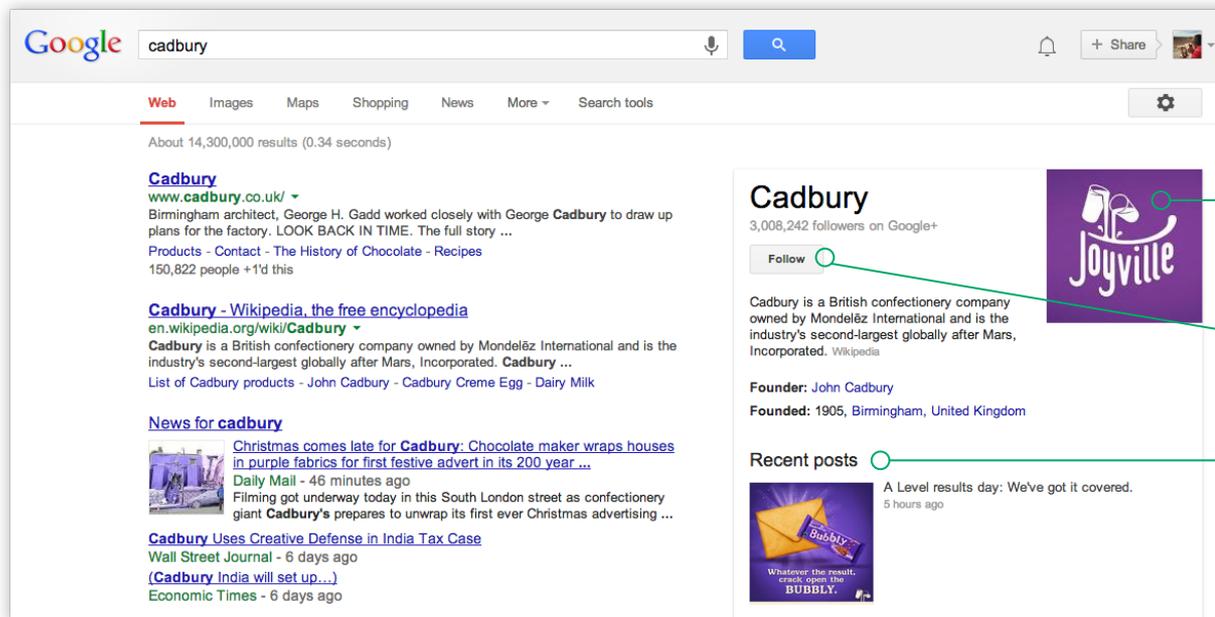
02 Increase Discovery

Use SEO strategies when creating posts

Tips & Strategies

Make your brand more discoverable

There is no better way for a customer (or potential customer) to find you than through search. Not surprisingly, Google+ is tightly tied to Google Search. Maintaining an engaging Google+ page affects how your brand shows up in organic search results.



Click through to your Google+ page

Follow directly from search

See recent posts



[Google Trends](#) can help you identify keywords to include in your posts, to increase chances of discovery in organic search results.

Increase Discovery

Promote your Google+ page across channels

Tips & Strategies

Promote your page and gain followers

- Encourage customers to follow your page
 - Link your Google+ page to your website
 - Promote your page in all online and offline communications.
 - Use custom URLs; customers can find your Google+ page much more easily and it gives your brand more credibility.
- Delta included their custom URL - plus.google.com/+delta - in promotions to celebrate their achievement of reaching 1M followers on Google+.



Get creative with offline cross-promotions. Williams-Sonoma promotes their +Page via their offline catalog; Dominoes Pizza via their pizza boxes; and Aflac during their TV commercials.

Merge your Google+ and YouTube identities

Tips & Strategies

Use one identity across Google

A single, unified identity builds deeper connections with your customers and amplifies your brand's voice. Create a unified brand experience across Google, share videos more easily and make content easier to find.

Linking your Google+ and YouTube accounts means:

- Your followers will see your brand's videos surface in their Google+ stream, making them easier to find and share
- Videos posted to your YouTube channel are automatically posted to your Google+ followers
- Your Hangouts On Air are automatically posted to your Google+ page and YouTube channel
- Find out [more](#)

Chevrolet
Shared publicly - Jul 29, 2013 #Safety

#Safety was a top priority in designing the all-new 2014 **#Impala**. That's why Impala has a 5-Star Safety Score from NHTSA & features **#innovative** safety advancements like the available Crash Imminent Braking. It utilizes **#radar** to sense traffic, and can automatically apply brakes to help avoid a crash. Watch to see more. **#FindNewRoads**

Crash Imminent Braking through Radar in Impala

Chevrolet · 816 videos
Subscribe 228,211

Like Share Facebook Twitter Google+

+197 25

Increase Discovery

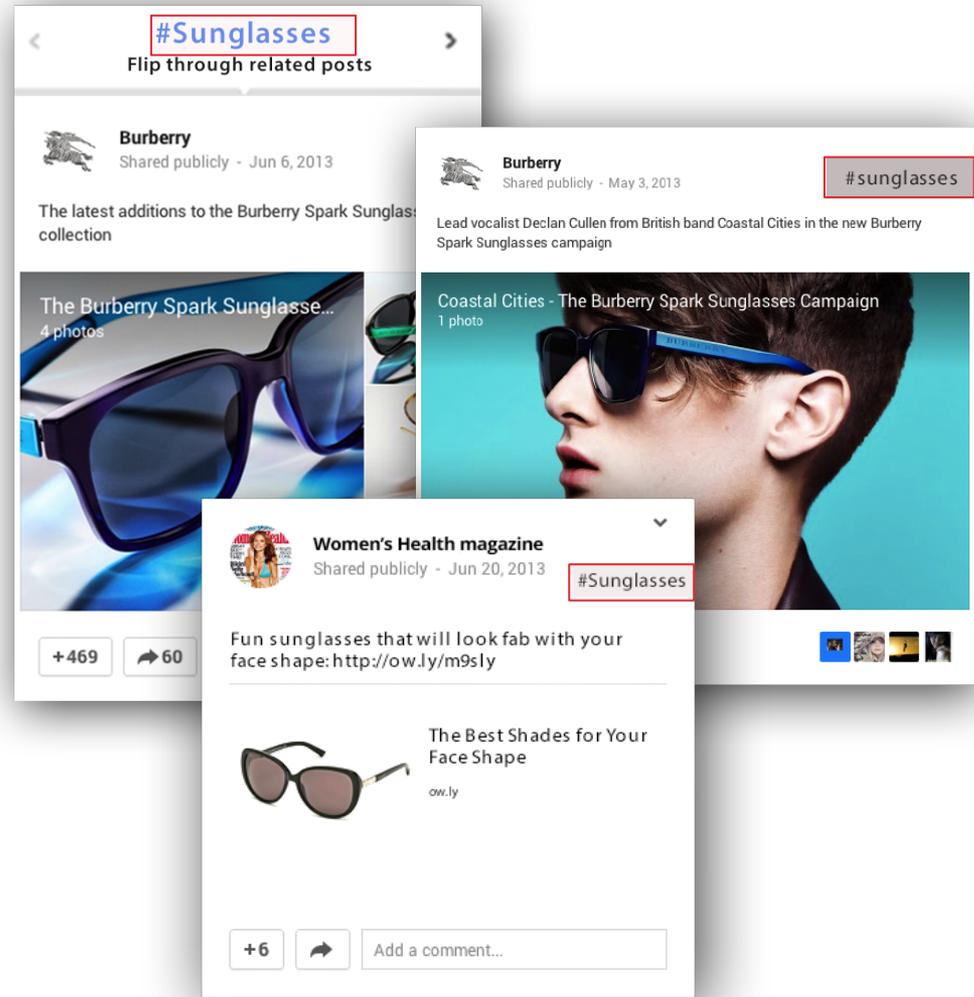
Use #hashtags to drive discoverability

Tips & Strategies

#Hashtags help your followers find your content

Adding a hashtag to your posts helps people find and join the conversations about a particular topic. Typing “#” before any word creates a clickable link, clicking on the link will show related content.

Hashtags in your Google+ posts may also appear at the top of your post as related hashtags. Related hashtags helps posts get discovered and build conversations around the content of your post.



Increase Discovery

02 Increase Discovery Checklist

- Use SEO strategies when creating posts
 - Make your profile more discoverable
- Merge your Google+ and YouTube identities
 - Use one identity across Google by linking your Google+ and YouTube accounts
- Promote your Google+ page across channels
 - Promote your page and gain followers
- Use #hashtags to drive discoverability
 - Help your followers find your content

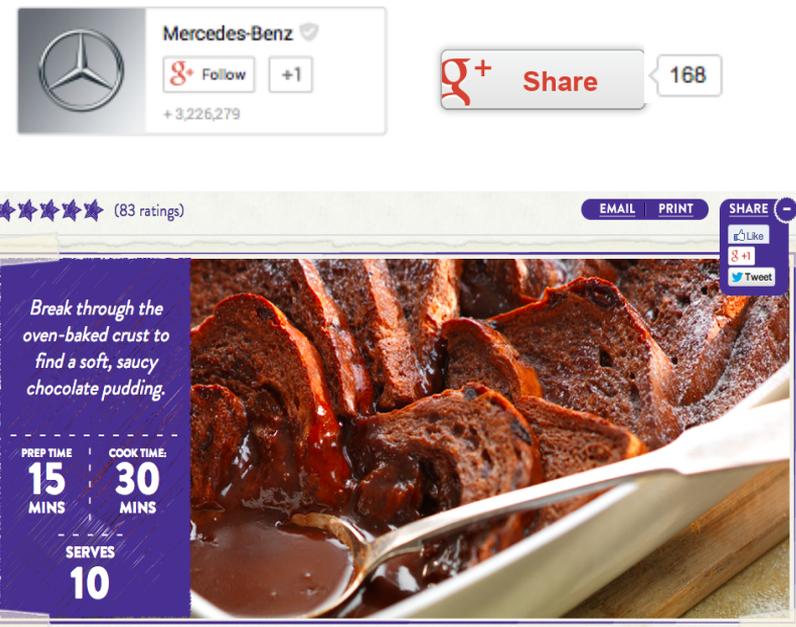
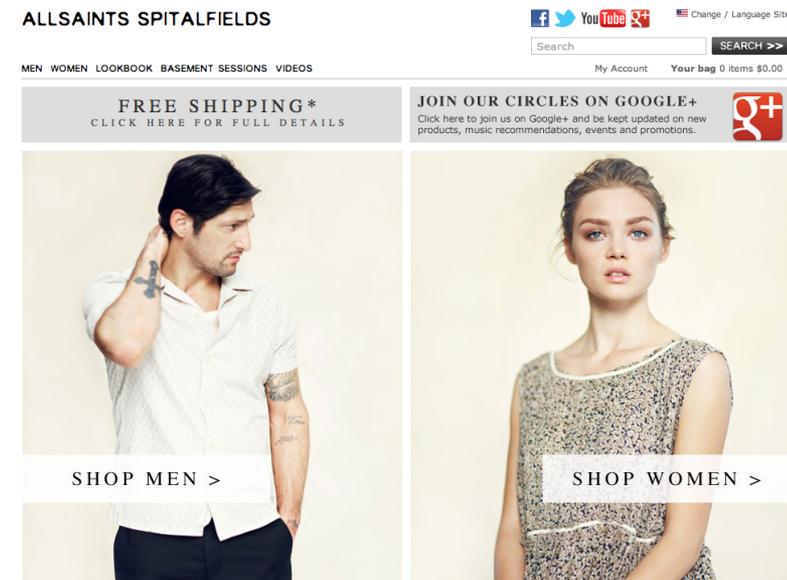
03 Grow Followers

Help users to follow you and share your content

Tips & Strategies

Adding the **Google+ Badge** to your website makes it easy for visitors to follow your brand directly from your website.

Add the **Follow**, **Share**, and **+1** buttons to content you want the world to see.



Increase CTR while growing followers

Tips & Strategies

Brands using social annotations see a **5-10%** uptick in click through rates

When you link your Google+ page to your AdWords campaign users will see endorsements from your Google+ followers alongside your ads. These are called social annotations and are a powerful tool to increase the performance of your ads, while informing users of your G+ presence.

The image is a screenshot of a Google search results page for the query 'tripadvisor'. The search bar at the top shows the Google logo and the search term 'tripadvisor'. Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for 'Web', 'Images', 'Maps', 'Shopping', 'News', 'More', and 'Search tools'. The main search results area shows a snippet for 'TripAdvisor.com - TripAdvisor' with a social annotation overlay. The annotation is a circular callout containing the text 'TripAdvisor.com - TripAdvisor' and '1,510,029 followers'. To the right of the search results, there is a knowledge panel for 'TripAdvisor LLC' with a 'Follow' button, indicating '1,512,303 followers on Google+'. Below the knowledge panel, there is a section for 'Stock price: TRIP (NASDAQ) \$70.52 -3.03 (-4.12%)' and 'Recent posts'.

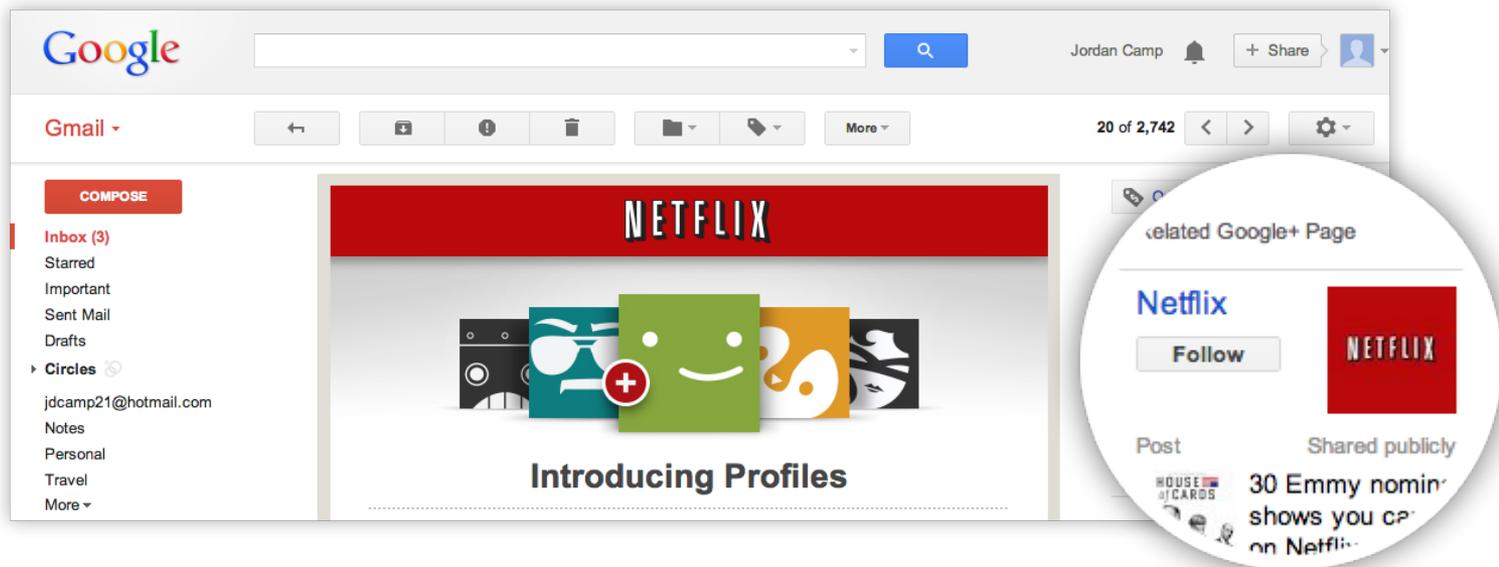
Grow Followers

Grow followers directly from Gmail

Tips & Strategies

Follow buttons, embedded in your Emails

If you have a verified Google+ page people who receive emails from your domain can now follow your Google+ page directly from their inbox. Recent Google+ posts can also surface, helping customers (and prospective customers) find and engage with your product.



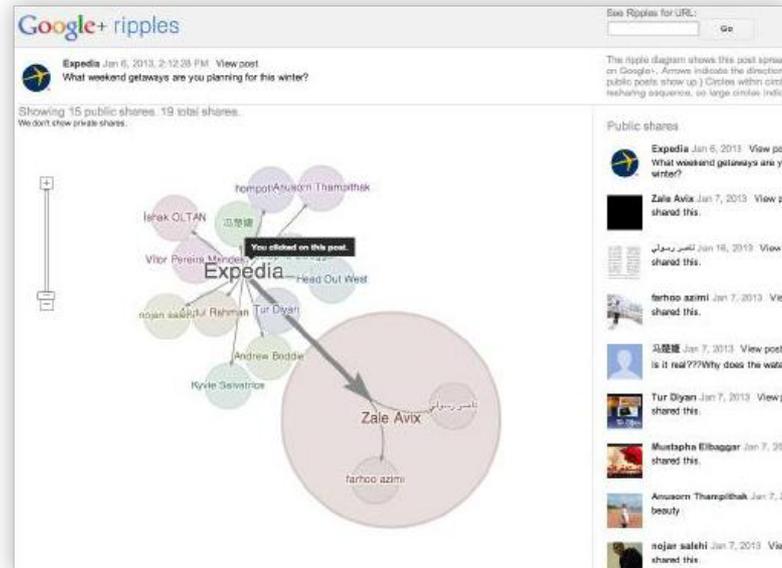
PRO TIP:

Recent posts can also surface next to your email messages. Another reason to keep your Google+ page content fresh.

Identify brand advocates who can help you grow Tips & Strategies

See who is spreading the word and just how far your message travels

Google+ Ripples creates an interactive graphic of the public shares of any public post or URL on Google+. It shows you how your post has rippled through the network to help you discover new and interesting people to follow, and find out who your brand advocates are. Learn more about [Ripples](#).



PRO TIP:

When you know who is giving you the best engagement you can create a strategy to partner with them and further amplify your message.

03 Grow Follower Checklist

- Add buttons and badges for reach and engagement
 - Google+ Badges and Buttons allow users to find and share your content across the web
- Social annotations
 - Harness the power of recommendations
- Grow followers with Gmail
 - Embed follow buttons in your emails
- Brand advocates can help grow your follower base
 - Tap into those who are helping to spread your message

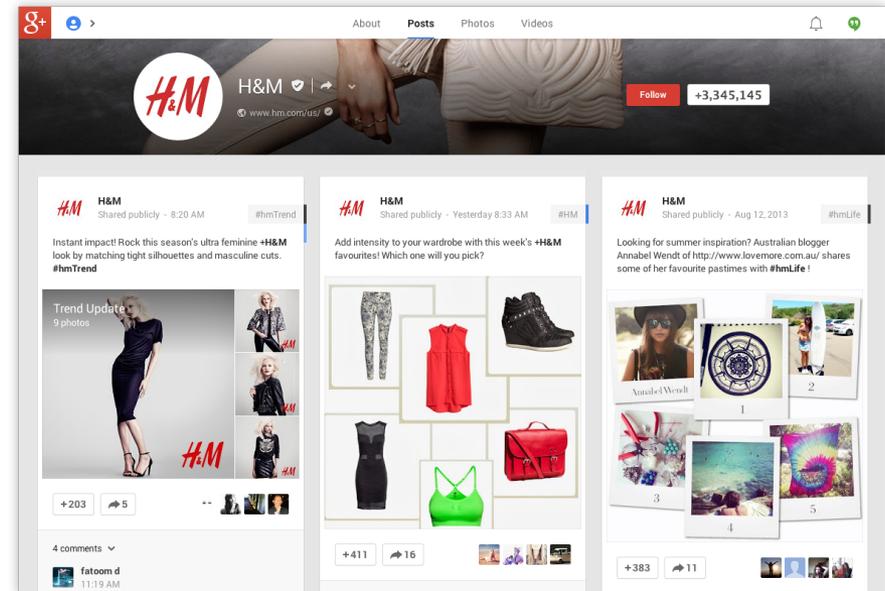
04 Drive Engagement

Increase the likelihood of engagement with compelling content

When you post great content, people are more likely to comment, share, follow, and +1 your posts

Keep this in mind:

- **Personalized comments** increase engagement.
- Posing questions generate about **90% more engagement** than the average text post.
- **Think timely.** Followers are more likely to engage with topics that are already top of mind, such as current events, holidays or news.
- **Include Offers** in your posts. Followers can then reshare the offer with their friends and spread the word for you.



PRO TIP:

Be visual. Videos and photos are more likely to get a response (comment, +1, reshare) than a written post.

Reach marketing objectives with Hangouts on Air Tips & Strategies

Host **Hangouts On Air** for product launches, product education, focus groups, customer support, grow customer loyalty, or to build brand awareness, -- to name a few.

To celebrate their 125th anniversary, [National Geographic](#) hosted an epic, 7 continent Hangout On Air. 13 famous explorers -- from primatologist Jane Goodall to ocean explorer Bob Ballard -- participated.

Results were impressive:

- **22,000** Hangout views
- **10,000** +1s
- **2,450** Google+ Event RSVPs
- **1,500** reshares
- **1,300** comments
- **250+** press mentions
- **150,000** new followers



PRO TIP:

UK brand Top Shop took Hangouts to all all new level. See how they redefined the future of fashion via an HOA [here](#).

Get the most traction from your Hangouts on Air

Tips & Strategies

A little preparation goes a long way to ensure a successful Hangout On Air

Lead the conversation

HOAs are conversations. Figure out what you want to talk about and with whom. Have a moderator if possible to keep things moving.

Announce your Hangout On Air

Post across all social media and get people excited. [Hype My Hangout](#) is an easy way to create a 15-second video to promote your HOA.

Select participants

Although an unlimited number can watch only 10 people can participate in a Hangout On Air. Choose your participants to get a cross-section of people and ideas.

Pick a location

Broadcast your HOA from a quiet spot that's well lit and one that has plenty of bandwidth.

Stream your HOA

Stream your HOA on your Google+ page, YouTube channel and your website. You can share the URL to stream your HOA on other sites. Use #hashtags across other social platforms to increase discoverability.

Make your HOA live longer

Keep promoting your HOA. Your Hangout On Air will automatically post to your YouTube channel. Let your followers know where they can view the Hangout On Air, ask them to subscribe to your YouTube channel and invite them to watch and reshare.



PRO TIP:

Drive awareness and viewership promoting your Hangout On Air across all social media.

Drive Engagement

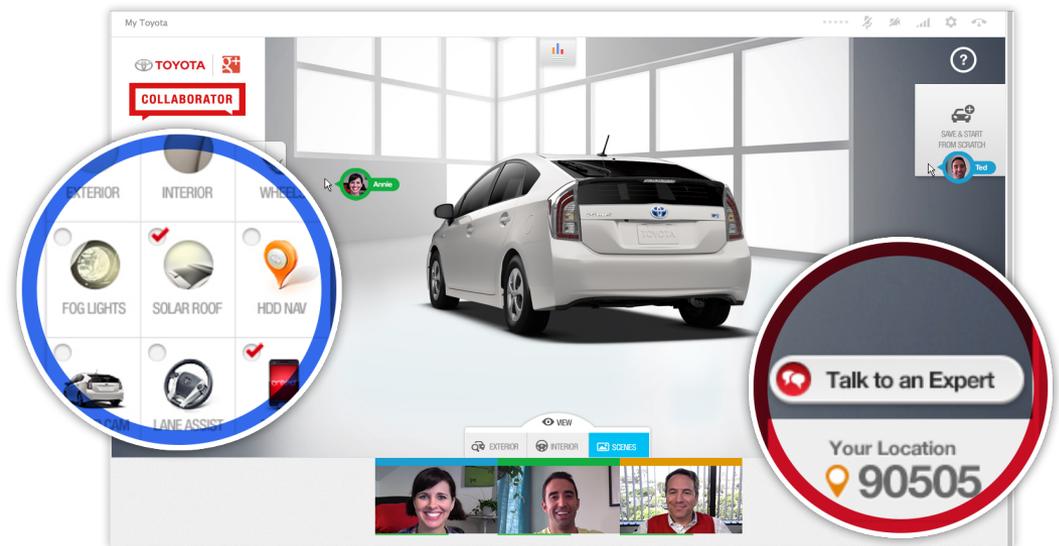
Create a one of a kind experience with your own Hangout application

Tips & Strategies

Customized Hangout Apps create a memorable experience

Toyota used a custom Hangout application -- the Toyota Collaborator -- to allow customers to log on with their friends or family in a Hangout to build their new vehicle. They could add features, change colors and take a virtual test spin.

Check out the [demo video](#).



PRO TIP:

Anything that can fit in an iframe, works in a Hangout App. [Here's](#) a fun tool to help you build your own app.

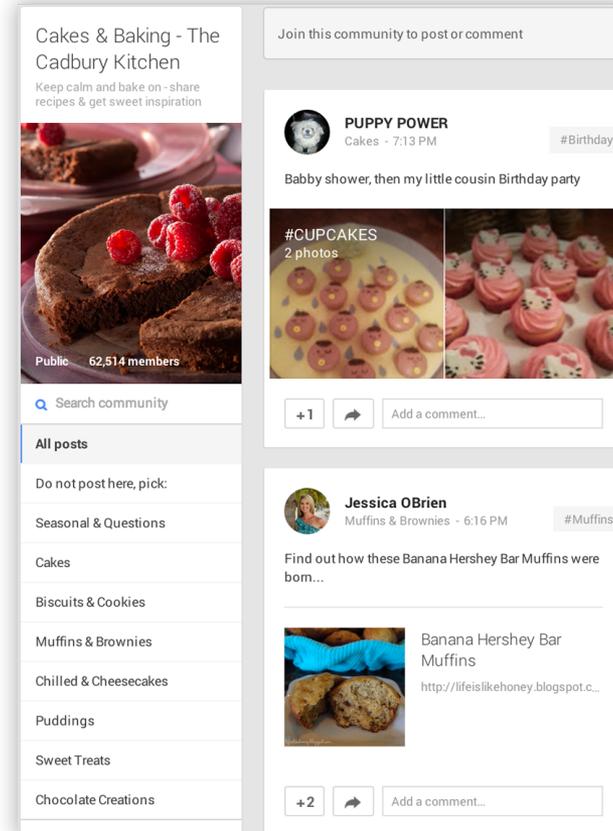
Provide expert advice to your consumers from a Community

Communities help users discover recommendations for experts and brands

Google+ Communities are where people gather and talk about shared interests. Join a community to meet people with shared passions or create a new community where people can connect around common topics.

Communities are great places to listen to your audience. What they have to say is invaluable.

For example, if you're an apparel company join a community of female distance runners and add to their conversation. Or start your own community. Cadbury started a community for bakers and chefs.



 **PRO TIP:** A post in a community generates more engagement (+1s, comments, reshares) than on the stream.

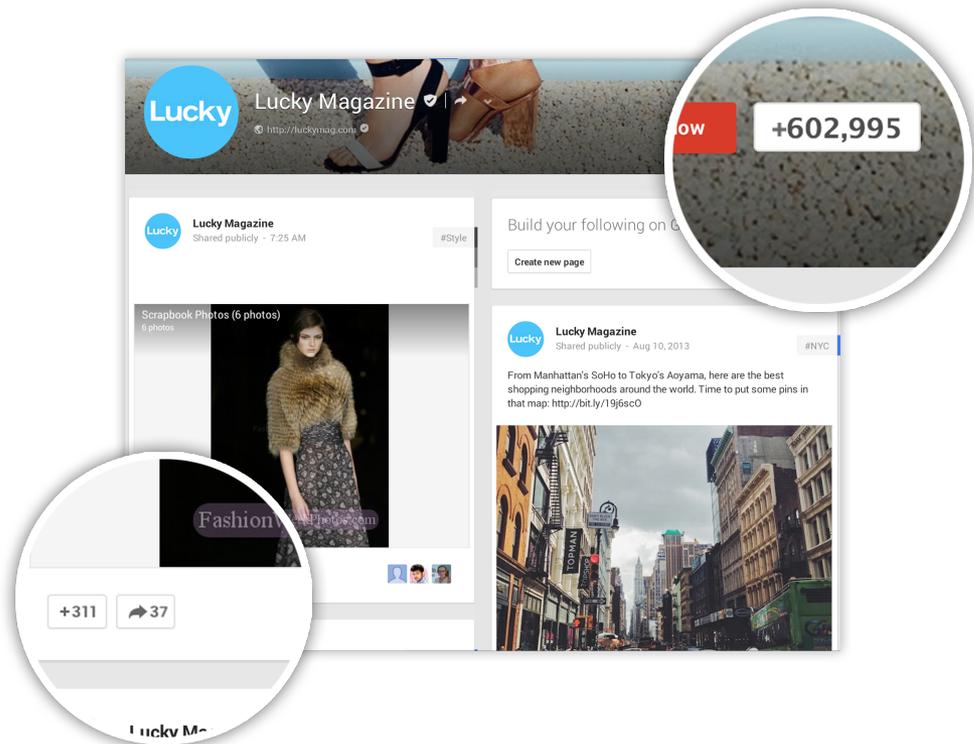
Host an Event to engage consumers

Tips & Strategies

Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event On Air to allow fashion forward fans to get a live look at New York Fashion Week. Bloggers, designers, and editors uploaded and shared hundreds of photos from Fashion Week. The response? Huge, they more than doubled their followers because of the event.

How They Did It:

- Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event, inviting 20 fashion influencers to post photos and comments live from each event in New York.
- They broadcast 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 wider audience.
- Lucky also promoted the event with posts on their Google+ page.



[Read more.](#)



PRO TIP:

Host an Event to launch a new product, gather feedback, or make an announcement.

Drive Engagement

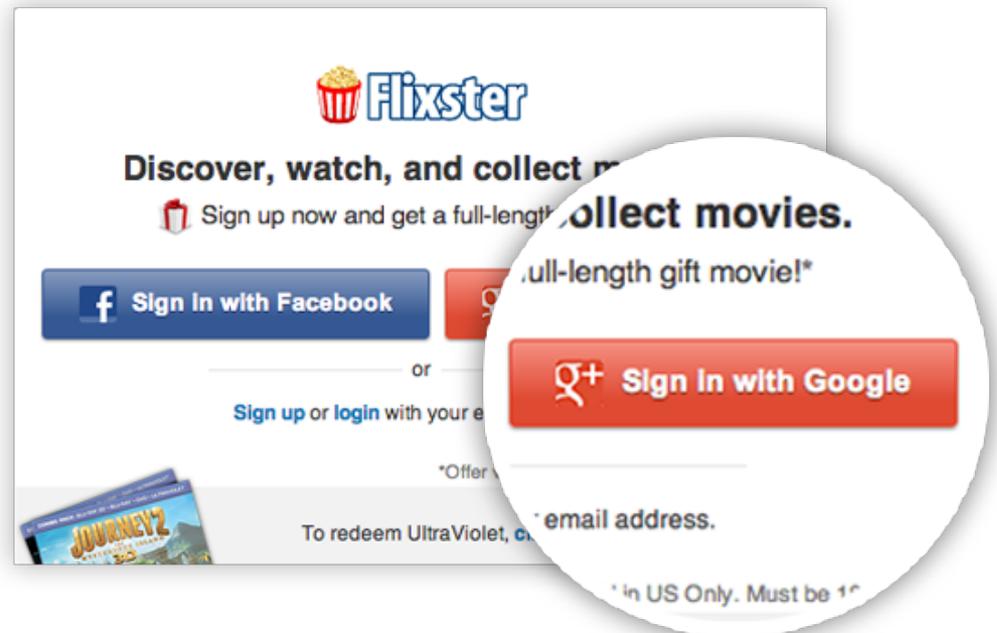
Drive app installs and personalize experiences

Tips & Strategies

Google+ Sign-in is a simple, trusted way to let customers sign-in to your website or app with their Google identity.

Build even more engaging experiences across desktop and mobile.

Works on Android, iOS or from the web.



**PRO
TIP:**

With Sign-In web users can instantly download and install your app to their Android device.

04 Drive Engagement Checklist

- Increase engagement with compelling content
When you post great content, people are more likely to comment, share, follow, and +1 your posts
- Prepare for your HOA pre and post event
A little preparation goes a long way to ensure a successful Hangout On Air
- Provide expert advice to consumers
Have real conversation with your audience
- Reach marketing objectives via Hangouts on Air
Connect face-to-face using Hangouts and Hangouts On Air
- Create a one of a kind experience
Customized Hangout Apps create a one-of-a-kind experience
- Host an Event for seamless engagement
Plan an event and create a slick, customized invitation that you can send to followers or the public
- Drive app installs and personalize experiences
A simple, trusted way to let customers sign-in to your website or app with their Google identity

Thank You

The Google+ Team



Case Studies

Spotlight: Product launch

Tips & Strategies

Launch new products with Hangouts On Air

[Verizon Wireless](#) launched their new Droid phone using a Google+ event and hosted a live unboxing using Hangouts On Air.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google+ post from Verizon Wireless. The post is dated November 19, 2012, and is shared publicly. The main text of the post reads: "Today's the day. Watch our live unboxing Hangout on Air with PhoneDog at 9AM PT / 12PM ET and check out the Droid DNA in full detail. <http://social.vzw.com/sal>". Below the text is a promotional graphic for the event. The graphic features the Verizon logo in the top right corner, the text "WITNESS THE UNBOXING OF THE NEWEST 4G DROID" in large, bold letters, and "LIVE VIA HANGOUT WITH PHONE DOG" in white text. The event date and time, "9AM PT / 12PM EST Monday, November 19th", are displayed in red. The Verizon and Google+ logos are also present in the bottom right corner of the graphic. At the bottom of the post, there are interaction buttons showing "+42" likes and "5" shares, along with a row of profile pictures of users who interacted with the post.

Spotlight: Focus groups

Host customer focus groups via Hangouts On Air

[Cadbury](#) uses Hangouts On Air in innovative and creative ways. For example, they shipped a new flavor of chocolate bar called Bubbly Mint to a focus group of fans in their “taster’s circle.” Then, they arranged for the tasters to try it together, all at the same time, in a Hangout On Air.



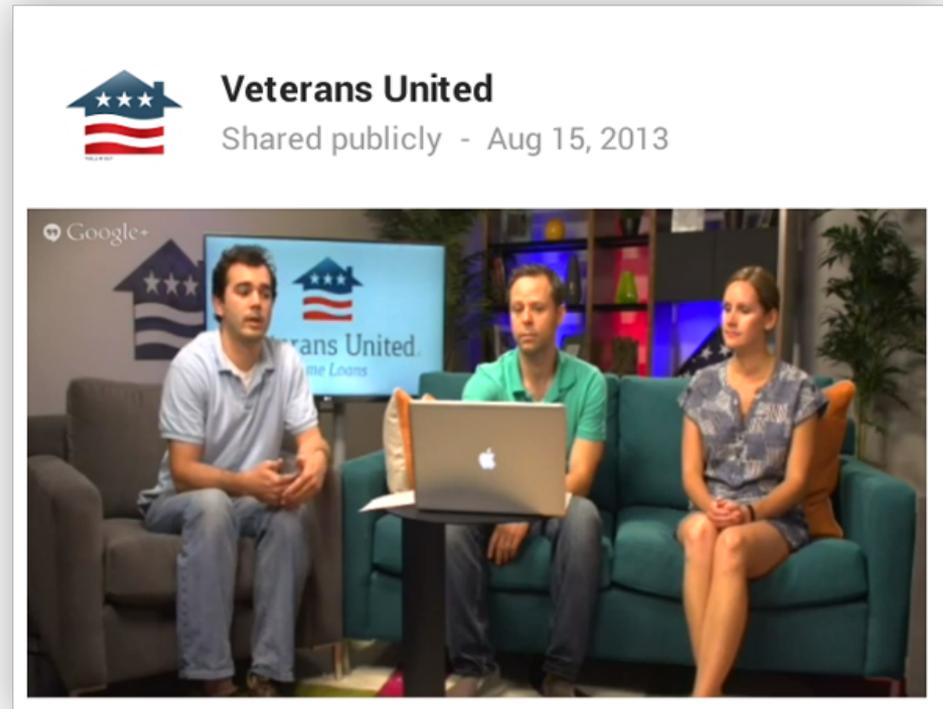
Spotlight: Education

Tips & Strategies

Educate your audience via Hangouts On Air

[Veterans United](#) hosts regular Hangouts On Air to engage veterans and educate them on loans, job applications and benefits.

They've also developed a [Hangout hub](#) to educate veterans on how to use Google+.

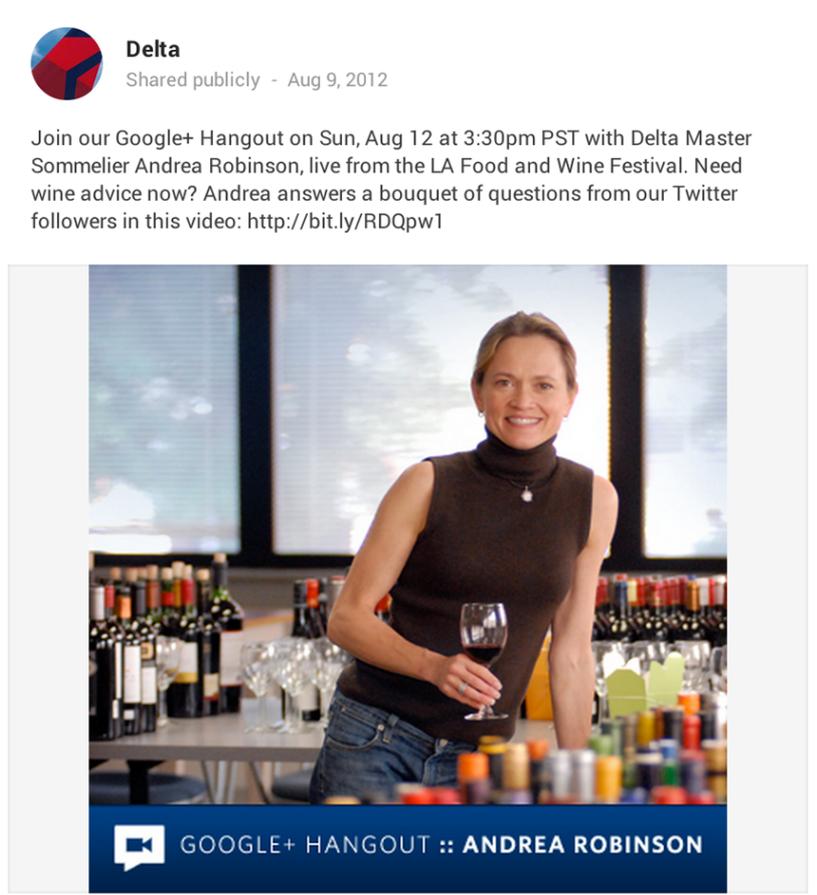


Spotlight: Exclusive content

Tips & Strategies

Give a peek behind-the-scenes via Hangouts On Air

[Delta](#) introduced their wine loving customers to Master Sommelier Andrea Robinson via Hangouts On Air. Robinson assessed and rated wines served in Delta's Business Elite class. The group recommended possible food and wine pairings and suggested their top picks for future flights.



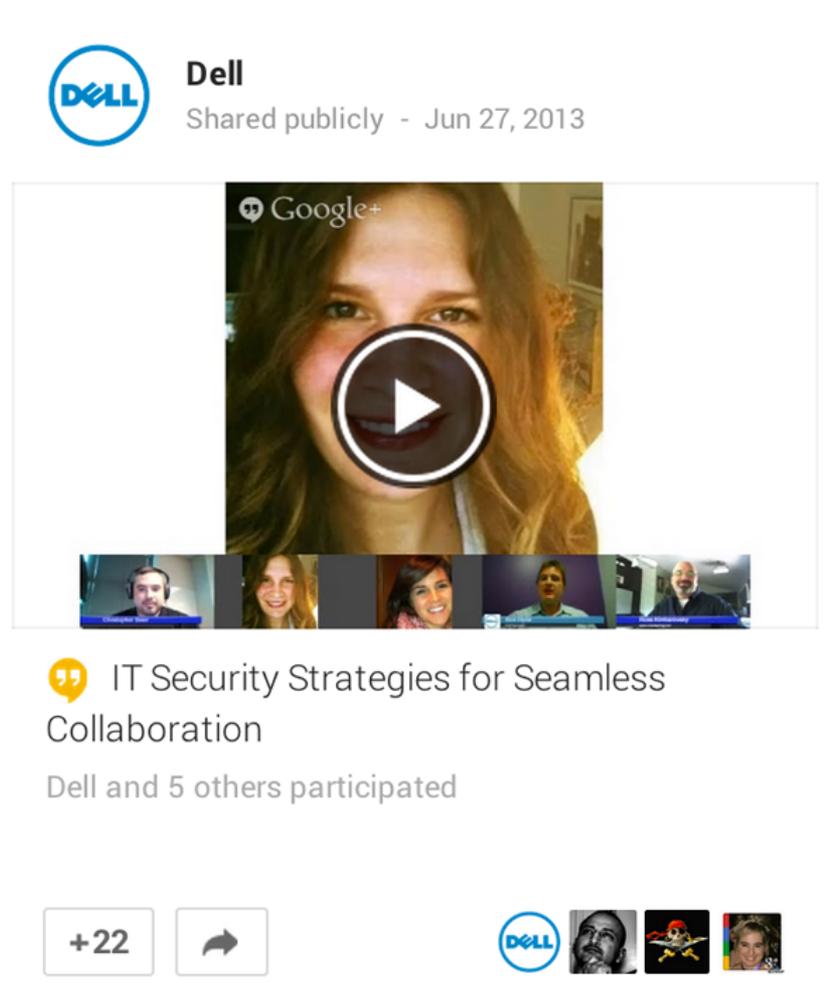
The image is a screenshot of a social media post from Delta. At the top left is the Delta logo, a stylized globe in red, white, and blue. To its right, the text reads "Delta" in bold, followed by "Shared publicly - Aug 9, 2012". Below this is a paragraph of text: "Join our Google+ Hangout on Sun, Aug 12 at 3:30pm PST with Delta Master Sommelier Andrea Robinson, live from the LA Food and Wine Festival. Need wine advice now? Andrea answers a bouquet of questions from our Twitter followers in this video: <http://bit.ly/RDQpw1>". Below the text is a photograph of Andrea Robinson, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a black sleeveless top and blue jeans, smiling and holding a glass of red wine. She is standing behind a bar with various bottles and glasses. At the bottom of the photo is a dark blue banner with a white speech bubble icon containing a camera, followed by the text "GOOGLE+ HANGOUT :: ANDREA ROBINSON".

Spotlight: Customer support

Tips & Strategies

Provide customer support via Hangouts On Air

[Dell](#) has hosted more than 50 Hangouts On Air – most of which focus on customer service. During these friendly, lively Hangouts On Air viewers can troubleshoot any technical problems with an official Dell service rep.



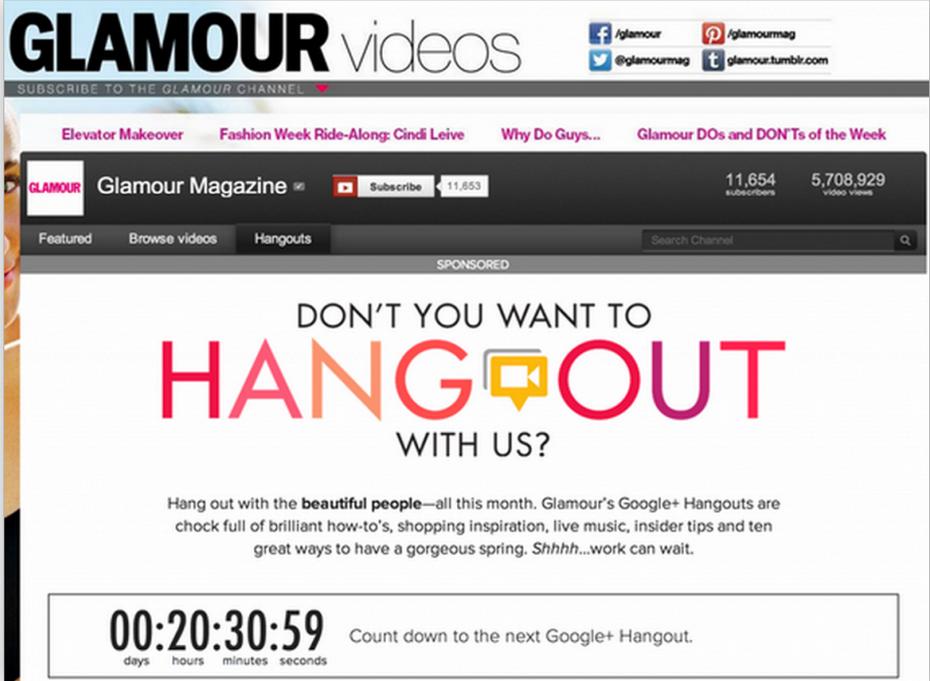
The image is a screenshot of a Google+ Hangout On Air post. At the top left is the Dell logo. To its right, the text reads "Dell" and "Shared publicly - Jun 27, 2013". Below this is a large video player showing a woman's face with a play button overlay. Underneath the video player is a horizontal strip of five smaller video thumbnails showing other participants. Below the thumbnails, the text says "IT Security Strategies for Seamless Collaboration" and "Dell and 5 others participated". At the bottom left, there is a "+22" button and a share icon. At the bottom right, there are four small profile pictures, including the Dell logo and three other individuals.

Spotlight: Customer appreciation

Tips & Strategies

Reward and build loyalty via Hangouts On Air

To highlight its upcoming May fashion issue, [Glamour Magazine](#) hosted a series of Hangouts On Air with readers to discuss fashion topics. This campaign drove brand awareness, loyalty and reader retention as subscribers enjoyed an alternative way to enjoy Glamour's fashion content.



The image shows a screenshot of the Glamour Magazine YouTube channel page. At the top, the channel name "GLAMOUR videos" is displayed in large, bold letters. Below the name, there are social media links for Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. The channel's subscriber count is 11,653, and the video view count is 5,708,929. The page features a navigation menu with options like "Featured", "Browse videos", and "Hangouts". A sponsored video is prominently displayed with the title "DON'T YOU WANT TO HANGOUT WITH US?". The video description reads: "Hang out with the beautiful people—all this month. Glamour's Google+ Hangouts are chock full of brilliant how-to's, shopping inspiration, live music, insider tips and ten great ways to have a gorgeous spring. Shhhh...work can wait." At the bottom of the video player, there is a countdown timer showing "00:20:30:59" (days, hours, minutes, seconds) and the text "Count down to the next Google+ Hangout."

Reach brand advocates via Search

Tips & Strategies

An active Google+ page surfaces recent posts so the right users see your posted content at just the right moment.

The image shows a Google search for "H&M". A circular callout highlights the search term "H&M". The search results include a link to the H&M website and a Google+ post. The Google+ post is titled "Go behind the scenes of +H&M's Paris fashion show adventure for a ..." and includes a video thumbnail. The post text reads: "1 day ago - Go behind the scenes of +H&M's Paris fashion show adventure for a look at the fantastic venue and amazing collection! Save the date: The Paris Show Collection ... Behind The Scenes - H&M Paris Fashion Show AW13". The Google+ profile for H&M is also visible, showing 2,975,288 followers and a "Following" button. The profile bio states: "H & M Hennes & Mauritz AB is a Swedish multinational retail-clothing company, known for its fast-fashion clothing for men, women, teenagers and children. H&M exists in 43 countries and as of 2011 employed around 94,000 people. Wikipedia". The headquarters are listed as Stockholm, Södermanland, and the founder as Erling Persson. The company was founded in 1947 in Västerås, Sweden. Below the profile, there are more recent posts, including the same video thumbnail seen in the main post. At the bottom of the search results, there are logos for other brands: Forever 21, Topshop, Bershka, and Mango.

Recent posts

Music magic! Don't miss the latest #hmLife video where we get to meet the experimental-pop band BRAINSTORM and watch them perform in Portland. 10 hours ago

Go behind the scenes of +H&M's Paris fashion show adventure for a ...

<https://plus.google.com/.../posts/TCrUvrQvaTJ>

H&M

1 day ago - Go behind the scenes of +H&M's Paris fashion show adventure for a look at the fantastic venue and amazing collection! Save the date: The Paris Show Collection ... Behind The Scenes - H&M Paris Fashion Show AW13

The hub of innovative marketing

Tips & Strategies

Develop a unique marketing campaign with Google+

TopShop, a leading fashion retailer with over 440 shops in 38 countries, offered followers exclusive access to London Fashion Week.

- Models wore HD “model cams.” Total online views were 4M.
- 2.5M views of content on YouTube and 4M views across all platforms.
- They received over 400 press mentions - from Vogue to TechCrunch.
- Customers modeled for the camera in a branded store photobooth. Photos were uploaded automatically to Google+.
- Interaction with the custom Hangout application was 11 minutes on average per attendee and saw a 52% reshare rate

BE THE



MODEL

BE THE



TEAM

BE THE



FASHION

BE THE



BUYER