Social Media

8 Things Every Technology Company Should Know About Google+

Publitek Ltd
18 Brock Street, Bath BA1 2LW, UK
Tel: **+44 (0) 1225 470000**

8 Things Every Technology Company Should Know About Google+

Google+, the social network created by search and advertising powerhouse Google back in June 2011, was their fourth attempt to diminish the market share of Facebook, the largest social network both at the time and currently. After multiple attempts at developing a social sphere with Google Buzz, Google Friend Connect and Orkut, the first invitation-only accounts were set up in 2011 but were quickly opened up due to the demand for new accounts.

To date Google+ has 300 million 'active' users. However, unlike Facebook and

Twitter, Google's definition of 'active' users covers members that use any one of their services - for example YouTube and Gmail - not just Google+.

Considering the significant importance the Google search engine places on content, and how current features of Google+ such as the Authorship tool create credibility for content authors and creators, the feel of this social network is more of a social layer that spans all of the services Google provides.

1. Personal Pages
Google+ has been shown to increase search engine ranking. Creating a personal Google+ page provides credibility to your content allowing authors to be accredited and authorised as reliable, quality content generators. Once accredited, Google sees this as a more reliable source of information and in turn content attributed to you is likely to feature higher up a search engine results page.

2. Business Pages
Alongside a personal page, there is a feature where you can create a company page, similar to other networking sites such as LinkedIn. This is a valuable resource for your business, shown to build brand awareness and boost search engine optimisation efforts.

3. Searchable Content
Google+ contains a micro blogging style platform, in a manner similar to Tumblr, to which you can submit original content or share content created by others. Google+ also provides the ability to search for relevant information.

When thinking about the content you post to each page, keep your business page related to your company and the industry you are within. Personal pages can have more freedom to post general thought, interests or opinions - however you must be aware that you are the face of your brand and everything you post could impact upon brand perception.

publitek
marketing communications

4. #Hashtags and Circles

Hashtags, allow you to more easily share content with those interested in those topics. Circles enable you to segment people and pages you follow based upon interest, sector or any other categorisation you require – and you can add profiles to multiple circles; someone might be interested in #SEO, #inboundmarketing and electronics, for instance.

Similar to other social networks such as Twitter, Google+ has the ability to collate popular hashtags into trending topics. This enables users to target specific topics that are currently in the news

5. RIPPLE

One useful tool contained within the Google+ platform is the RIPPLE feature. This allows users to search and view the profiles of people that are highly active and engage regularly with your content. Using the ripple effect, you can view the profiles of those people that interact with them and gain insight into profiles that enjoy, share and +1 (similar to a Facebook 'like') content that would be applicable to your business or services.

This is particularly useful for companies serving niche areas as it enables you to identify industry influencers that can act as brand advocates and champions.

6. Community

A Google+ community is one aspect of Google+ that has many similarities to forums and message boards. These are areas where you can submit questions or simply initiate a discussion to interact with your audience. If there is not a community already created that addresses the topic you want to be known for then you have the facility to create your own - perhaps start by inviting your clients or industry peers to join.

If you are interested in finding out more about these pages, some of the more popular community technology pages that you may wish to join are as follows:

- Women techmakers
- Tech news
- Tech, security & social
- Tech & coffee

7. Hangouts

As with any social network, you are connected to many people that you can communicate with at a moment's notice. However, face-to-face voice and video communication are still lacking from, or implemented poorly in, most platforms.

This is where the Google Hangoutsteps in to fill the void, and it is open to everyone with a Google account. Google Hangouts offer face-to-face video calls over the internet, in real time and completely free of charge.

So how could you use this feature for your company? A common use is for first round screening interviews or for interviewing candidates that are further afield. It is also a great way to inform and engage with customers and prospects and host interactive webinars.

8. Google Brand Pages and Google+ Local Pages

On the 3rd June 2014 Google released a feature that allowed verified local page data to merge with an existing brand page, to become a Google+ local page.

The benefit of this feature can be seen when a user that is starting out on Google+ creates a brand page (mistakenly) for their location-based business. If this page has been actively viewed and interacted with they may have a number of followers, posts and reviews that they would like to import into their local page, which Google+ automatically creates using Map and local data.

The merger of the data from a brands (or other none location-based) pages would combine local data such as verification, reviews, map pin and location with the existing brand page to create a verified Google+ local page.

While this combination of data is a way to transplant the local features to the established brand page, it is not a feature to merge the two pages. It is solely for the transplant of data. The original verified local page would become a none local page, whilst your original brand page would become your new verified local page. The only data aspect you would not be able to transfer across would be the original local page followers due to a user trust issue that Google implements. A quick solution would be to reach out to those followers from your new account and notify them of the change.

The Future of Google+

The future of Google+ is as unclear as it has ever been. As a stand-alone social network, it is currently lagging far behind the industry leader, with less than a quarter of the 1.28 billion active users that Facebook has. However with the adoption of Google+ as a 'social layer' covering all its services, and the Authorship system adding credibility to content, the future is bright for Google+.

With the Google+ layer already collecting data that spans app usage (on the web and on Android and iOS devices) internet searches and click-throughs, as well data about the discussions you engage with and your personal information, Google is able to build a complete picture of your personal web habits.

In the short term, this has enabled the search giant to provide personalised search results based upon what Google already knows about you – and provide suggestions as to what you might be searching for.

It is not beyond the realms of possibility that, in the near future, Google+ could be used to provide personalised news feeds full of content from sources all over the web that users will have a high probability of engaging with. Whether users will appreciate this level of Orwellian oversight in return for the convenience of personalised content and ad feeds is, of course, still to be seen.

publitek
marketing communications

Need help with
Google+ marketing?

To find out, contact:

Bob Jones
CEO

bob.jones@publitek.com
Europe: **+44 1225 470000**
US: **+1 408 786 5151**

Publitek is the world's leading content marketing and technology PR agency for the B2B electronics industry. By complementing our in-house capabilities with proven partners, we offer a multi-lingual, global capability encompassing both corporate and technical communications.

Publitek Ltd,
18 Brock Street,
Bath, BA1 2LW
Tel: **+44 (0) 1225 470000**

www.publitek.com