

By stimulating deep engagement and quality content, Cadbury's first Google+ community attracts 20,000 bakers in less than three months



About Cadbury

- Founded in 1824
- Owned by Mondelez International
- One of the world's leading names in chocolate
- Headquartered in Bournville, Birmingham UK

Background

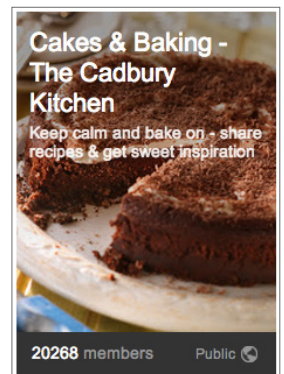
Cadbury is one of the most popular confectionary brands in the UK. With a dedicated following developed over many decades, it made sense to embrace social media as an outlet for sharing enthusiasm around this favourite British topic. Cadbury was an early adopter of Google+, and quickly became one of the most successful and prominent brands on the platform.

Community stirs passion

Having already put several Google+ features to use with excellent effect, Cadbury was keen to explore the possibilities of the latest feature to debut on the platform – communities. These allow Google+ users to build networks around shared interests, activities and passions. They can be private and by invitation only, or they can be public, allowing anyone to observe or participate.

Cadbury's inaugural community is called “**Cakes & Baking – The Cadbury Kitchen**”, and it addresses a key content area for the brand. “Although they're not part of our main marketing communications, recipes have proven to be hugely popular on our website and Google+ page, but it's always been tricky to encourage our fans to share their own creations and recipes with us,” explains Jerry Daykin, European Social Media Marketing Manager. In the span of more than one year, only about a dozen proactive recipe submissions came through the Google+ page. “But through our community we now get that every day.”

The community not only provides a perfect forum for this kind of discussion, but also offers an exceptional opportunity to garner interesting content for use outside of the community. “It can be a long and costly process to develop, test and photograph new recipes, but the community provides us with a **rich source of regular and authentic content**, which in turn we're using to drive engagement on our original Google+ page. The community feature has allowed us to become an authoritative source of information on baking on Google+ and reach a range of new consumers around the world.”



Conversation replaces broadcast

The new community has created an environment where true two-way conversation can take place. “The community is a natural extension of the #CadburyKitchen posts we used to make on our Google+ page, only now it's not just us driving the conversation but our fans too,” he observes. “It's made it into more of an authentic dialogue.”

According to Jerry, the **organic growth** of the community has exceeded expectations. “It's already evolved hugely beyond our input. We post to it once or twice a week and the community itself posts several hundred times. Some of the most engaged members regularly see recipes posted, have an attempt and then share their results a few days later. One commented that he used to bake four or five times a year, but now he's trying out one of the recipes from the community every single week.”

In the future, it seems that there is scope for the community to almost run itself. “We're definitely interested in letting some of these most engaged members have

“It quickly became apparent that communities are a powerful tool to encourage a richer dialogue with consumers.”

- Jerry Daykin, European Social Media Marketing Manager, Cadbury

Results

- One of the top 100 communities on G+
 - Over 20,000 members
 - Over 2,500 recipes posted
 - 20 interactions per post on average
 - 11 new recipes being formally developed as a result of the community member activity, all of which will be featured on the Cadbury.co.uk website
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more responsibility in the community and hopefully become official moderators. Many of them already proactively answer the questions and concerns of other community members."



Adding promotion to the mix

To facilitate discussion and browsing, Cadbury makes use of **hashtags** such as #CheesecakeWeek or #RomanticRecipeFortnight, as well as community categories including "puddings", "muffins & brownies" and the like. The fact that a clear description of the community's focus – cakes and baking – appears in the title also makes it easy for interested web users to instantly connect with the subject matter.

Because the content from the community is of high quality, it has proven an excellent resource for attracting readers from outside the community too. "Every week we look back at the new posts in the community and pick the ones that have had the best response there to post to our Google+ page. Unsurprisingly, they then tend to get great receptions when shared with our wider audience. We also post our own recipe content directly to the community first to provide exclusive content there, and then later reshare these to our page."

Whenever content is borrowed from the community page to be posted elsewhere, Jerry includes a link to the community itself. "Part of our strategy is to regularly post content from the community to our established Google+ page, and to make sure we also always post a shortened link which drives through to the community page," he explains. "As the community offers a unique experience that differs from our other more general social channels, it's also been easy to cross-promote it from those other accounts." As a further way to extend its networking, Cadbury has joined other Google+ communities too, such as the **UK Photography community**.



About Google+

Google+ brings the benefits of personal recommendations to Google Search and ads, delivering recommendations when people need them most and making it easy to start conversations with those who care about your brand. Linking your site to your page unifies your +1s across search, ads, your Google +Page, and your homepage. Google +Pages let you share your content with new audiences and connect with them in more engaging ways. To learn more about Google +Pages, visit: www.google.com/+business

A proven recipe for success

These measures have clearly paid off, with the response to the community proving much greater than the Cadbury team imagined. "We were hoping to build a community of a few hundred bakers to help drive content for our main page, so we have been amazed that **over 20,000 people** have actually joined the community and that **over 2,500 recipes** have been posted," Jerry says. "We're really excited that the engagement around each post is really starting to grow too."

So what's next? "We're hoping to continue the success we've had already and to get into a good rhythm of feeding the content into our main page. We've been thinking about a cooking hangout, and we're hoping to run regular themed weeks or fortnights within the community to encourage fans to then select their favourite recipes each time."

