

A Comprehensive Study of Content and Brand Visibility on Google+

by Dan Petrovic

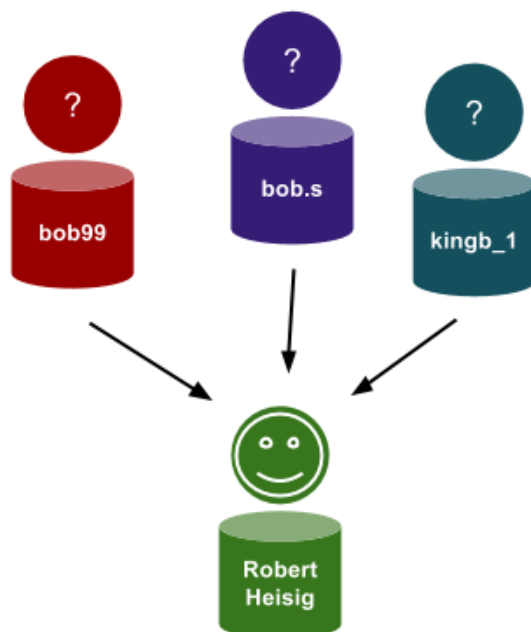
I tried Google+ but it looks like nobody is using it yet, why should I spend extra time on yet another social network?

Understanding Google+

Google has been aggressively attempting to diversify away from search. Over the years they've come up with a number of promising products in a sea of failed experiments. When Larry Page took charge of Google's direction once again, we witnessed a sudden shut down of unviable products. What followed was profound integration of Google's products services into a single unifying platform.

At the centre of all that action was Google+ which now fuses most of their key products and services including Search, AdWords, Gmail, YouTube, Drive, Picasa, Places, Android, Chrome, Maps and Earth.

Online Identity, Selective Sharing and Deep Web



A good portion of content on Google+ is selectively shared, which has lead many marketers and journalists into writing “ghost town” type articles, only to show their own lack of understanding of how Google+ really works.

An example of this phenomenon could be a user with multiple interests or languages. They may choose to share certain posts with specific circles based

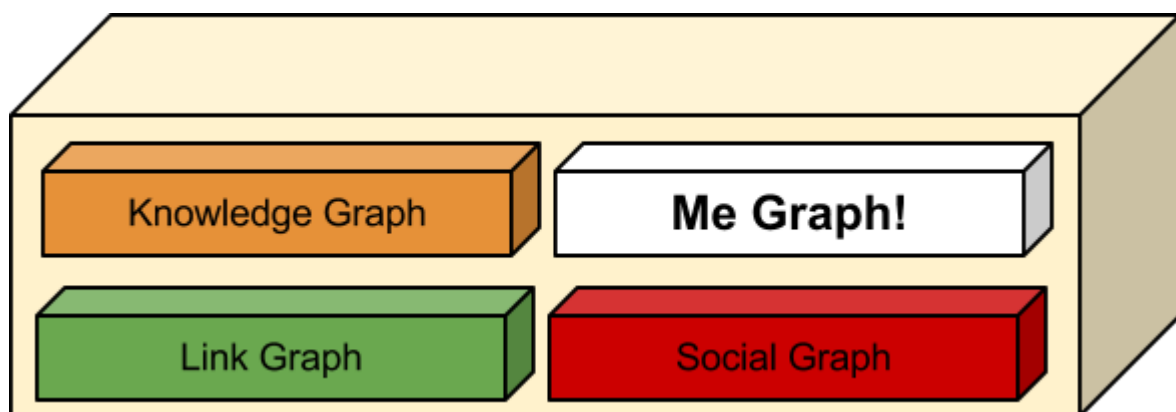
on language or topic. Selectively shared posts are not be visible to all users or search engines, but do appear in Google’s personalised search results for those in appropriate circles.

Google+ wants our real names but short of asking everyone for a copy of their ID on sign up, there is no way to tell if I’m really “Dan Petrovic” or “Hannah Blair”. I’ve been recently told by a Googler that from an engineering point of view, this isn’t really an issue.

The problem is in canonicalisation of individuals. One can have many aliases and nicknames on the web which leads to entity fragmentation.

Search engines have a hard time dealing with this problem. Closest we’ve ever been to real identity on the web might be Facebook profiles. Facebook’s deep web, however, remains permanently out of Google’s reach. Twitter is not playing ball either. So Google+ solves yet another problem and that is the one of a clean social graph. Even if your Google account name is not your real one, if you use it consistently across different platforms you give search engines something they can work with. Have you used “Sign in with Google” in the past? If so then you’ve already helped Google understand who you are outside of Googleverse itself.

There’s also the notion of the “index of one” or as I call it *mendex* which completes Google as an ecosystem and takes the search engine to the next level. We’re seeing glimpses of anticipation-based, query-less results in Google Now.



More Google knows about us, better they can serve us. This of course does include better and more efficient ad targeting at the same time. The right place and the right time? Add the right context to that and you have a winner. An ad for a local restaurant pops up while you’re on your way to the office from a meeting around lunch time, the restaurant was chosen based on the proximity, eating habits and reviews by people in your circles.

In summary Google+ is Google’s:

- Deep web
- Social network
- Product unification platform
- Online identity service

Organic Virality

When Lady Gaga or Mashable post stuff on Google+ it immediately receives hundreds of +1s, comments and reshares due to the number of people who have them in circles. Posts like that often end up in the “Hot & Recommended” section, propelling it even further, perpetuating the effect and their status. This behaviour is predictable and uninteresting.

One phenomenon that really fascinates me is **organic virality**, or in other words, when ordinary people and brands make a big splash with a special piece of content. Although not the only platform (Reddit is also a good one), Google+ seems to enable great content to be seen by many through a whole array of interesting mechanisms.

As a marketer, I’m fascinated by these ‘content propellers’ and more importantly by specific qualities or content which goes viral on its own merit and not because it was seeded by an influencer.

I will now present two such cases, one for [Dejan SEO page](#) and one for [my personal profile post](#).

Case 1: Commercial Content

Here is one “uncharacteristically successful” [post](#) with signals many times over that which I consider an average interaction on our page’s content. An average post by Dejan SEO page is seen by approximately 2000 people from which 20-30 may engage in some way. A quarter of a million impressions represents a significant deviation from the norm.

Dejan SEO
Shared publicly · 14 Aug 2013

YES! YES! YES!
Source code search engine: <http://nerdydata.com/>

226,740 Impressions

A Search Engine for Source Code

Type a keyword, HTML, CSS, and JavaScript

SEARCH

</> Search HTML
Find Backlinks
Track Competitors
Generate Leads

Try it free!

+256 451

Pro Tip: Image posts contain one valuable piece of statistics other post formats do not, impressions. So if you're keen to see how many people will see your post on Google+ then share in an image mode.

Danny Sullivan
Shared publicly · 11:10 #SMX

*Amit Singhal *Matt Cutts and I in a *Google Glass selfie on stage at #SMX -- come on Google+ folks we want to make it the most shared thing on Google+ ever :) #throughglass

+96 40

Share Tag people Slideshow More

Danny Sullivan

*Amit Singhal *Matt Cutts and I in a *Google Glass selfie on stage at #SMX -- come on Google+ folks we want to make it the most shared thing on Google+ ever :) #throughglass

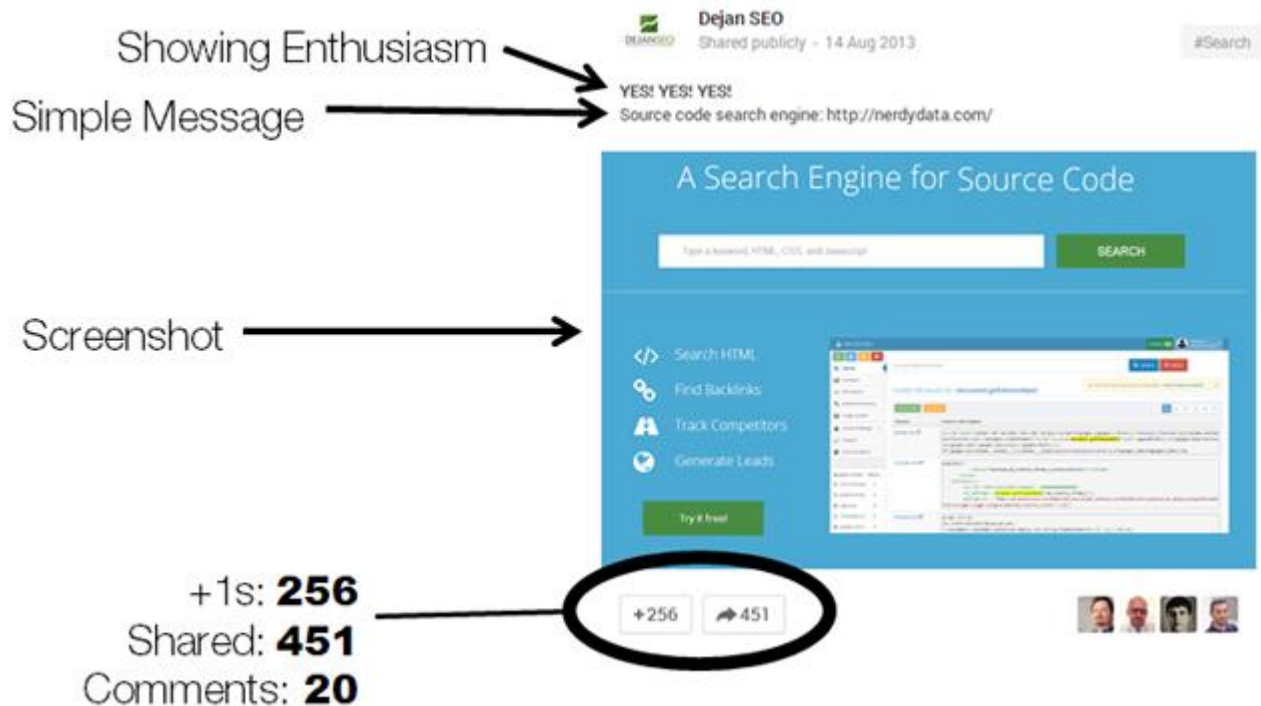
Amit Singhal
Danny Sullivan
Matt Cutts

Photo details

Date taken 11/03/2014 17:07
Dimensions 2528 x 1856
File name 20140311_170716_106.gp
File size 876.34K
Camera Glass 1
Focal Length 2.95 mm
Exposure 1/75
F Number 5/2.40
ISO 225
Camera make Google
Flash Off
Exposure Bias 0.00EV
Views 47768

Impressions (Including Reshares)

I analysed this post in detail in hope to understand why it went viral. Naturally it all starts from the content itself, the story had to be exciting enough to start with. Being interesting alone is not enough in most cases as many potentially viral posts simply die out in its infancy while other, more influential channels may hit the critical mass instead.



Showing Enthusiasm

I've noticed that posts in which I show enthusiasm and excitement tends to do better. Examples: *YES! Finally! WOW! OMG! Whoa!*

Short and Simple

Simple, shorter post messages tend to trigger wider reach in terms of +1s and reshares, while longer posts often see more activity in the comments section.

Image Sharing

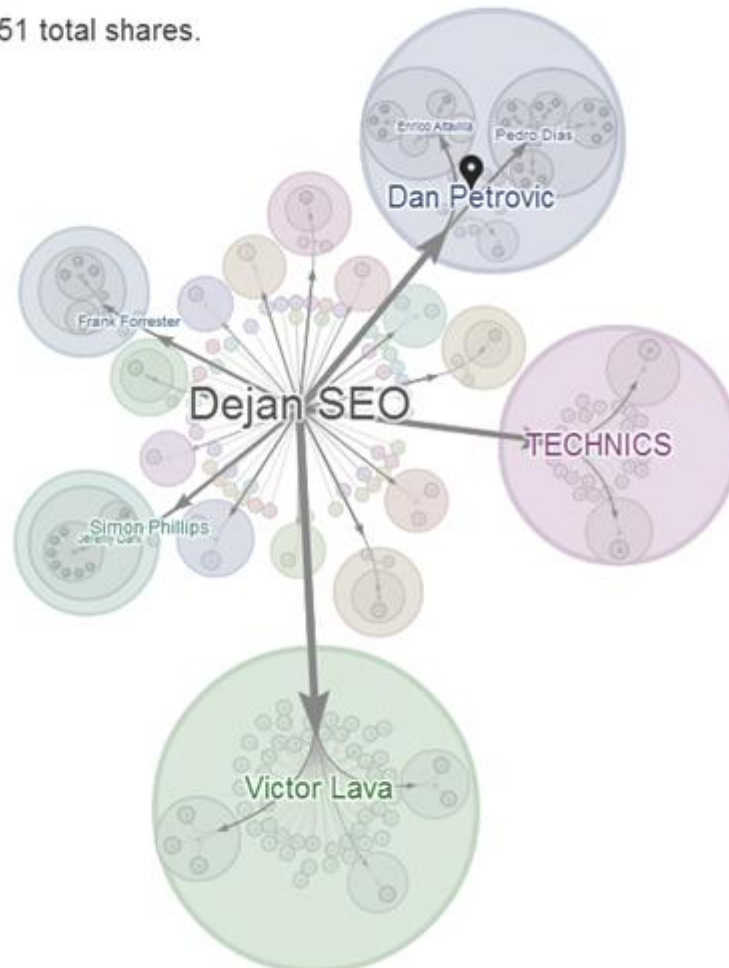
Google+ has just the right amount of 'pinterestness' to it that it can safely be called a visual social platform. Some of the most followed users on Google+ are photographers and top posts by user engagement are almost always image shares. Knowing this, and the fact that I get the impression data, I chose to include a screenshot from Nerdy Data instead of sharing it as a link. There is a debate whether Google+ purposely promotes image shares in comparison to other formats or the effect we're seeing with image shares is purely human nature. One thing is for sure, image posts tend to do rather well on Google+.

Having great news, being excited and sharing a photo of it still doesn't answer my question. Why did this post go viral?

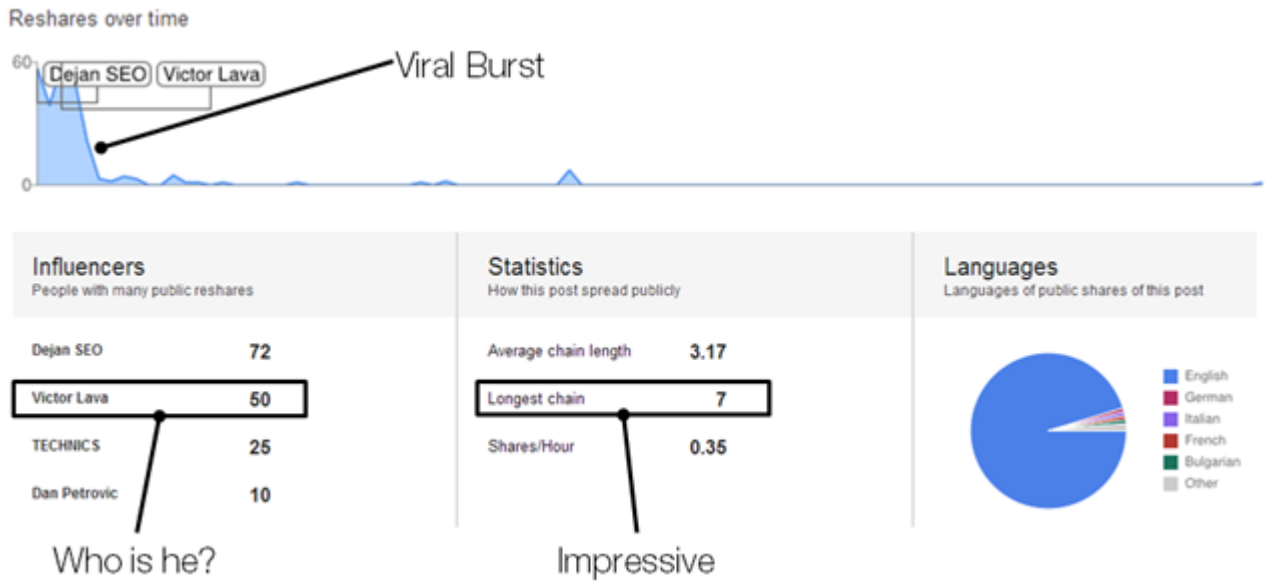
Google+ Ripples

Ripples are one of my favourite methods of investigating content visibility and distribution on Google+. In the example below we're seeing three main influencers: TECHNICS, Victor Lava and myself. There are also several other, smaller share clusters.

261 public shares / 451 total shares.
We don't show private shares.



We're seeing a sharp viral burst and rapid fall with the longest chain at an impressive seven consecutive shares. On average I see about 2-3 consecutive reshares. Primary language among those who shared this post was English.



TECHNICS having been one of the driving factors is hardly a surprise considering their profile strength. The page has 180,000,000 views, 120,000 followers and an incredible engagement score of +900,000 leading to constant presence in the “Hot & Recommended” section.

Victor Lava, however, was a surprise. With only 536 followers he made as big a splash as TECHNICS. The key to his influence was the membership in the HTML5 community which at the time had more than 120,000 members. The post resonated within the community rendering Mr. Lava a sensational influencer on the ripples graph.

Shame he didn't get his name attributed to all the reshares which followed. Or is it?

Pro Tip: If you have a great piece of content share it as your page first (or whichever asset you're looking to promote).



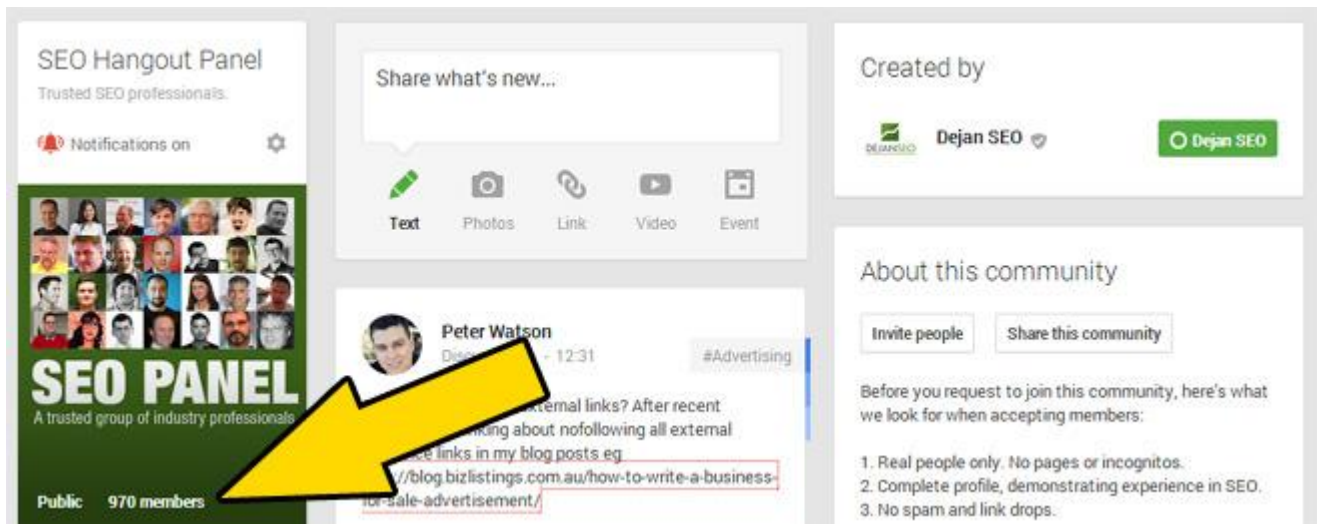
Every reshare of the original post will then contain your brand name, a link to your page and a hovercard. This can lead to brand discovery, brand reinforcement and new followers. We're grateful to Victor for exposing our brand to many thousands of HTML5 community members.

Google+ Communities

Communities on Google+ are a device for segregating special interest groups from the rest of the social stream. Running a community or being an active participant of one can have a great impact on your status and reputation on Google+. Brands can also create, be members and engage on third party communities which acts as an additional funnel of content discovery and brand visibility.

Dejan SEO [page](#) runs a community called [SEO Hangout Panel](#), originally designed to discuss ideas and content from our hangouts on air.

Pro Tip: Page's community engagement including the member count is a contributing factor to page's overall social score.



Despite this, our community strategy has been that of extremely strict approval process and rigorous moderation in order to attract and keep the type of people we really want to have in the community.

Understanding Reshares and +1s

I wanted to gain deeper understanding behind the success of the [Nerdy Data post](#) and decided to analyse the full list of contributors including both shares and +1s. Unfortunately I bumped into a logistical problem. Google+ posts only show a sample of 50 engagers, which means that you have no chance analysing any of your successful posts within Google+.



Displays Maximum of 50 Users
(Not helpful for analysis of popular posts)

Luckily there's an API explorer which enables you to query the full user list. Here's the URL:
<https://developers.google.com/apis-explorer/#p/plus/v1/plus.people.listByActivity>

activityId

collection

maxResults

pageToken

fields

bold red = required

Try Getting it from ripple URL

Activity Type

The 'activityId' is not visible in the post URL but can be retrieved from the ripples URL instead (alternatively use Google's API Explorer). In the collection select an appropriate activity (e.g. plusoners) and hit 'execute'.

```
200 OK
- Show headers -
- {
  "kind": "plus#peopleFeed",
  "etag": "\"KmFlUTDKo0bNqNhpeBygvIv8XvA/O0pizYZ-1sCKpZ-YYf0qk8ZYojk\"",
  "title": "Google+ People By Activity: Plusoners",
  "nextPageToken": "K1sKOVf4wS-Q_aoOQpielp7Fz8_Pz8_Py8nPy5uazJyezSXMymXMyN7i
- "items": [
  - {
    "kind": "plus#person",
    "etag": "\"KmFlUTDKo0bNqNhpeBygvIv8XvA/PGKQ5bs9wxYWDCHOhx0WP5z1DEA\"",
    "id": "117389735805147926169",
    "displayName": "Lakasha Williams",
    "url": "https://profiles.google.com/117389735805147926169",
    - "image": {
      "url": "https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/-A5vrr7CwzC8/AAAAAAAAAAI/AAAi
    }
  },
```

The output will contain a full list of people who have +1d your post. Keep note of the nextPageToken, you will need it to query each new set of the results until the full record has been retrieved via API explorer.





















Pro Tip: Retrieving the activityId from the page source code.



1. Hover over the +1 button and inspect element
2. Find the "Qg" class
3. The string after the po- div id is your activityId

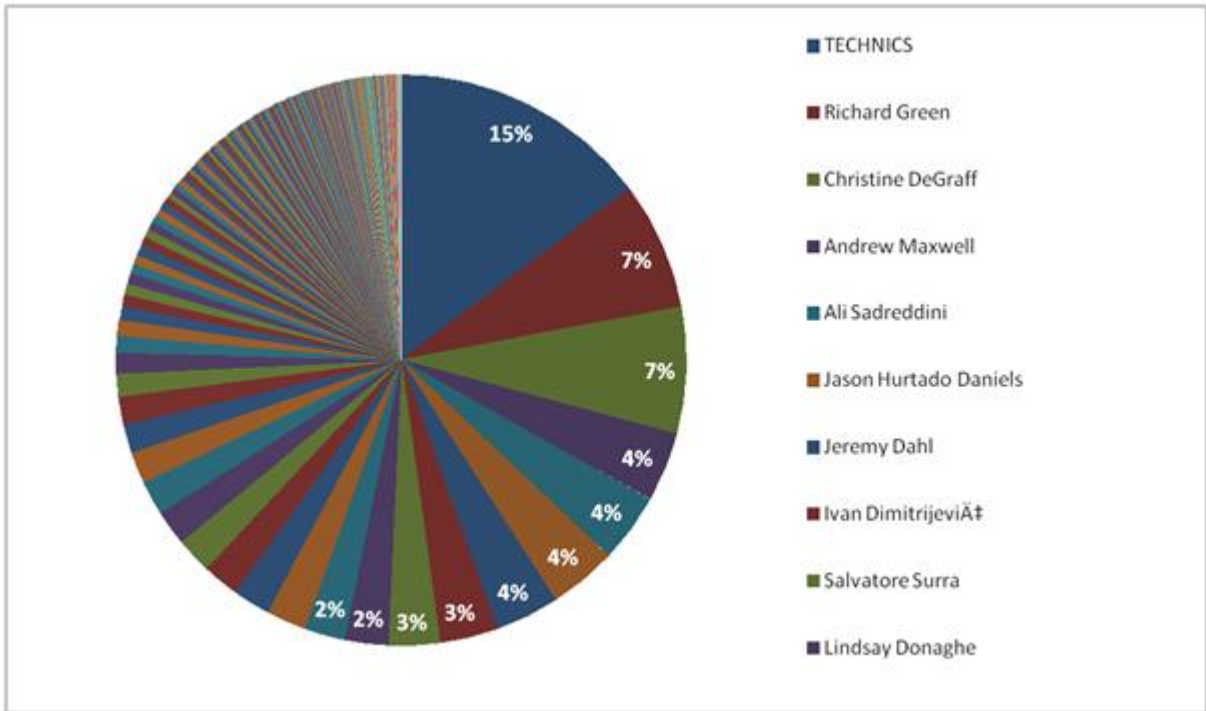
Credit: [Lee Smallwood](#)

Once you retrieve and format your data (I made a script to do the whole thing) you will be able to show a full report on users who have contributed to the success of your content.

	TECHNICS	118469		Manuel Arciniega	18488
	Richard Green	58154		Umberto Orefice	18195
	Christine DeGraff	57642		Randall Snyder, Jr.	16978
	Andrew Maxwell	31778		Dan Petrovic	16740
	Ali Sadreddini	31306		SEO on Google+ - Search Engine Optimization	16356
	Jason Hurtado Daniels	30980		David Ford	16032
	Jeremy Dahl	29387		Clive Roach	15668
	Ivan Dimitrijević	26276		manish kumar	14260
	Salvatore Surra	23362		Franklyn Galusha	13192
	Lindsay Donaghe	19754		Brent Csutoras	12696

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Top sharers by number of followers.



Pie Chart of Sharer Follower Distribution

Looking at this data I get a sense for ‘virality share credit’ from each of the listed users and couldn’t but wonder how my initially observed factors may have influenced on everyone’s decision to share:

- Content
- Simplicity
- Image
- Enthusiasm / Excitement

The Power of +1

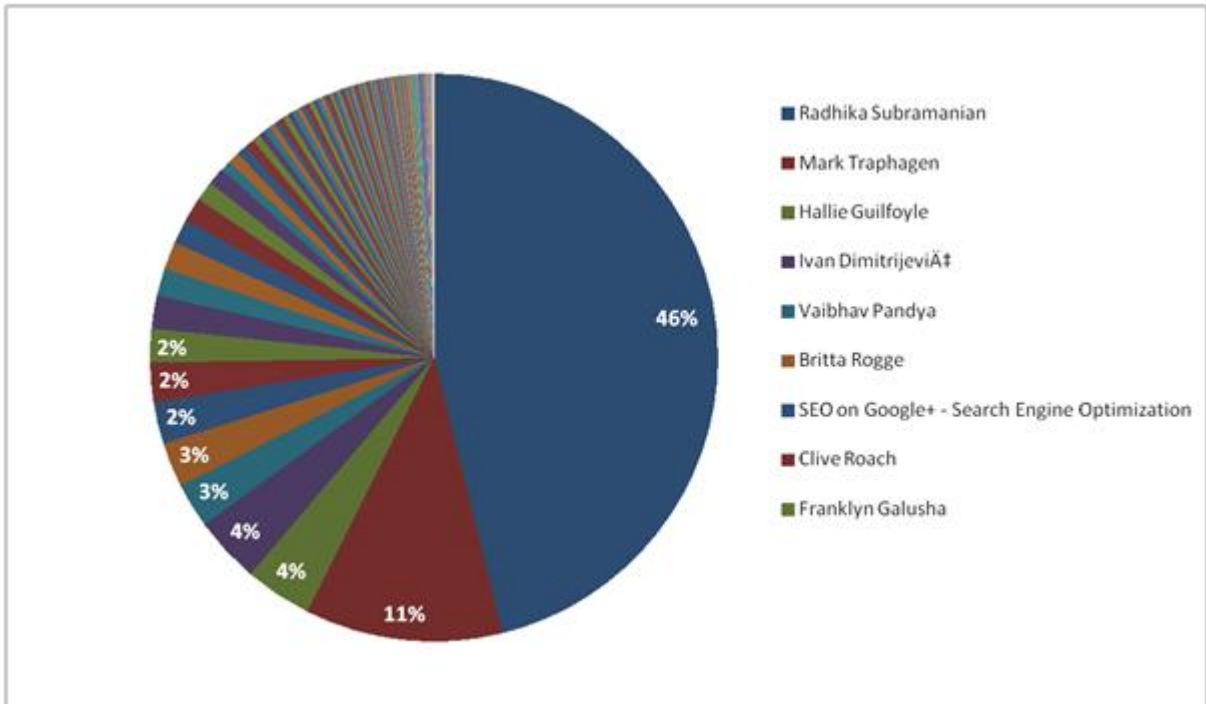
While Google still maintains that +1 has no direct impact on organic search, I know for a fact that it’s by no means an arbitrary signal. From what I have seen +1’d posts are distributed to a ‘dynamic fraction’ of user’s followers on Google+ and I say dynamic because I’ve seen it shift in terms of impact and prominence, likely due to interest velocity (something for me to test later on).

It’s only after querying the full list of ‘plusoners’ and querying their follower numbers that I understood just how much of an impact +1 has had on the success of our share.

	Radhika Subramanian	319106		Felipe Veiga	10847
	Mark Traphagen	77674		Brandon Cooney	10731
	Hallie Guilfoyle	26344		Bo Christensen	9699
	Ivan Dimitrijević	26276		Tadeusz Szewczyk (Tad Chef)	9541
	Vaibhav Pandya	17766		Heather Wildcat	7693
	Britta Rogge	17507		Brad Leese	6697
	SEO on Google+ - Search Engine Optimization	16356		J.D. Garrett	4368
	Clive Roach	15668		Aaron Alexander (iJackPortals)	4309
	Franklyn Galusha	13192		Marylin LaGata (La Soledad)	4208
	Rahul Dixit (राहुल)	13019		Ian McCully	3669

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In the image above you see the list of users and pages who have shared our post, sorted by number of followers. I realised the sheer impact Radhika Subramanian's +1 had on the post:



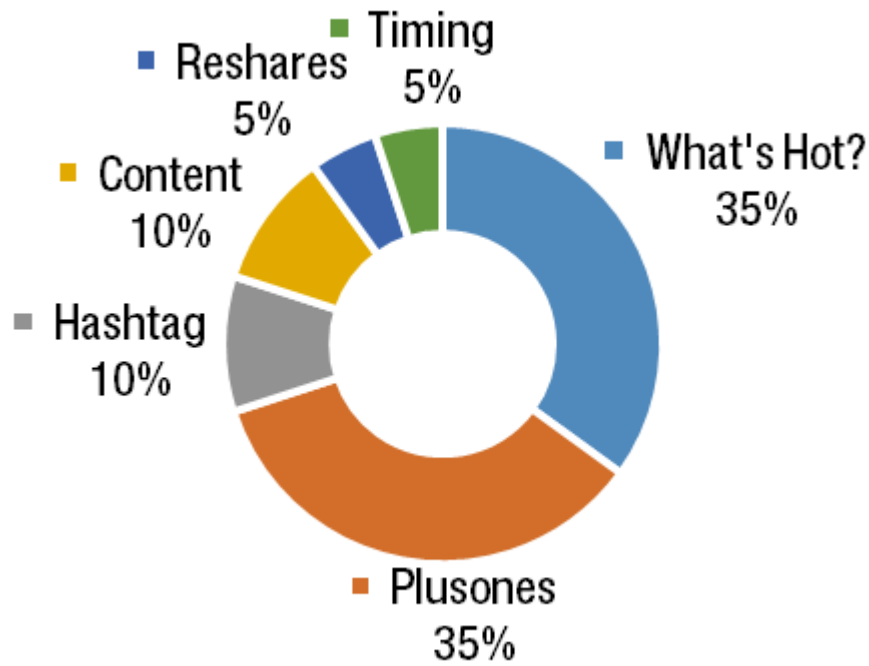
In Summary

The success of the post can be attributed to the following factors:

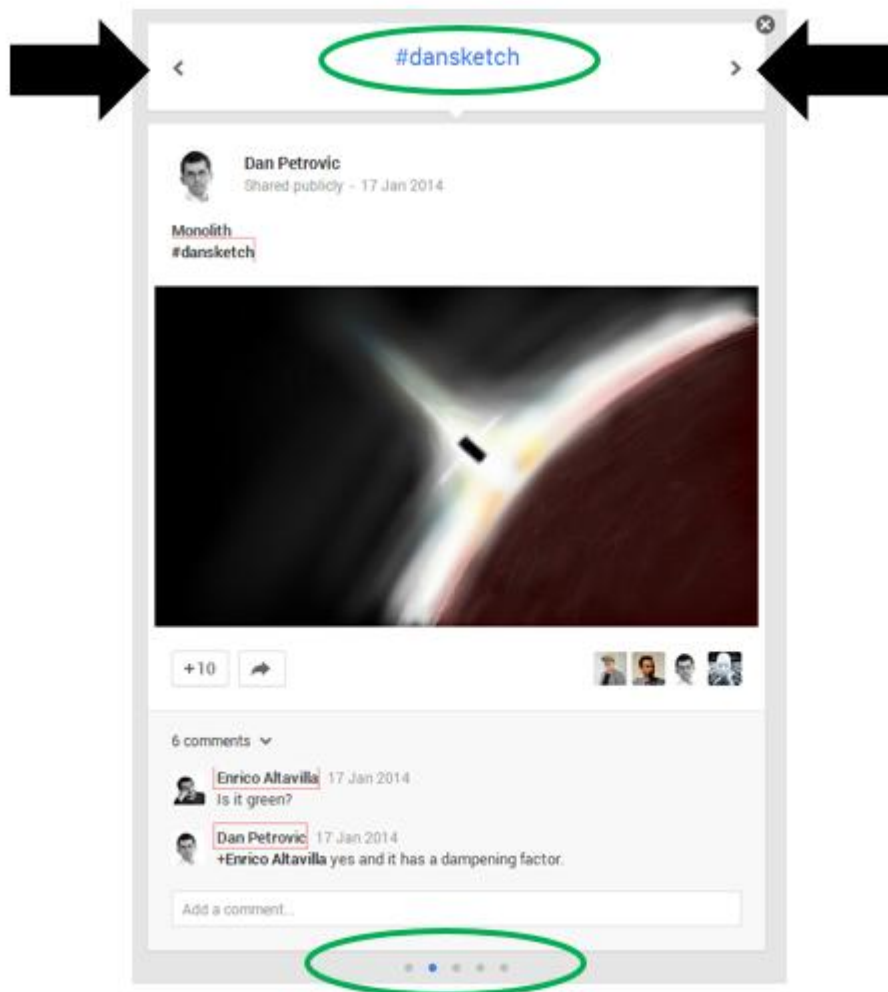
- Breaking news
- Content demand
- Image use
- Simple message
- Optimal post time
- Influencers triggered (reshares, +1's)
- Community impact

The impact on our page included increased social number (+1's, reshares, followers), increased followership and personalised search visibility, brand introduction and reinforcement and finally forming a relationship with the owner of the shared asset.

In a similar study I focused on one of my non-commercial content posts and analysed the reasons behind its success as well. Here are the results:



Detailed write-up is [available here](#). The only item I wish to highlight in this article is my use of [#foodporn](#). [Hashtags on Google+](#) are not only a way of tuning into a semantic stream and enabling interest-based content discovery, but also a way to create your own browsable, gallery-like collections.



Consistent, ritualistic hashtag series can be effective as well. One great example is [#ididnotwakeupin](#) by [AJ Kohn](#). We use [#postanniversary](#) where we rejuvenate content on its birthday.



The post above illustrates a relatively new link share format which when triggered (og tags) manifests in a more visual way, almost like an image share. Unfortunately links to pages in this case include rel="nofollow" which is contrary to what Matt Cutts said might happen on Google+ after I enquired about them [nofollowing](#) and [PageRank sculpting](#).

"Google+ is using rel="nofollow" on some of its internal links. Why?"

[Dan](#), Brisbane [Hide response](#) [Post a response](#) [Share](#) ▼

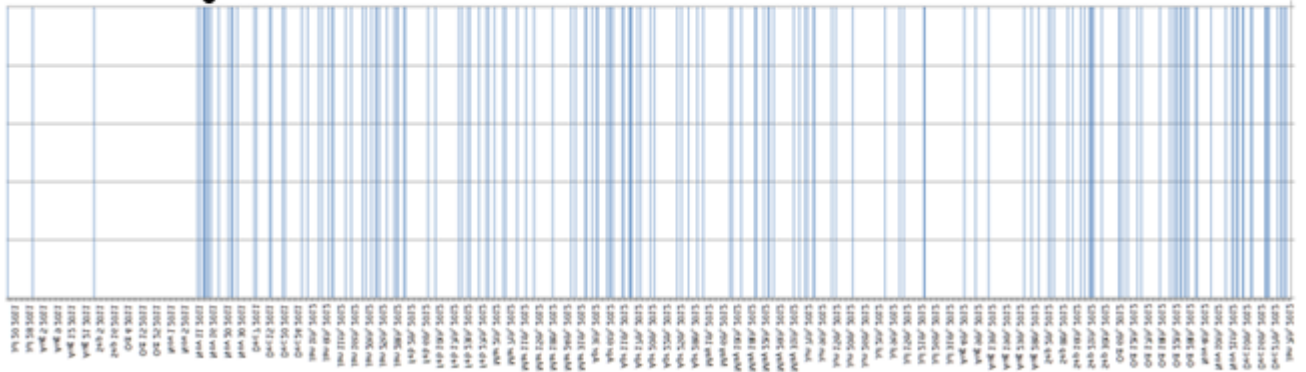
Sometimes we try to be cautious, just so we don't become any sort of spam attack vector ourselves.

Over time, as we come up with ways to make sure that things are spam-resistant, we might remove that nofollow attribute though.

[Matt Cutts](#), Mountain View

Use public posts whenever possible to get any SEO value. Selectively shared posts don't count in the non-personalised link graph. We actually [tested this](#) and found that selectively shared posts appear only in personalised search results.

Since 11 November 2011 Google+ Posts are being indexed very frequently. Almost out of control.



We also tracked the rate at which Google+ posts appeared in Google's searches for the same set of queries and found the rate to go through the roof after 11 of November 2011. Googlebot, strangely, crawls Google+ like any other web asset instead of simply absorbing the information internally. Many strange URLs end up in Google search as a result.

Content Success Analysis

Using methods similar to the ones described earlier I analysed my blog posts, again selecting those which seemed to be uncharacteristically successful, ranging from 103 to 440 +1's:

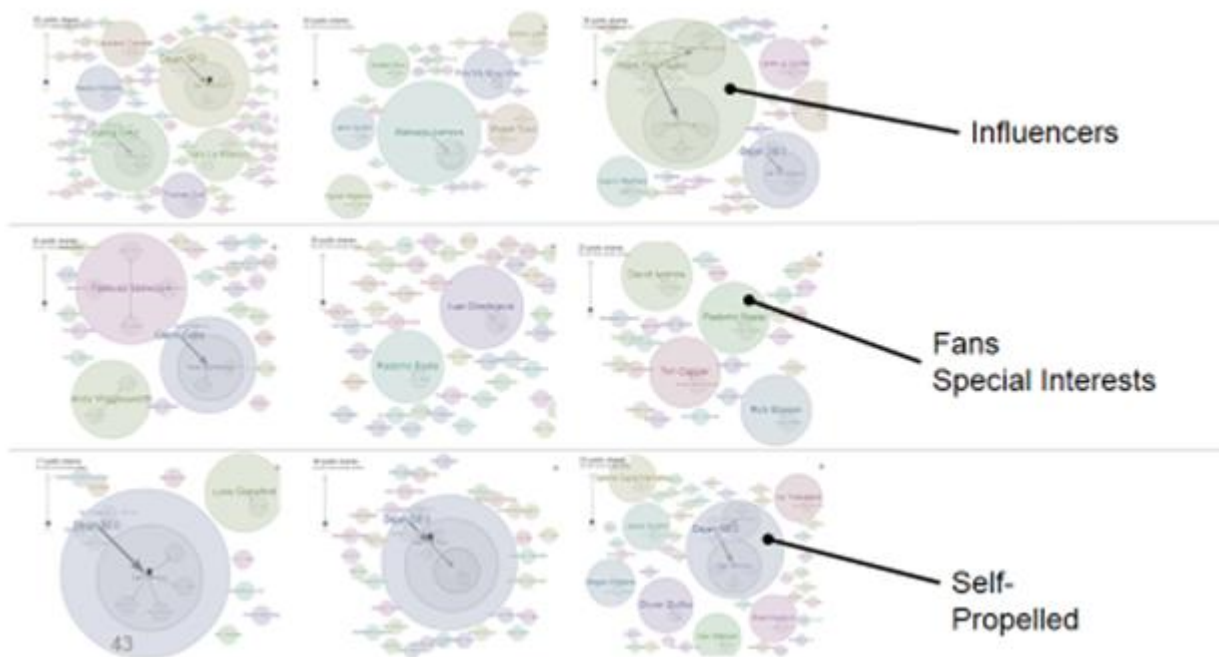
+1s

- 407 – [Google+ Interactive Posts](#)
- 440 – [First Google Webmaster Tools Update in 2014](#)
- 152 – [Entrepreneurial Search](#)
- 266 – [Everything you type is recorded](#)
- 203 – [The Biggest SERP Flux Since Penguin 2.0](#)
- 131 – [Google Helpouts: AdWords is OK, SEO is Not](#)
- 103 – [Little-Known Gem of Google+ Engagement](#)
- 241 – [The Art of Link Earning](#)
- 120 – [How to get 25,000 +1's and PageRank 7](#)
- 405 – [Google+ Custom URL: Here's what happens](#)

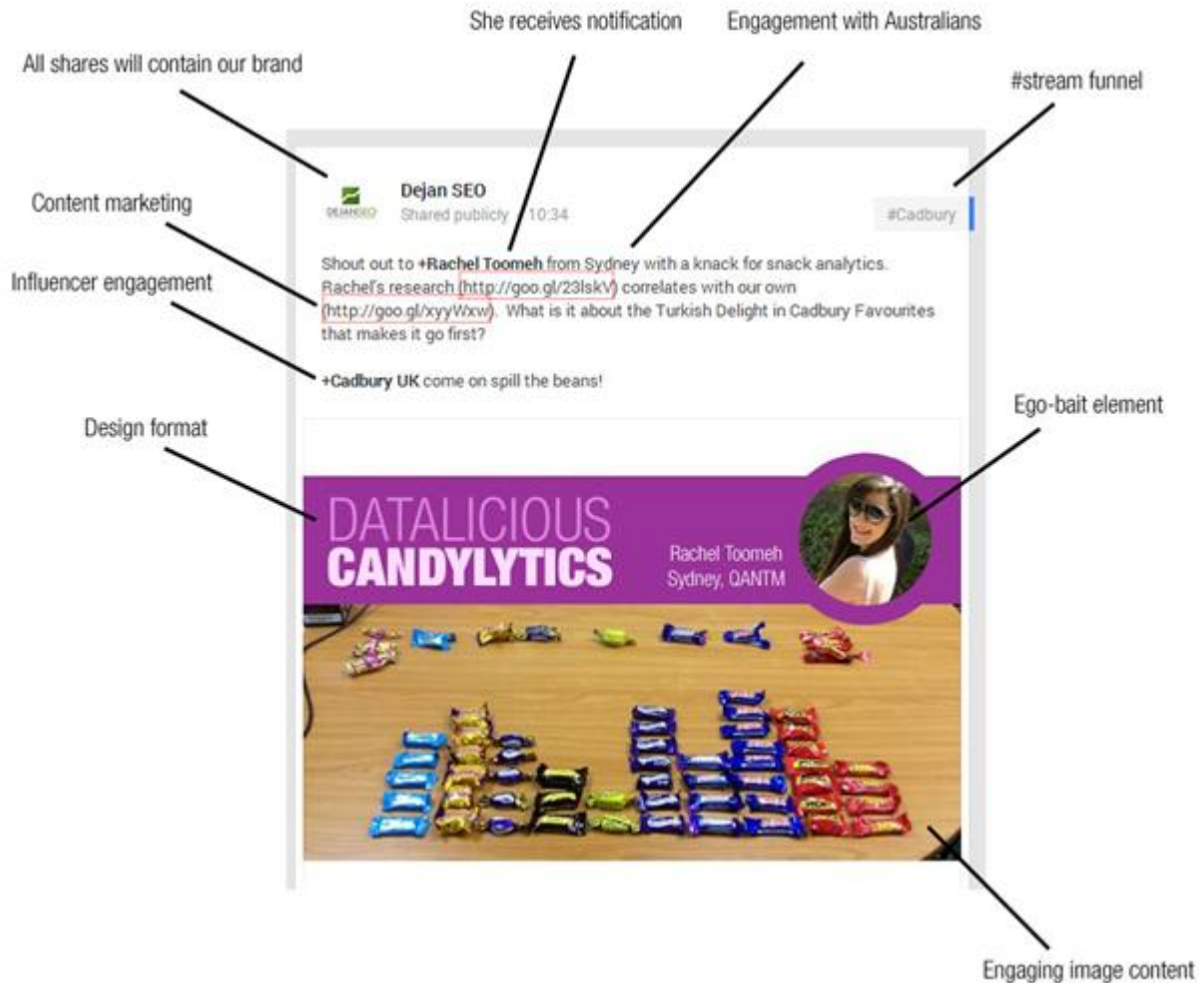
Style

Innovation
 Breaking News
 Opening Up
 Privacy Concerns
 Breaking News
 Rant
 Unique Insight
 Timely. In-Depth.
 Misleading Title. Hack.
 Breaking News

I found three major ways something reaches above average popularity. While some posts are completely self-propelled and require a lot of promotional work and energy, others manage to trigger fans and special interest groups. This typically happens when a special topic or issue is being discussed which at the time resonates within the community. What I'm seeing is a fairly even post distribution with no major influencers involved. This mode of sharing is interesting to me as it reveals content and engagement value in itself and does not rely on well-known people to share it to be successful as we can see at the top of the ripple graph collection:



Investing in consistent post format and style pays off in terms of engagement and recognition. Here is a mock-up image I shared with my staff a while ago to illustrate a possible post format:



- Share as a page first to attach brand to all reshares.
- Where appropriate:
 - Embed your other content in the post
 - Ping bigger brands and influencers
 - Use hashtags
- Maintain a consistent design format and post styles
- Personalise your content (maybe wrongly labelled as ego-bait)
- Trigger engagement with relevant target audience
- Utilise images

Naturally 'don't be a jerk' rule applies universally. Avoid spamming people with notifications and requests.

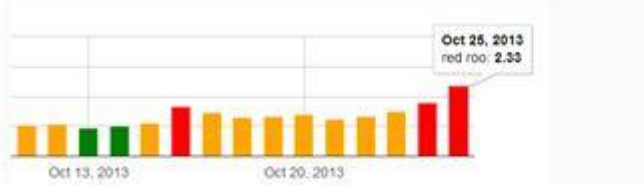
Pro Tip: Funnelling your blog traffic discussion to Google+ is a great way to increase followers and engagement. We typically use in-text call to action:

Possible Google Update: Friday 25-10-13

Saturday October 26, 2013 Category: SEO News & Updates Edit

Tweets 43 Likes 20 St+ 54 Share 13 Share on Google+

Algoroo has measured a significant ranking flux on Friday after a relatively stable fortnight indicating at a possible algorithmic tweak at Google.



The SERP turbulence level this Friday was at a whopping 2.33 rods making it the 8th most volatile day in 2013.



Are we looking at a new layer in the search quality algorithm or a break to an existing one? We'll know more if Google decides to share the details with us.

One observation we've made so far is related to how Google indexes pages. We monitor a number of search queries on a regular basis and have recently started noticing presence of Google+ URL types that would normally be excluded.

Here are some examples:

Example 1: <https://plus.google.com/app/basic/#/k23PageRank/related?cbp=52e57eb21u1&ev=204&ero=k23Bloggsng&ez=0&epath=/app/basic/#k2023Bloggsng/>

Example 2:

[cbp=99](#)

Example 3: <https://plus.google.com/app/basic/#/k23Vocabulary/related?cbp=edvkurba3v66&ev=27&ero=k23Market&ez=0&epath=/app/basic/1090325460675714058>

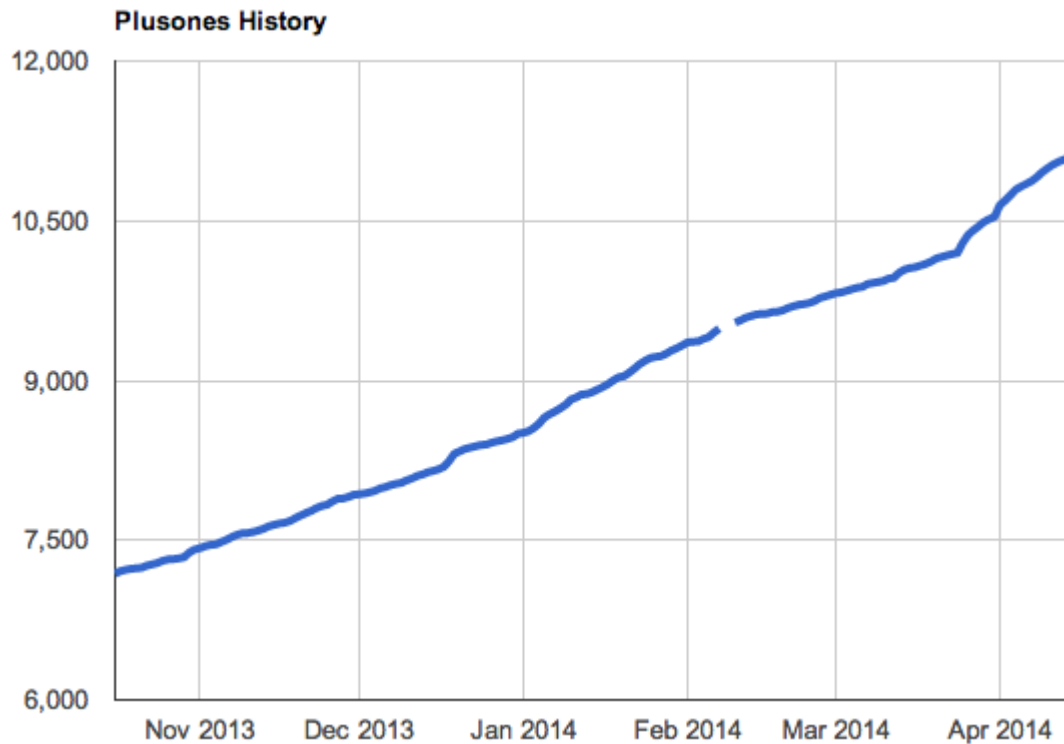
The above just seem like "search result" type pages which they normally avoid indexing or at least lower it on the priority list.

Have you been affected? Let us know in the comments or on [Google+](#)

Discussion Funnel

Have you been affected? Let us know in the comments or on [Google+](#)

Ross Hudgens has recently covered Copyblogger's tactics and their growth impact due to discussion funnelling:



Another great way to spark up engagement on your Google+ page is to embed Google+ posts in your content. This allows your readers to quickly jump into discussion, +1 or follow your page. For extra geek points link directly to the post [ripple URL](#) as I did in [this post](#).

Hangouts on Air

Hangouts on air (HOA) have been one of the major driving factors in the success of our brand on Google+. Running hangouts takes a lot of time and energy but rewards with increased user engagement and is an excellent content generation mechanism.



So far we've had several hangout formats including:

1. Industry Guests (Guest Speaker + Panel)
2. Featured Software (Guest Speaker + Panel)
3. Special Agenda / Topic (Speaker + Panel)
4. Random Acts of SEO (Panel)
5. Celebrity SEO Audit (Panel)
6. SEO Challenge (Quiz Format)



“ Dan Petrovic put together one of the more useful Google Hangouts I've yet to see by a non-Gogler.



“ This is a pretty insightful "SEO Challenge" hangout - check out the questions & answers or just listen in for ideas by the experts.



“ I recommend anyone in SEO watching this. Check out the write-up here too <http://dejanseo.com.au/seo-challenge/>

Judging by user reactions, shares and views, SEO Challenge has been the most successful format of all, partly due to its content and partly due to its

interactive nature. Sadly, it's also the most time-demanding type and requires hours of preparation. This means that we can't do it too often.

There are many great tips and posts on [running smooth HOA sessions](#) so I won't go into all the technicalities, but will instead focus on things I found to be particularly important or useful.

Organising Topic

Selecting the right topic is one of the most important things when planning a hangout. I often dive into our community and simply ask people or surprise everyone once I figure out the trend on my own.

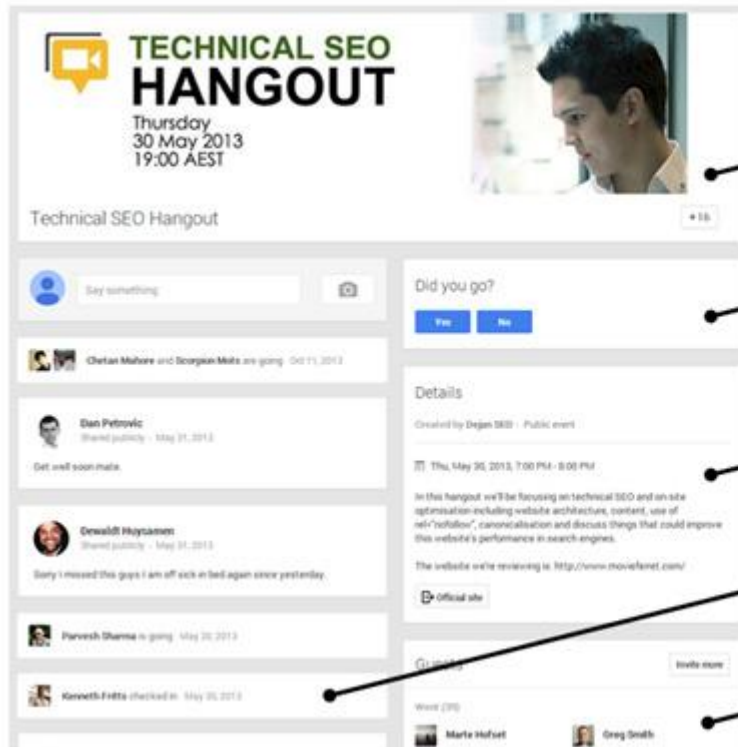
Promotional Artwork

Creating and maintaining well-designed promotional material, consistent across different channels and platforms helps attract quality audience to the session. Artwork typically covers website landing page, Google+ event page, YouTube video image and social media promo posts.



Google+ Event Page

Event pages are not only an efficient guest management mechanism but also allow you to easily gauge interest in each upcoming session. Managing questions from viewers can often be challenging and comments feature on the events page tends to serve as a centralised point of outside of HOA discussion.



Google+ Event Page

Custom Event Image
- Establish and maintain style

Encourage RSVPs
- Gives you attendance idea


Detailed Description
- This is how you "sell" the event

Discussion
- Pre/During/Post Event


Guest List
- Allowing guests to invite more


Landing Page

Our hangouts on air have one main landing page located on our own website. The page normally contains session description, relevant links and details, artwork and embedded hangout video. Once the session is live we promote our own page instead of Google+ accumulating links and social signals on our own assets.

 **Dejan SEO**
Shared publicly - May 30, 2013

We're on Air!

 **TECHNICAL SEO HANGOUT**
Thursday
30 May 2013
19:00 AEST



Technical SEO Hangout
dejanseo.com.au

In this hangout we'll be focusing on technical SEO and on-site optimisation including website architecture, content, nofollow and canonicalisation.

It might be worth adding that we also tried promoting our hangouts in AdWords and Facebook ads and found that organic spread works much better.

Other Tips:

- Timely Hangout Invitations
- Sound Technical Setup
- Pre-Hangout Session

During Hangouts

- Driving Discussion
- Moderation
- Outside Hangout Q&A
- Sharing on Social Channels

After Hangouts

- De-Briefing
- Customising Video Image
- Sharing Embedded Video
- Remaining Discussion



Dislocated Channel Syndrome

I see a lot of this happening with many brands on Google+. Local pages, brand page, website, YouTube channel, all disconnected from each other. Followers, engagement and social signals funnelling in different directions. Consolidating your Google+ presence is worth the effort.

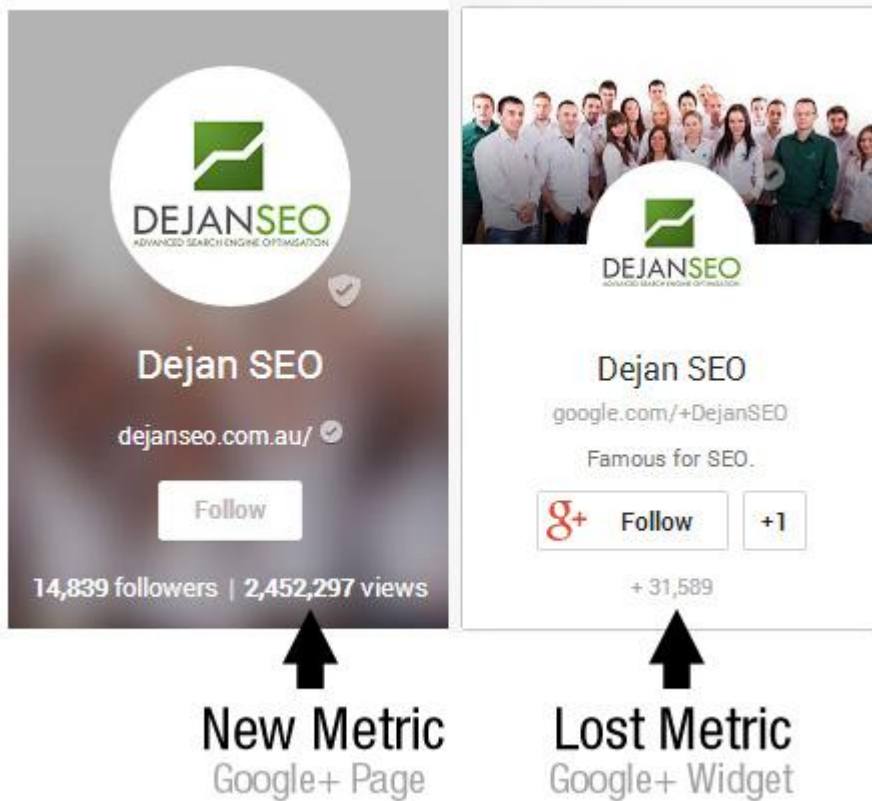
[I wrote about the process of linking up YouTube channel with Google+ brand page](#) in great detail, so if you are affected check out the article and start planning your merging process and get a step closer to this:



Until recently, pages used display a rather mysterious metric showing cumulative plus engagement of a page (+1s on page, linked website, posts, community...etc) . There were a few names for it including “social score”, “social number” and “plus score” and it looked like this:



This metric has been replaced by cumulative content views but there are a few places which still display this number, one of them being the website widget:



So to quickly query the plus score for any page navigate over to the [badge maker tool](#) and paste in the page URL.

Brand Entity Linking Issues

Now let's talk about a troubled Google Maps / Places / Local / Google+ Places... thing, whatever it's called today. Among many merge/integration issues and original design flaws, there's one area that bothers me more than anything.

Let me illustrate this by taking a look at Hilton's main brand page on Google+:



As you can see above, the page has an outstanding amount of followers and decent visibility. The website and the page are both verified. But here's what happens when I search for Hilton locally: 89 followers on Google+

hiltonsydney.com.au - Hilton Sydney Hotel
 Ad www.hiltonsydney.com.au/ ▾
 Sydney CBD close to Darling Harbour Award-winning bar, restaurant & gym
 Special Offers Book Now
 Rooms & Suites Hotel Details
 Maps & Directions

Hilton Sydney Hotel | Accommodation in Sydney
 www.hiltonsydney.com.au/ ▾
 Stay at the Hilton Sydney hotel in the Sydney CBD for deluxe hotel accommodation, award-winning Sydney restaurant & bars, and outstanding meeting and ...

Rooms & Suites
 Rooms & Suites. Hilton Guest Room. Enjoy upscale amenities ...

Specials & Packages
 Special Offers & Packages at the Hilton Sydney hotel, Australia ...

Directions & Map
 Directions and map for Hilton Sydney hotel, 488 George ...

Contact Us
 Contact the Hilton Sydney hotel, 488 George Street, Sydney ...

Restaurants & Bars
 The Hilton Sydney hotel's acclaimed restaurants & bars.

Meetings & Events
 ... event venues. Book meetings and private events or view ...

More results from hiltonsydney.com.au »

Hilton Sydney
 map hilton.com/HiltonSydney ▾
 4.0 ★★★★★ 79 Google reviews Write a review Google+ page - \$196 ▾

488 George St, Sydney NSW 2000
 (02) 9266 2000

Sydney Hotels | Hilton Sydney | Sydney, NSW
 www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/new-south-wales/hilton-sydney.../index.html ▾
 488 George Street, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000, Australia TEL: 61-2-9266-2000 ...
 Superbly located in the hub of Sydney's vibrant CBD, Hilton Sydney has ...

Hilton Sydney
 89 followers on Google+
 \$195 Book ▾ Directions Write a review Follow

Address: 488 George St, Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: (02) 9266 2000
Hotel class: 5 stars

Reviews
 4.0 ★★★★★ 79 Google reviews

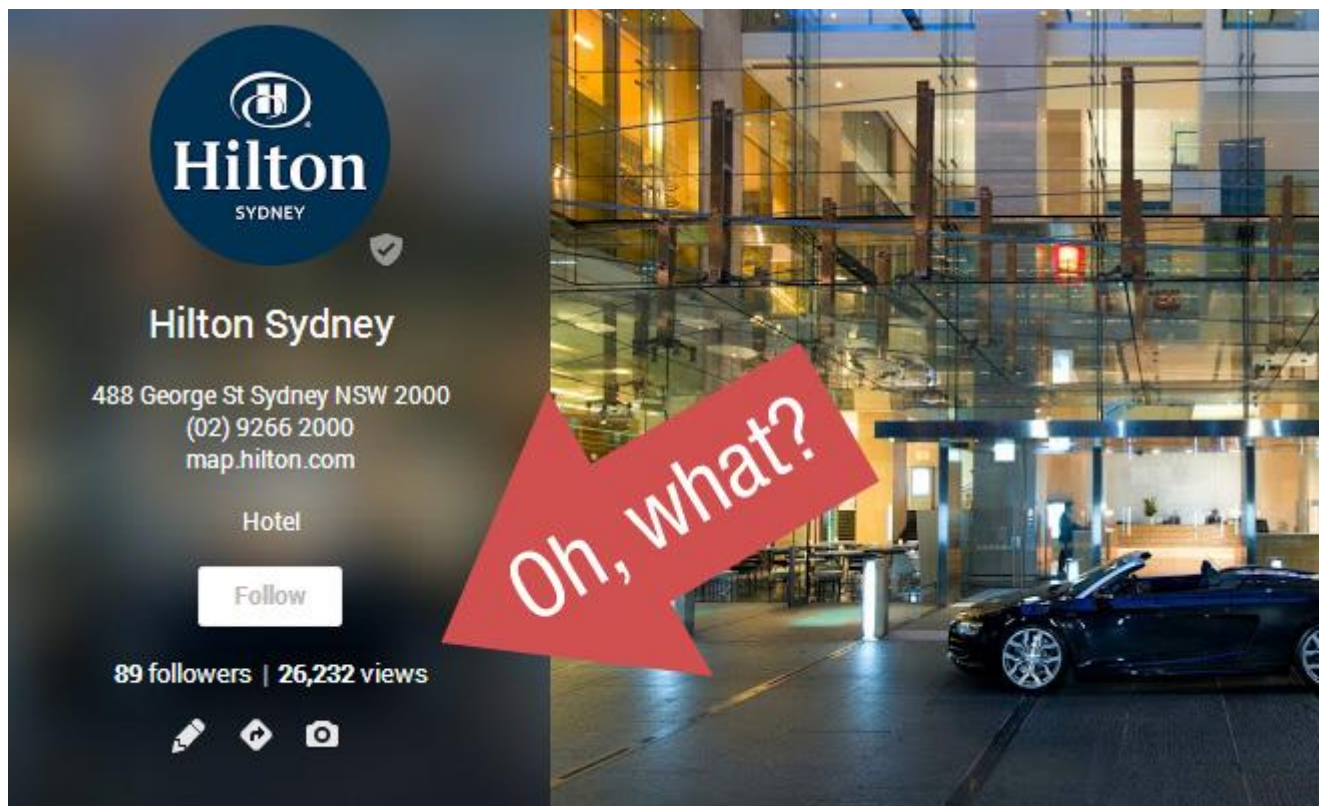
More reviews: agoda.com.cn, hotelclub.com, hotel.info, eatability.com.au

People also search for

Four Seasons Hotel Sydney The Westin Sydney Caffe Cino Glass Brasserie Swisshotel Sydney

Feedback

This doesn't really seem fitting for such a strong brand and it gives out weak confidence signals to users. If we click on the page from SERPs this is what we see:



Let's compare this to actual brand's performance:

Page	Type	Plus Score	Views	Followers
Hilton Hotels & Resorts	Brand	1,260,341	6,580,111	1,064,626
Hilton Sydney	Local	102	26,249	89
Hilton Melbourne South Wharf	Local	60	10,119	61
Hilton On The Park Melbourne Hotel	Local	57	9,775	50
Hilton Brisbane	Local	91	7,032	79
Hilton Cairns Hotel	Local	64	4,825	57
Hilton Surfers Paradise	Local	0	1,097	2
Parmelia Hilton Perth	Old Local			
Hilton Adelaide Hotel	Old Local			
Hilton Darwin	Old Local			
Hilton Brand		1,260,715	6,639,208	1,064,964

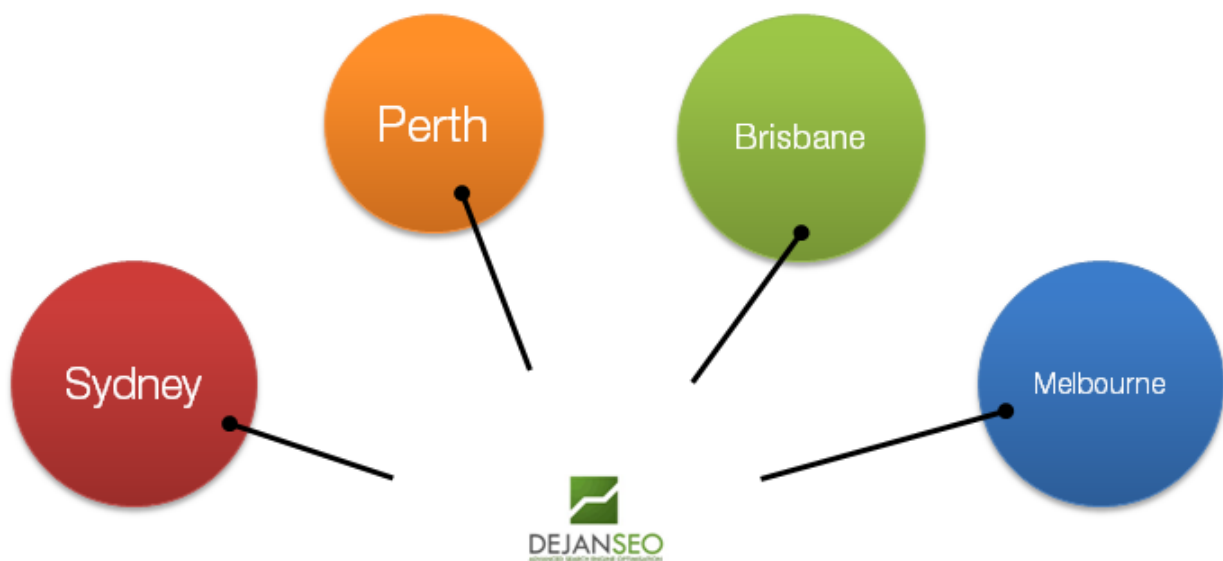
In the table above you can see how various local Hilton pages perform on Google+ in comparison to the main brand. This brings up a very important question. How does a brand interact with its customers and fans?

- Brand Level
- Country Level

- City Level
- Hotel Level

Should franchises such as McDonalds and Starbucks have a social media person engaging on each cafe or restaurant page? Probably not. How about a hotel chain like Hilton? Maybe. How about us here at Dejan SEO? No!

We have a single brand page integrated with our website content, blog posts, hangouts on air, events, community, YouTube, image sharing and is where all the centralised discussion takes place. There are four locations in Australia and three other locations in two other countries.



Our Brand

We in fact prefer to engage on a language level, and literally have no need for city-level pages in Australia. Yet if we want to have all the nice statistics that come with Google+ places pages we had to convert them at one point.

Now we're facing the dislocated channel syndrome again. Even with our best efforts, a fraction of our followers goes to our local pages. Worse yet, those followers are exposed to pages with no engagement. This paints a wrong picture about us as a brand that otherwise does pretty well on Google+

DEJANSEO
Dejan SEO Melbourne

Suite 405a/198 Harbour Esplanade Docklan...
(03) 9999 8388
dejanseo.com.au

Internet Marketing Service
Today 9.00 am - 5.00 pm

Dejan SEO

28 followers | 1,675 views

About Posts Photos Videos

Dejan SEO Melbourne
Shared publicly - 20 Jan 2014

You're currently on our Melbourne Places Page
Before you navigate over to the official +Dejan SEO page, here's a little tip. Get more local reviews with a single click. Link directly to your review prompt screen: <http://goo.gl/WnrNzZ>

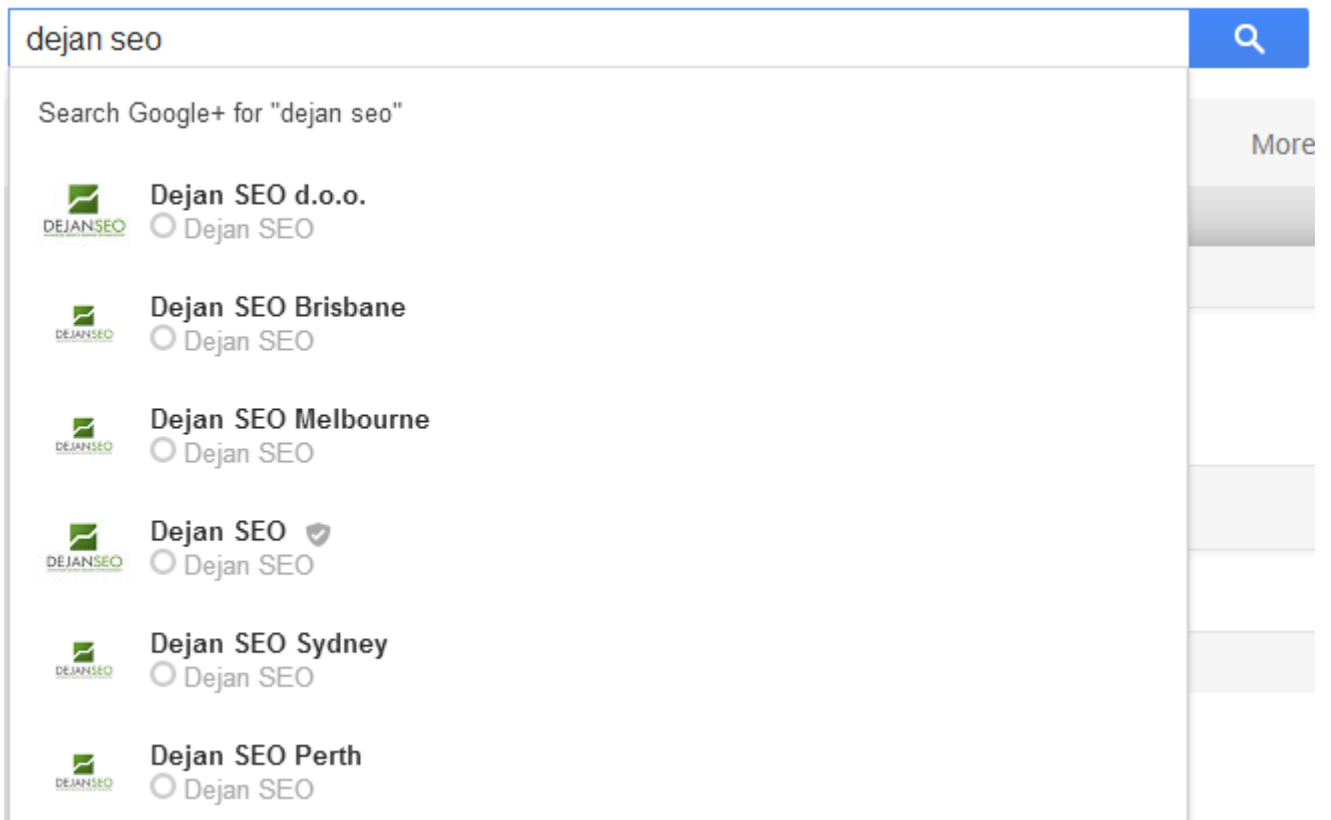
Q: How to encourage more reviews?
A: Link to your review prompt screen.

+1

Build your following on Google+

Create new page

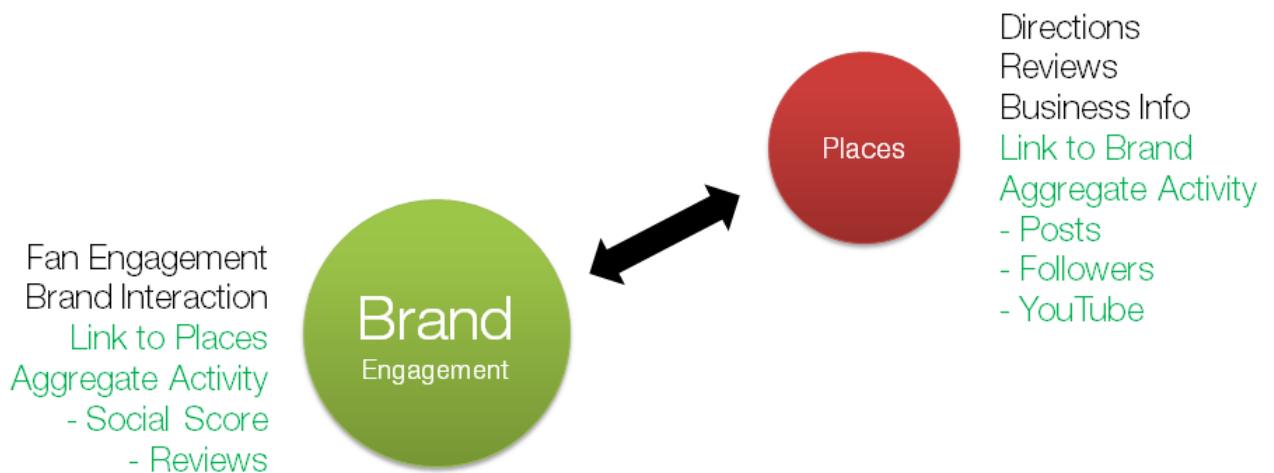
In the screenshot above, you can see one of our attempts to direct all future followers to our brand page, but no matter how clever we try to be, it's still a workaround. The issue goes deeper involving internal Google+ search:



Having multiple brand pages can confuse users as you cannot expect everyone to notice the official verified brand page tick. This can result in further fragmentation of followers.

So what is the solution?

I thought about this problem for a while and even discussed it with Google staff. There is no right or wrong way to engage on social media and every business and brand may choose a different level of engagement. So by design Google+ should allow for this flexibility and provide a way to link up brand entities into meaningful relationships.



Linking the brand and its associated entities and leveraging of each other's signals is the key improvement area for Google+ and Places.

- Each local page could contain a link function allowing the conversation from the main brand page to appear on its own stream, number of followers and impressions would be those of the main brand page and followers of the local page would add to the count of the brand page in total.
- Brand pages would be able to specify all their local pages and link with those. Activity of local pages would aggregate and funnel up to the main brand much like community membership count or content +1's do. Places pages are after all an asset of the main brand.

The above mentioned scenario would help Google understand business entities much better. We could start with a single option to tick on successfully linked places settings pages:

Show activity from the linked brand page.

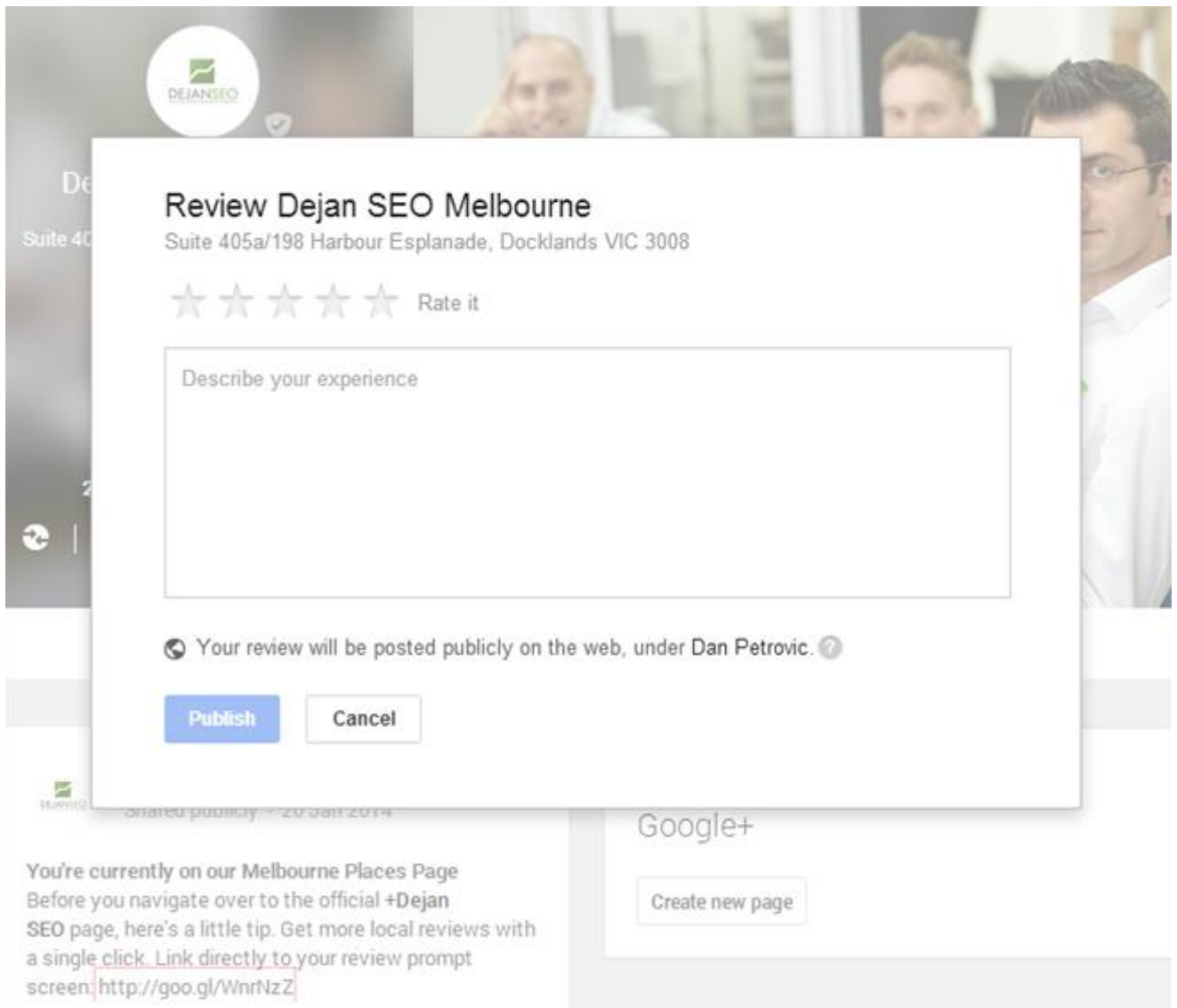
We played around with associating places pages with our main brand by using `rel="publisher"`

```
<link href="https://plus.google.com/114074532743058808065"
rel="publisher" />
<link href="https://plus.google.com/111370210640172198521"
rel="publisher" />
<link href="https://plus.google.com/101815805415133883437"
rel="publisher" />
<link href="https://plus.google.com/111085467327929190566"
```

```
rel="publisher" />
<link href="https://plus.google.com/114946883922926896150"
rel="publisher" />
```

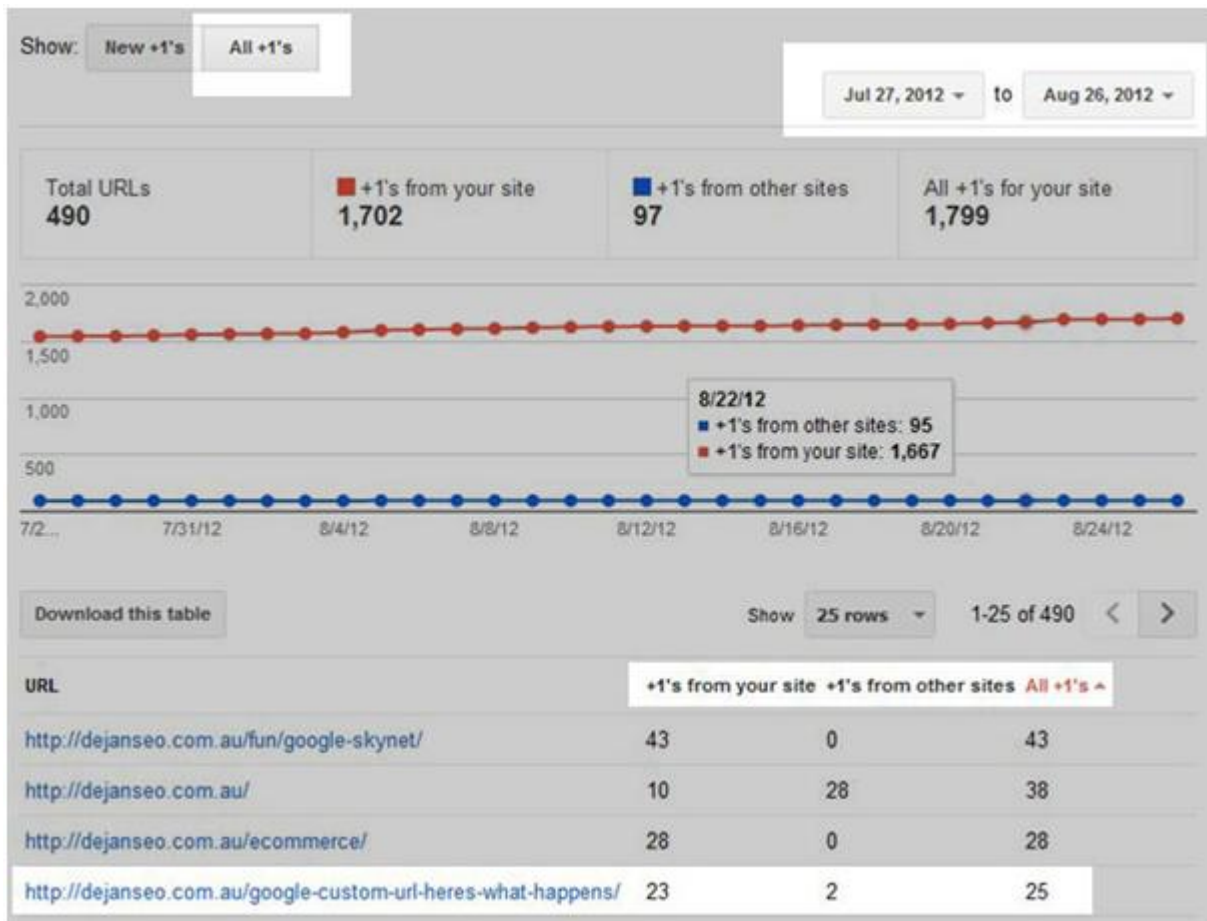
The effect was such that a places page would show the signals of the main brand page. Since Google+ turned off the social score number, this hack no longer works.

Pro Tip: If you want to get more reviews for your places pages provide your customers with the direct review prompt. To do that simply add “?review=1” at the end of the page URL.



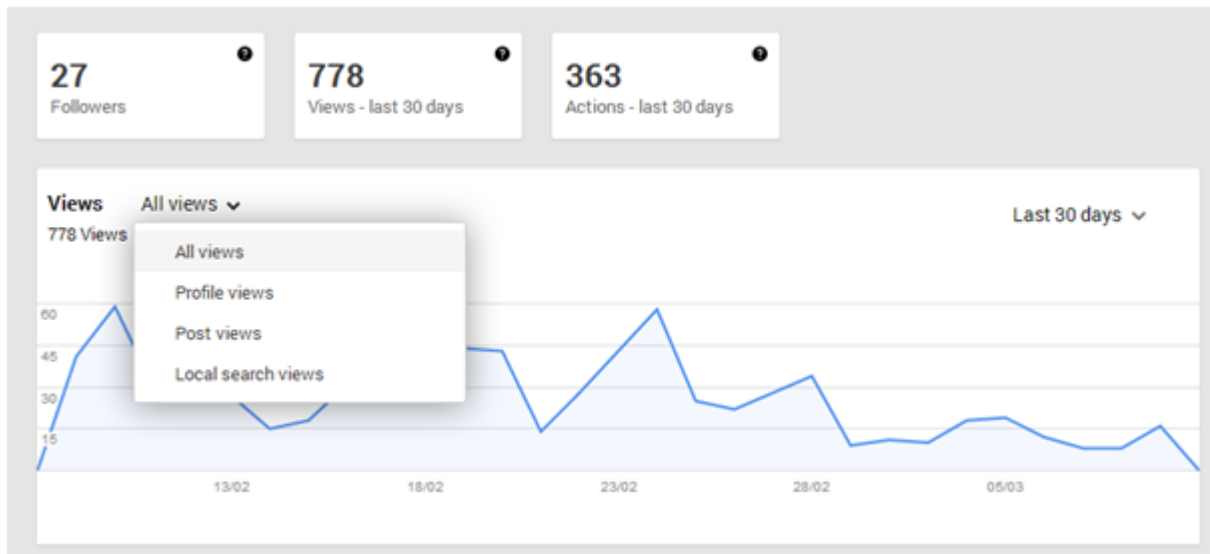
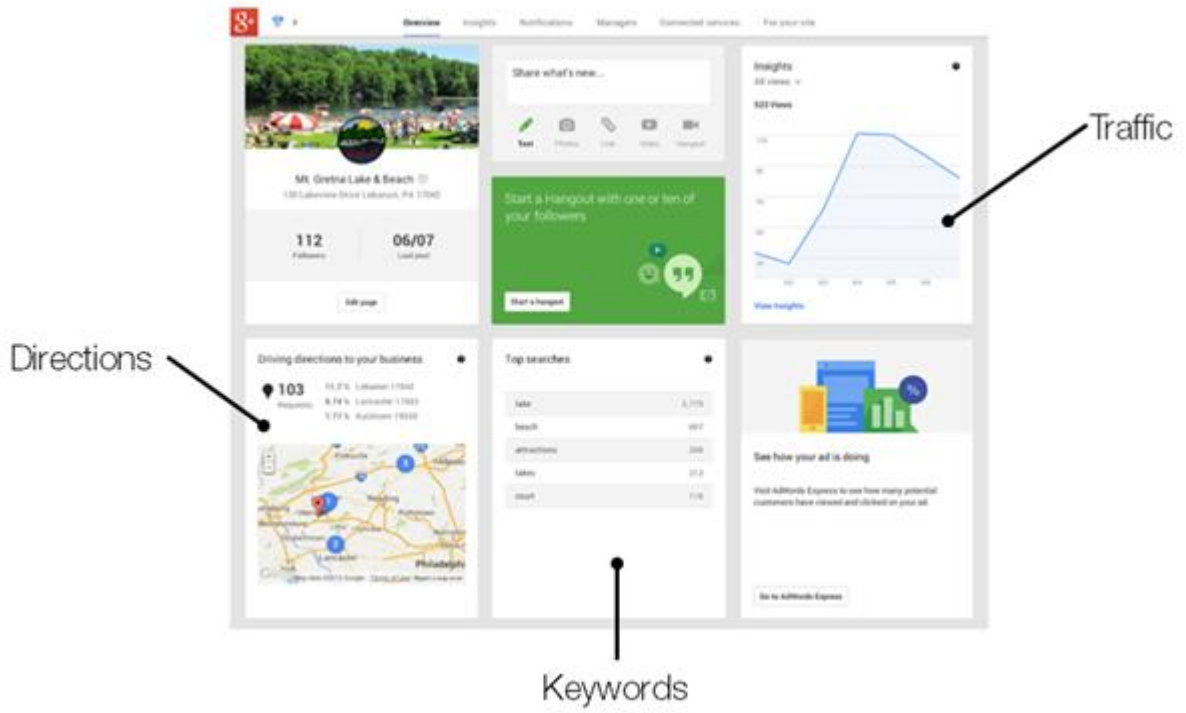
Statistics and Data on Google+

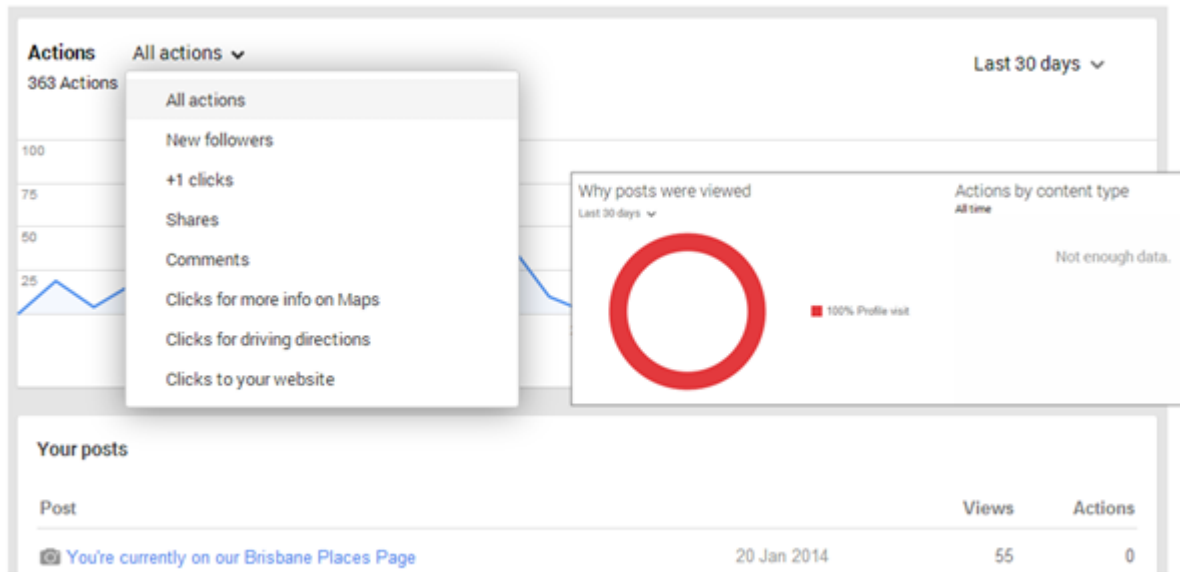
Some of you may remember seeing +1 statistics in Google Webmaster Tools for a while:



This feature is no longer available to webmasters, except those running Google+ Places Pages. In fact the amount of information given to brand pages versus places pages is amazingly disproportionate.

Here's what a local page insights look like:





As you can see, there's some nice data in there including +1 activity, follower acquisition, shares, comments, clicks to website, maps, profile views, post success and reasons behind it.

In comparison, brand pages see very little and it takes a fair bit of linking up and configuration to squeeze more data out of it including:

- YouTube Statistics
- Google Analytics
- Interactive Posts



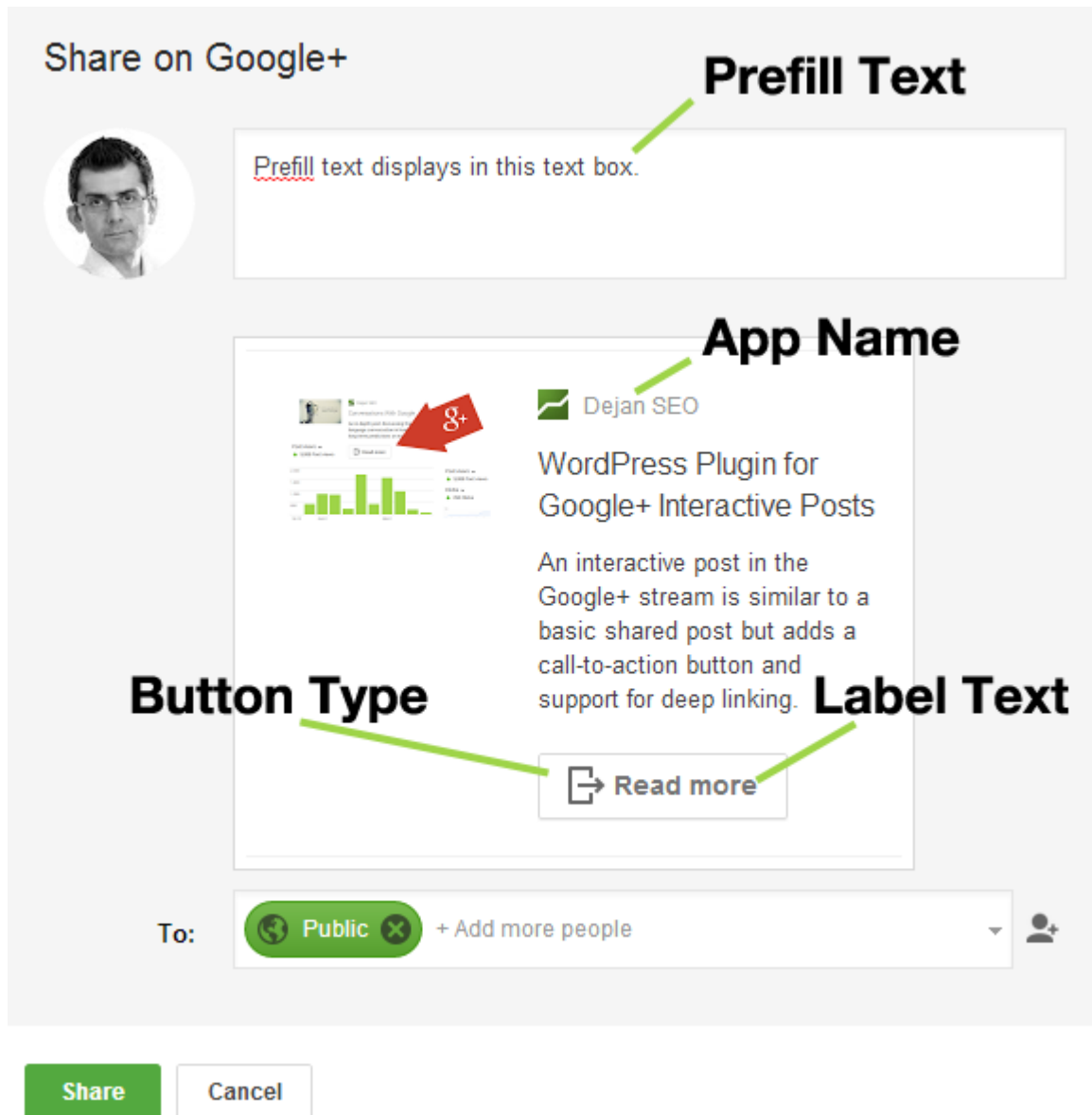
Interactive posts statistics are probably the best type of data a brand page can see as it includes:

- User sign-ins
- New users
- Posts published
- Post Views
- Clicks
- CTR (CTA Button vs Link)



- Insights: Sign-Ins, Interactive Posts, Activities Sent or Android App Installs
- Click Element: CTA Button or Link
- Platforms: Web, Android or iOS
- Date Range: 7 or 30 days

Interactive posts are something that more webmasters should consider implementing this year:



It not only gives you a purple cow element when others share your content but users also stay logged in to your website giving you a chance to customise their experience on next visit and make your site act as an app instead of a static medium:

2,400
1,800
1,200
600
15/12 04/01 09/01

Post views
9,889 Post views

Clicks
292 Clicks

This plugin streamlines interactive post implementation on WordPress websites.

[Download Link](#)

Note: This plugin is in alpha version. Please report any bugs and usability issues in the comments below.

About Interactive Posts

Interactive posts on Google+ are similar to basic shared posts with an added call-to-action button, functionality and additional page interaction statistics in Google+ page dashboard. This is one of the greatest features within Google+, but rarely utilised due to implementation complexity. Here are some notable examples of interactive post use:

Recommended reads:

- <http://googleplusplatform.blogspot.com.au/2013/1/>
- <http://googleplusplatform.blogspot.com.au/2013/1/>

Welcome back Dan P

Logos: ABC, Mater Foundation, SUPERCHEAP AUTO, PayPal, TRADINGPOST.COM, AFL, BCF, australia

While we're on the subject of little utilised features, let's quickly go over mobile content recommendations.

dejanseo.com.au/temporary-link-schen

Google+

From your circles

First Google Webmaster Tools Update in 2014
dejanseo.com.au
+401

Geran Teguh comments

Entrepreneurial Search
dejanseo.com.au
+137

Popular from Dejan SEO on Google+

Dejan SEO
DEJANSEO Dejan SEO

How to Visualise Very Large Websites
dejanseo.com.au
+136

Mobile Recommendations
Circles Popular

dejanseo.com.au/first-google-webmaster-tools-update-2014/

Google+

From your circles

Google+ Interactive Posts
dejanseo.com.au
+257

dejanseo.com.au/first-google-webmaster-tools-update-2014/

Google+

Popular from Dejan SEO on Google+

How to get 25,000 +1's and PageRank 7 in one week
dejanseo.com.au

You're using your mobile device, reading an article and just as you finish and scroll up a content suggestion comes up offering to read more from the same site. The recommendation is based on two criteria:

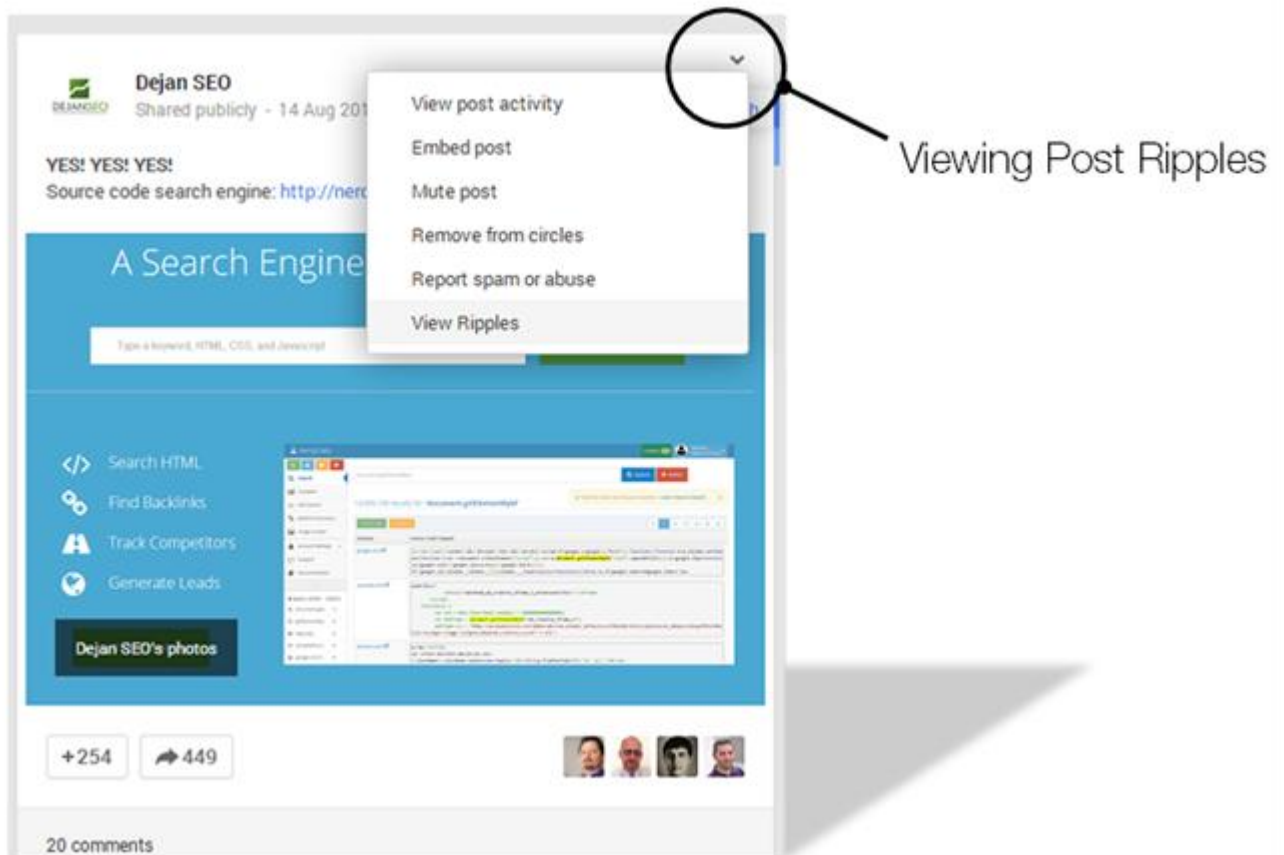
1. Connectivity
2. Popularity

The first one is easy to understand. If people in your circles have shared or +1'd a page then it may be included in the recommendation. Now, the second one is a bit of a mystery and I'm just a little bit excited about it. It's almost like a "Hot & Recommended" section but for your own website specifically. If you see a page in this section it may be worth investigating why Google+ felt this page triggered this algorithmic recommendation.

Here are two great articles to help you get started.

Google+ Ripples Pro Tip

I already wrote about ripples and statistics in detail, but I'd like to cover one more feature. When you click on "View Ripples" to examine post success you will notice two distinct ripple modes: activity ripple and URL ripple.



An image share for example, is an activity share:
<https://plus.google.com/ripples/details?activityid=z13xj5f4rkmftlotb22gspjyutugwhgnl>

YouTube share at the other hand is a URL share:

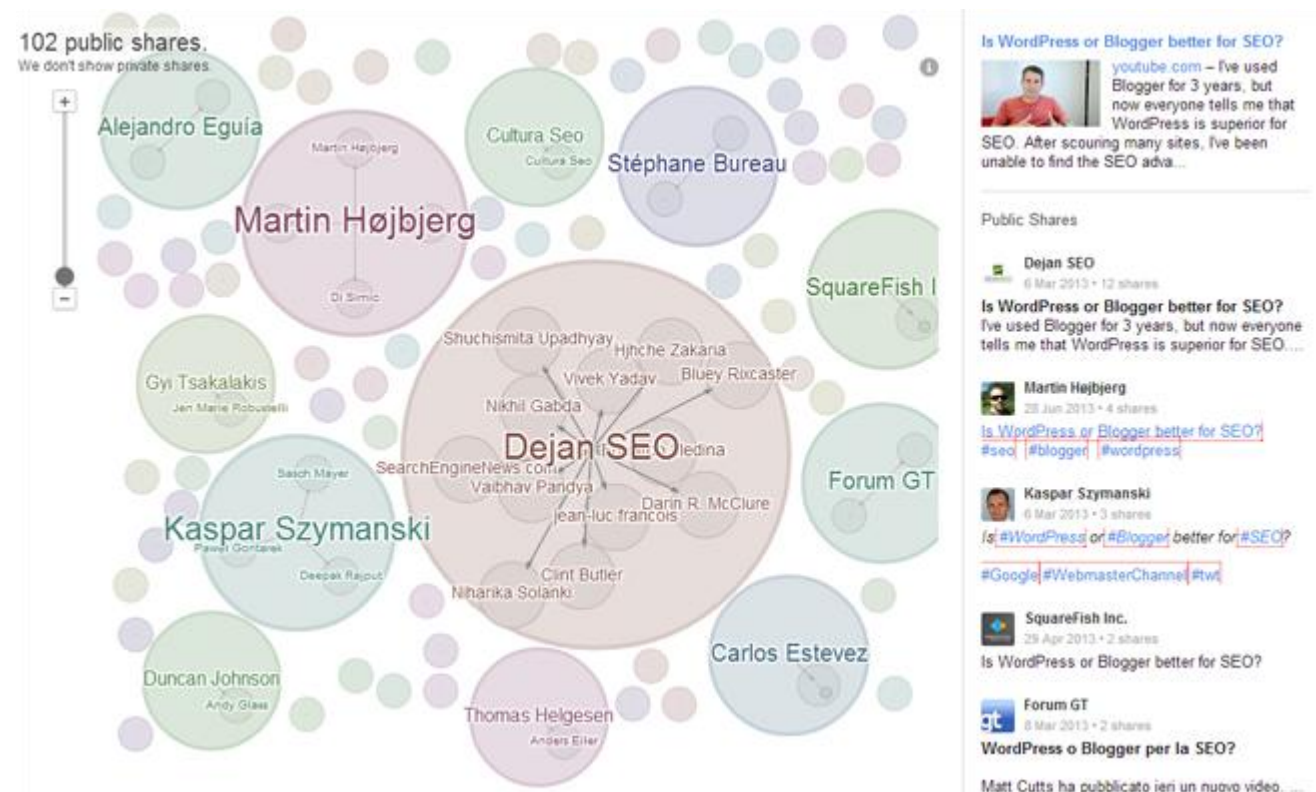
https://plus.google.com/ripples/details?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DxHO_20MSTPO

What's new is that the earlier mentioned crinkle cut link share format on Google+ actually isn't considered a traditional URL share. If you view it's ripples you will notice it uses an activityId instead:

Crinkle cut link share ripples:

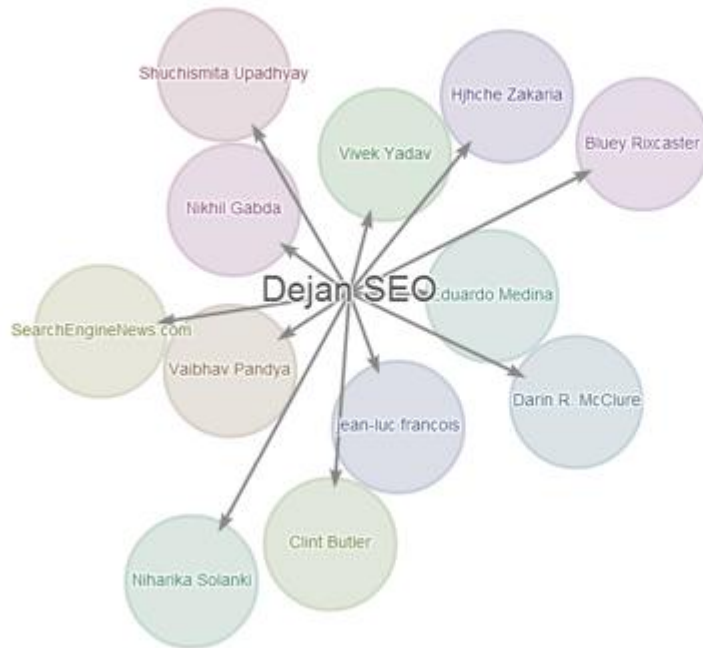
<https://plus.google.com/ripples/details?activityid=z12xz33piqeihfjos04cfv5owkbpuzwzibo>

Here's one annoying thing when analysing your URL shares, in this case a YouTube video. It shows you everyone else's shares as well:



To force ripples to show only your post activity simply switch the ripple URL around from "url" to "activityId":

12 public shares.
We don't show private shares.



Dejan SEO
6 Mar 2013 16:37:24

Is WordPress or Blogger better for SEO?
youtube.com – I've used Blogger for 3 years, but now everyone tells me that WordPress is superior for SEO. After scouring many sites, I've been unable to find the SEO adva...

[View full post](#)

Public Shares

Dejan SEO
6 Mar 2013 • 12 shares

Is WordPress or Blogger better for SEO?
I've used Blogger for 3 years, but now everyone tells me that WordPress is superior for SEO....

Niharika Solanki
21 Jun 2013

Bluey Rixcaster
18 Mar 2013
[More Helpful Info](#)

SearchEngineNews.com
7 Mar 2013

In case you skipped the activityId retrieval tip covered earlier, I suggest you [hop over here](#) and check it out. Another way to retrieving your post's activityId is by visiting [this page](#) and entering relevant user ID:

e.g. Matt Cutts

Services > Google+ API v1 > plus.activities.list Authorize requests using OAuth 2.0: ON [i](#)

userid	<input type="text" value="109412257237874861202"/>	The ID of the user to get activities for. The special value "me" can be used to indicate the authenticated user. (string)
collection	<input type="text" value="public"/>	The collection of activities to list. (string)
maxResults	<input type="text"/>	The maximum number of activities to include in the response, which is used for paging. For any response, the actual number returned might be less than the specified maxResults. (integer, 1-100)
pageToken	<input type="text"/>	The continuation token, which is used to page through large result sets. To get the next page of results, set this parameter to the value of "nextPageToken" from the previous response. (string)
fields	<input type="text"/>	Selector specifying which fields to include in a partial response. Use fields editor

bold red = required

The output will contain public post activity for that user including post activityId:

```
- {
  "kind": "plus#activityFeed",
  "etag": "\"Dt-nshlcY01jIPex5J4-1YGkLBo/jOL6DKsmoJBxx3RgaaMS2G4hn9Y\"",
  "nextPageToken": "CAIQwK_IxsjBugIqFCgB",
  "title": "Google+ List of Activities for Collection PUBLIC",
  "updated": "2014-03-12T01:22:17.320Z",
  "-items": [
    - {
      "kind": "plus#activity",
      "etag": "\"Dt-nshlcY01jIPex5J4-1YGkLBo/m1CeNFgnKeydCsjPg28faUsWOM0\"",
      "title": "+Amit Singhal +Matt Cutts and I in a +Google Glass selfie on stage at #SMX -- come on Google+ folks...",
      "published": "2014-03-12T01:22:17.320Z",
      "updated": "2014-03-12T01:22:17.320Z",
      "id": "z12rwtcrvc3pysq0kka2cl0rtznpeemk",
      "url": "https://plus.google.com/109412257238874861202/posts/17jaNRhcfmG",
```

ActivityId

My 17 top Google+ posts earned 1813 clicks in Google's organic search results over 3 months.

Cyrus Shepard

Google Webmaster Tools Data

Navigate over to Authorship section of the Webmaster Tools Labs and click on "page" sort. That tends to surface up Google+ URLs. What you're looking at there is literally statistics for organic traffic on Google+ though you can only see traffic for the pages that have you as the author attached. Still the usual metrics are there including impressions, clicks, CTR and average position. (Note: You can see statistics for any page where you're a verified author, not just Google+).



Google+ Organic Traffic Data

I exported and analysed my entire authorship dataset and found Google+ authorship annotated results to have a phenomenally good click-through rates:

Breakdown of Authorship Data

Authorship	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	Position
Overall	257,282	16,055	19%	14.6
Google+	1,048	227	32%	3.0
Bot-Based	28	3	15%	1.5

Calculating Engagement Levels on Google+

Over the last few years I've played with various ways of gauging page's engagement scores and have settled at a rather simple point-based method. I'll start by illustrating the type of data I work with:

	Me	Page
Top Comments:	71	65
Top Reshares:	39	451
Top Plusones:	312	256
Posts:	2,457	1,163
Plusones:	16,238	11,229
Reshares:	2,255	5,037
Comments:	11,024	3,084
Followers:	16,729	14,511





Essentially I'm observing the following metrics:

- Posts
- Plusones
- Reshares
- Comments

But more importantly I pay close attention to engagement averages. As you can see for my personal profile I have an average of 7 plusones, 1 reshare and 4 comments, while Dejan SEO page has 10 plusones, 4 reshares and 3 comments per post in average.

	Me	Page
Top Comments:	71	65
Top Reshares:	39	451
Top Plusones:	312	256
Chars / Post:	228	248
Avg. Plusones:	7	10
Avg. Reshares:	1	4
Avg. Comments:	4	3
Followers:	16,729	14,511

These stats include all available post data, including the early days while both profiles were in their infancy. Improvement in engagement levels and growth can be gauged by selecting a lower date range or perhaps the last 100 posts:

	Me	Page
Top Comments:	71	65
Top Reshares:	39	451
Top Plusones:	312	256
 Last Posts:	(100)	(100)
Avg. Plusones:	15 	13 
Avg. Reshares:	3	4
Avg. Comments:	7 	3
Followers:	16,729	14,511

In the example above we see great improvement on my personal profile with 8 extra +1s and 3 additional comments per post in average. Our page seems to have made an improvement with +1s only. This hints at a need to look at ways to stimulate discussion and sharing in the future.

Now here's an exciting part. I've worked out my own point system for comments (2), +1s (1) and reshares (3) based on how much I value each. As plusones are almost like Facebook "likes" I gave them the lowest engagement score, I appreciate comments a great deal, but not as much when somebody reshares my post which seems like the best way of value recognition. By multiplying averages for comments, plusones and reshares with their scores I get a total score for each engagement metric. This can reveal areas of excellence and at the same time point out when there's room for improvement. Particularly when benchmarked against other profiles.

	Comments/Post	Plusones/Post	Reshares/Post	
Value	3.68	13.37	5.77	Dejan
38.04	2	1	3	
	7.36	13.37	17.31	
	Comments/Post	Plusones/Post	Reshares/Post	
Value	0.86	4.74	0.84	Comp. (boosted)
8.98	2	1	3	
	1.72	4.74	2.52	
	Comments/Post	Plusones/Post	Reshares/Post	
Value	2.98	28.69	9.76	Moz
63.93	2	1	3	
	5.96	28.69	29.28	

data source: allmyplus.com

Adding each engagement subtotal to a single score gives me a pretty solid engagement metric for profiles and pages on Google+. In the example above I've compared Dejan SEO page to one of our competitors which happen to have more followers, but very weak user engagement. I've also found out that Dejan SEO page tends to have better conversation in comparison to Moz page, while Moz outweigh us in both +1s and reshares. Their total score is quite high too at 63.93 which is nearly double to the engagement level of our page.

So what can Moz do now? Engage with their fans more on Google+ posts by replying, asking for opinion and answering questions.

Pro Tip: If you want people to engage and mention you more on Google+ use the name people use to refer to you colloquially.

Which sentence reads best to you?

- a) I stayed at **+Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts** last night.
- b) I stayed at **+Holiday Inn Hotels & Resorts** last night.
- c) I stayed at **+Hilton Hotels & Resorts** last night.
- d) I stayed at **+Best Western** last night.

The last one of course.

Arguably the best solution is to mention the actual hotel directly, for example: I stayed at **+Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore** last night. The problem is that local hotel names don't pop up in your suggestion list that easily. For example, for the above to work you had to enter "**+Shangri-La...**" while "**Shangri La...**" wouldn't trigger local hotel page.

Coming Soon: Discovery Paths for Brands and Content

The second part of this article will be published right after my talk at SMX Sydney this year. It will be a detailed overview of passive and active brand and content discovery mechanisms on Google+ with actionable advice and real-world examples.

Want more content like this? [Follow Us on Google+](#)