

Social Media Intelligence

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Google+ and SEO

Google+ Overview

Google+ is Google's latest venture into the social media realm. At first glance, it would appear Google has gleaned some of the leading features from other networks, which you can read more about in our [overview of Google+](#). Whilst Google may have been inspired by elements of a number of other social networks, the relationship between Google+ and Google's search engine could potentially make Google+ a game changer with regard to social media SEO practice.

Follow Links & About Me

The most beneficial aspect of Google+ to SEO campaigns is the inclusion of "follow" links. This feature means Google has become the first social network to allow users to include links that pass page rank to the destination page and allow search engine spiders to crawl through them, thereby having a positive effect on a user's [backlink building strategy](#). Although these links can be included in any user's post, given the very nature of social networks the assumption is Google won't attribute much weight to these links. However, it is the inclusion of permanent links in the 'about me' section of a user's profile that is likely to prove worthwhile in a user's bid to promote specific links.

Google+ allows "follow" links within a user's profile to assist in the publicity of relative links, whether to other social networks or work-related promotion.

Links

-  Punch Comms
-  Facebook
-  Twitter
-  Quora
-  Punch Blog

+1 and the Implications for Search

Since the launch of Google+ and the inclusion of the +1 button, it has become clear that Google is looking to prioritise links recommended by friends when users come to make a search. A user logged into their Google+ profile, for example, will find that links +1'd by their friends on Google+ could appear higher in their search results compared to if they conduct the same search when they are not logged in (see the below image). Social Media blogger Todd Defren experimented with the potential [SEO benefits of "+1ing"](#), and found it had a positive affect within Google's rankings. It is this aspect of Google which points towards its plan to prioritise, as [one blogger](#) defined it, "trusted endorsements".

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 [Keredy Andrews](#) ([petegould on punchcomms.com](#)) shared this

Links +1'd by a user being followed appear towards the top of a search engine results page when a user searches whilst logged in.

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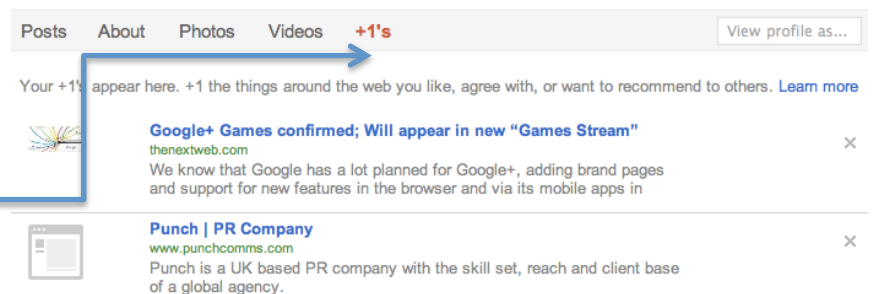
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The idea of trusted endorsements is likely to be one Google is looking to promote to shape future SEO campaigns. Whilst Google has traditionally used technical algorithms to determine which links deserve the highest ranking, these features appear to show that Google is using peer recommendation within social media to be able to produce more accurate, relevant results to users, as argued by [TechCrunch](#) within its discussion on the social implications Google+ may have on search. At a macro level, activity on Google+ is likely to lead to changes in search engine rankings for all users in the long term.

Websites +1'd by a user appear in a separate tab on the user's profile, allowing others to view that user's previous +1s and work out if that user is relevant to add to their circles.



How Best To React

Given that we're now aware of the apparent benefits towards SEO rankings within Google+, there are a number of elements users can optimise to in order to benefit their search campaign -

- Links - Link to websites, blogs other relevant links in the 'About Me' section of a Google+ profile.
- Link and use the +1 button wisely and at the correct frequency – Post links through a stream at a consistent frequency and whilst also “+1ing” useful and relevant links, be sure to +1 interesting links as well. This will prevent a feed looking like spam.
- Look to engage with other users to help spread the content being promoted - The more users engaged with, the higher the likelihood of your content being seen and spread further across Google+ and other social networks to a wider audience.

Of course, Google+ is still in its infancy, and as such the implications the social network may have on SEO may vary. Given this, we recommend regularly checking for updates from leading voices within the SEO sector, including [Search Engine Land](#), [SEOMOZ](#) and [Search Engine Watch](#).

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