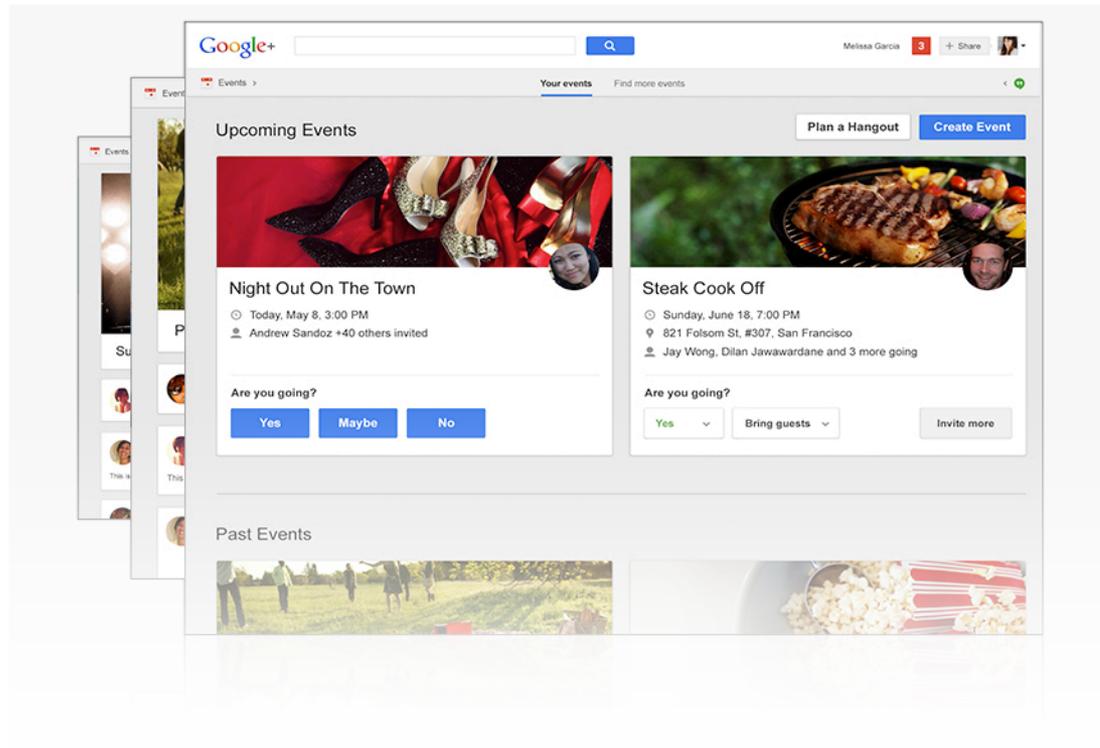


Google+ Partner Playbook



# Welcome to the Google+ Partner Playbook!

We're excited to provide you with a comprehensive resource to help grow your audience on Google+. From time to time, we'll update this playbook with new features, success stories, and best practices. We hope that it helps you share high-quality content, grow your audience, and get the most out of Google+.

Best,  
The Google+ Team

# Table of Contents

<b>Getting Started</b>	<b>5</b>
8 Tips to get Started	6-7
Case Study: Tyra Banks	8
<b>Features of Google+</b>	<b>9</b>
Hangouts and Hangouts On Air	10
Google+ Communities	11-12
Events	13
Public Event	14
Case Study: Suite 709	15
Event on Air	16
Case Study: <i>Lucky Magazine</i>	17
<b>Google+ and Search</b>	<b>18</b>
Google+ and Search	19
Pages in Search	20
Profiles in Search	21
<b>Growing Your Audience</b>	<b>22</b>
Growing Your Audience	23
5 Tips to Grow Your Audience	24
Google+ Growth Checklist	25

# Table of Contents

<b>G+ for Your Website or App</b>	<b>26</b>
G+ Helps Businesses Grow	27-28
<b>Hangouts On Air Broadcast Guide</b>	<b>29</b>
Hangouts On Air	30
Case Study: The White House	31
System Requirements	32
Scheduling Your HOA	33-34
Promoting Your HOA	35-36
Preparing for Your HOA	37-38
Case Study: <i>NY Times</i>	39
Selecting Participants	40-42
Connect with YouTube	43
Embed Your HOA	44
HOA Apps	45-46
The Day of Your HOA	47-48
Hosting Your HOA	49-51
After Your HOA	52-54
Metrics for Your HOA	55
Keep Promoting	56

# 01 Getting Started

## 8 tips to get started:

### 1. Complete your profile

Make sure that your Google+ page is complete and interesting before you start promoting it, this can help people discover you when they search. Add a picture and fill out your whole profile. Include a link to your website and a clear, detailed description in the 'About' section. Add pictures and videos, if you have them.

### 2. Welcome users

Welcome people to your page with your first post. Include a link to your website, a picture, or a video. Also post the video in the 'Video' section.

### 3. Share exclusive content

Make sure your followers learn something new and unique from your page. Share content they can't find anywhere else.

### 4. Start a Google+ Community

Communities are a way to interact with people who share common interests.

### 5. Promote your page

Maximize exposure for your Google+ page:

- Encourage users to follow your page.
- Use the Google+ badge on your website, other social media, and in all your other online and offline communication.

### 6. Host Hangouts On Air

The perfect way to connect with your followers is to invite them to a Hangout On Air. This gives them a unique opportunity to engage with you, or meet the people behind the organization. It gives you the chance to get to know your followers even better. Fiat Nederland, for example, hosted a Hangout On Air to introduce one of its car designs.

## 7. Post often and keep content fresh

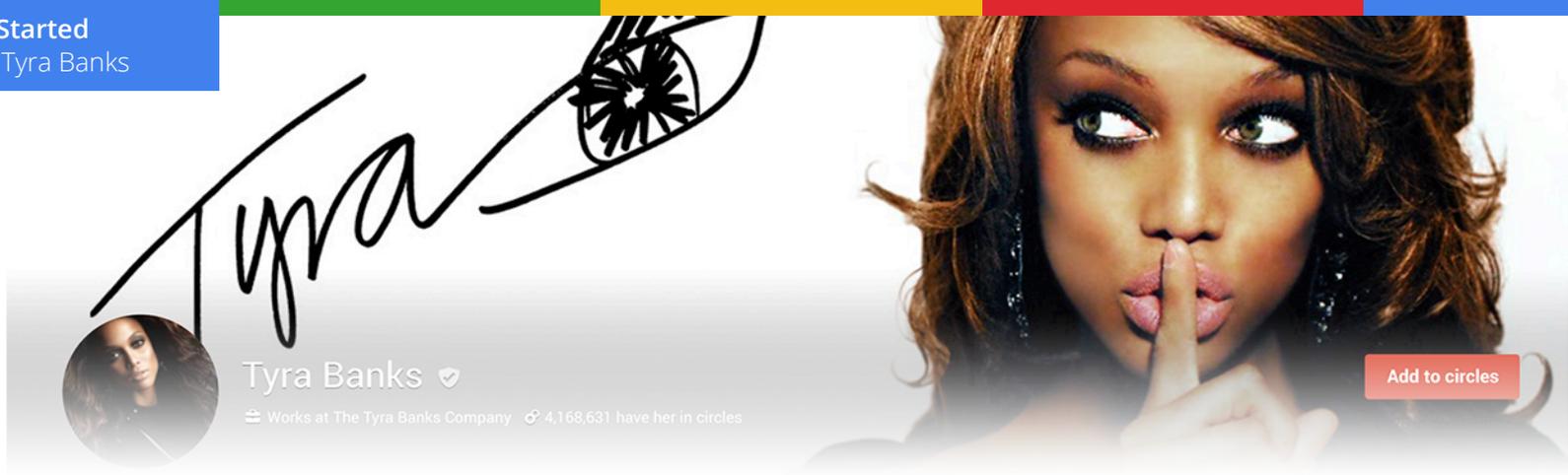
Post up-to-date content frequently to keep your followers engaged. But don't overwhelm them by posting everything at the same time. If you post more than once daily, spread your posts throughout the day. Distribute them across time zones too, if you have followers in various parts of the world. Make a content plan for each week, with a good mix of planned and spontaneous updates.

## 8. Test, experiment, and learn

Try different kinds of posts, questions, and Hangouts On Air and see what works best for you and your followers. Let the community's reaction to your content guide you and help you adjust. Have a look around the Google+ platform to find out what other organizations are doing, and start following them.

Please visit our help center if you have any questions.

<http://support.google.com/plus/>



## Tyra keeps it fierce on Google+

Tyra Banks makes her presence known on Google+ by constantly posting fun and original content while using the various features of the platform to engage her audience. For example, after the America's Next Top Model season premiere a post-show Hangout On Air kept the audience's attention for another hour by getting them to tune into this second screen experience.

### How Tyra works it:

- Her alluring profile and cover photos make it easier for fans to recognize her page, while giving it some glam.
- A verification badge and custom URL let fans know Tyra's page is the real deal.
- Tyra keeps the conversation fresh by posting at least once a day. Most of her posts are photos, which consistently receive the highest number of +1s, re-shares, and comments.
- She hosts regular Hangouts On Air and changes them up each time. Some Hangouts On Air are with fans, while others are with fashion bloggers and beauty experts. Every HOA is broadcasted on Google+ and YouTube so followers can always tune in.
- When planning a Hangout On Air, Tyra creates a Google+ Event so fans can RSVP, submit questions, and receive push notifications as reminders.
- Tyra promotes her Google+ presence across her social channels including: Twitter, Facebook and her own website. [Read more](#)

# 02 Features of Google+



# Hangouts and Hangouts On Air

1. **Private conversations with up to 9 people**
2. **Broadcast to the world with Hangouts On Air**  
Broadcast your live Hangout On Air on Google+, your YouTube channel, and your website, and share the public recording once you're done. You can stream a virtual press conference, host a worldwide concert, or moderate a panel discussion with international experts.
3. **Host a Virtual Meeting**

**Photography**  
All the things about photography  
Notification on



Public 4,996 members

Search community

All posts (2201)

Gear talk (301)

Free conversations (56)

 **James Applewood**  
Free conversations 5 hours ago

I love the sunsets in Arizona! It's my favorite place to get time-lapse shots at sunset.



About Photography

"To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them that they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as a camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a subliminal murder - a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time."  
-Susan Sontag-

[On Photography](#)

 **Amanda Plum**  
Free conversations 5 hours ago

Okay good people! Check out this fun shot I got of a colorful Mondrian-inspired house near the beach.



# Google+ Communities

Google+ Communities are places where people can get together and talk about the stuff they're into. With Google+ Communities, your business, organization, or brand can create a place for your fans and followers to engage more deeply with each other.

## With Google+ Communities, you can:

### 1. Bring together fans and followers.

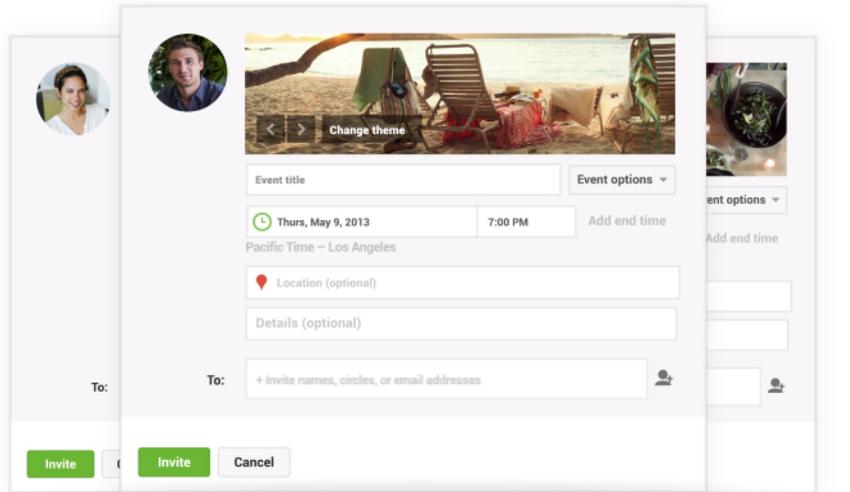
Example: If you're an athletic apparel company, you might create a Community for female distance runners to exchange tips, find out about upcoming races, share running trails, and find training partners.

### 2. Raise brand awareness by participating in Communities with similar interests.

Example: If you're an airline, you can join a community for frequent fliers at Chicago O'Hare International Airport and engage members by answering questions about ticket upgrades, sharing tips for stress-free travel, and inviting people to stop by your lounge during certain hours for free snacks.

### 3. Learn from followers by keeping up with relevant Community discussions.

Example: If you're a record label managing several up-and-coming bands, you might discover venues where similar bands have played in the past by spending time in music-oriented Communities, and then use this information to help plan tours.



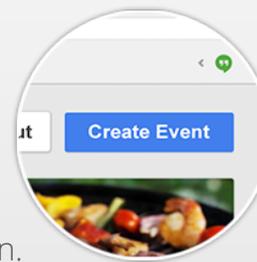
## Events

Create beautiful and customized invitations:

- Schedule a Hangout On Air
- Collect photos, videos, and comments in one place
- Integrate seamlessly with Google Calendar and Google Maps

### Get Started

1. Go to the Events page and click on the Create Event button.
2. Pick an Event name, and give it a start time, end time and location.
3. If your Event is private or an Event On Air, invite the appropriate Circles. If your Event is public or you are scheduling Hangouts On Air, select 'Public' in the invite field.





Pace Soccer vs. Southern New Hampshire

+1

Share event



Say something



Are you going?

Yes ▾

+2 guests ▾



Chandra Raghaven

Shared publicly · 20 min ago

Details ▾

# Public Event

Everyone can RSVP, comment, add photos, and invite others. Here's how:

1. Set up the Event.
2. In the 'Invite names, Circles, or email addresses' field, select 'Public.'
3. Click 'Invite.'
4. At any time you can disable or re-enable comments or photos.



Suite 709/Courrier National Tour - MONROE

+1

Share event

## Suite 709 keeps the party going with Google+

Austin-based band Suite 709 use Google+ Events and Hangouts On Air to bring their live shows to fans from around the world. On tour, the band uses Events to promote upcoming shows and collect a unique perspective of each performance with photos uploaded via Party Mode. This unique form of marketing has helped album sales and concert attendance rise, while the band gained more than 280,000 followers on Google+ in less than six months.

### How they rocked it:

- One week before each show, Suite 709 creates a Google+ Event and sends out invitations to fans, encouraging participation online and in-person.
- Band members interact directly with fans through the Event stream, responding to questions, encouraging followers to invite their circles, and posting pictures live via Party Mode at the Event.
- A few hours before each show, the band hosts a behind-the-scenes Hangout On Air to connect with fans and build engagement around the Event.
- At the concert, Suite 709 reminds fans to add photos to the Event using Party Mode, giving fans incentive to revisit the page after the show is over. [Read more](#)



## 64th Primetime Emmy Awards

+1

Share event



Say something



Are you going?

Yes

+2 guests



Roshni Malani

+1

Shared publicly · 5 min ago

Details

# Event On Air

Only invited guests can post photos and add comments, but anyone can +1 them.

1. Set up the Event.
2. Click on 'Advanced.'
3. Click on 'Make this an Event On Air.'
4. In the 'Invite names, Circles, or email addresses' field, select on the guests you want to give the ability to send photos and comment.
5. Click 'Invite.'



NYFW Spring 2013

+1

Share event

## Lucky brings New York Fashion Week to the world

Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event On Air to give fashionistas everywhere a live look at New York Fashion Week. Influential bloggers, designers, photographers, and editors, uploaded over 240 photos from New York Fashion Week. Lucky was looking to help boost their presence on Google+ and ended up doubling their followers due to this Event.

### How they did it:

- Lucky Magazine created a Google+ Event and invited 20 fashion influencers to post photos and comments live from each event in New York.

- They broadcasted 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 wide audience.
- Lucky also promoted the Event with posts on their Google+ page. [Read more](#)

# 03 Google+ and Search

Google  03 Google+ and Search Robin Johnson 0 + Share

Web Images Maps Shopping More Search tools

110 personal results. 574,000,000 other results.

[StarWars.com | Star Wars - Episode VII, The Clone Wars & Games](#)  
starwars.com/  
The official site for **Star Wars**, featuring the latest on Episode VII and The Clone Wars animated series, with regularly updated games, videos, and news.  
Games - The Clone Wars - Play - Shop

[Star Wars - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)  
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star\_Wars  
**Star Wars** is an American epic space opera franchise centered on a film series created by George Lucas. The film series has spawned a media franchise outside ...  
A New Hope - Sequel trilogy - List of Star Wars novels - The Phantom Menace

[Star Wars \(1977\) - IMDb](#)  
www.imdb.com/title/tt0076759/  
Directed by George Lucas. With Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guinness. Luke Skywalker, a spirited farm boy, joins rebel forces to save ...

[News for star wars](#)

[Star wars on the cricket pitch](#)  
Times of India - 4 hours ago  
The first two days of the Kalyan Jewellers CCL powered by Parle 20 20 were adrenaline-pumping and star-studded affairs.

['Star Wars' writer Lawrence Kasdan wants to 'start fresh' with spin-off film](#)  
NME.com - 12 hours ago

[Death Star not dead? Star Wars fans raise \\$380k for open source project, aim for ...](#)  
RT - 1 day ago

[Star Wars: The Old Republic](#)  
www.swtor.com/  
Official site. BioWare and LucasArts bring you the next evolution in MMO Gameplay: Story.  
3,705 people +1'd this

## Star Wars



Star Wars is an American epic space opera franchise centered on a film series created by George Lucas. [Wikipedia](#)

**Characters:** Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Yoda, Obi-Wan Kenobi, [More](#)

**Cast:** Mark Hamill, Natalie Portman, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, [More](#)

**Directors:** George Lucas, J.J. Abrams, Irvin Kershner, Richard Marquand, Dave Filoni

**Recent posts** [Follow](#)

 Character of the Week: "Attachment is forbidden. Possession is forbidden. Compassion, which I would define as unconditional love, is essential to a Jedi's life. — Feb 10, 2013"

**Movies**

				
Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope 1977	Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back 1980	Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi 1983	Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace 1999	Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones 2002

# Google+ and Search

While many types of social media photos, posts, and content are buried by new content within hours of their posting, Google+ content can appear to a user in Search when relevant and shared with them (or public).

03 Google+ and Search Pages in Search

Robin Johnson 0 + Share

Web Images Maps Shopping More Search tools

Results: 26,500,000 other results.

**Real-time**  
If you post frequently with high quality content to Google+, users may see your most recent post right in Search.

**Connect directly with people**  
Users will be able to click through to your Google+ page, so they can proactively discover and follow you.

**Follow from Search**  
Fans can add you to their circles directly from Search.

**Cadbury**  
Cadbury is a British confectionery company owned by Mondelez International Inc. and is the industry's second-largest globally after Mars, Incorporated. [Wikipedia](#)

**Recent posts**  
It's pancake Tuesday tomorrow, what's your favourite topping? — 4 hours ago

**See results about**  
Cadbury's Chocolate Factory, Tasmania  
Cadbury's Chocolate Factory is a working chocolate factory belonging to the Australian division of ...  
Cadbury World  
Cadbury World is a visitor attraction created and run by the Cadbury chocolate company. Two locations ...

**Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**  
British confectionery company owned by Mondelez International Inc. ry's second-largest globally after Mars, Incorporated. With its ...  
Products - John Cadbury - Cadbury Dairy Milk - Cadbury World

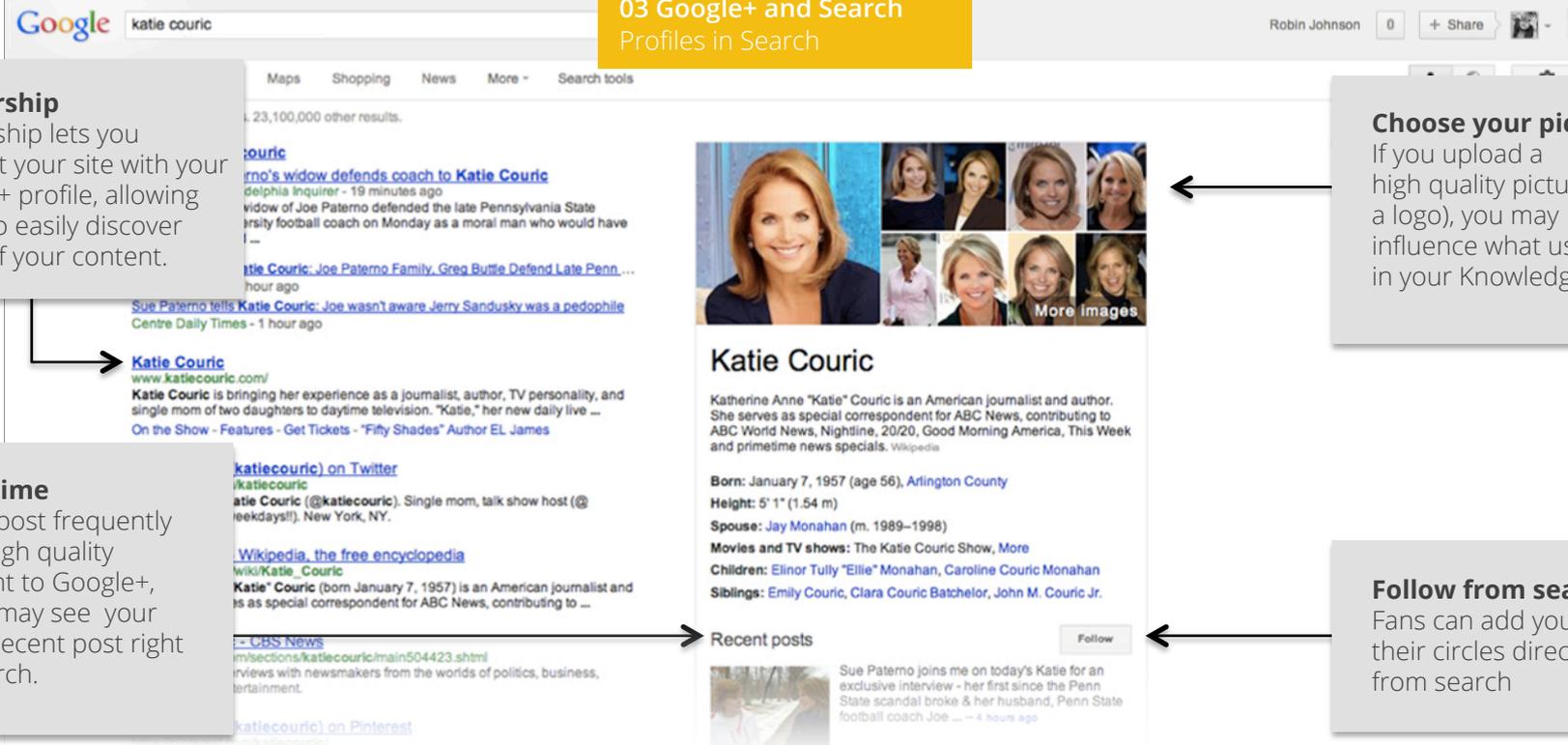
**Home - Cadbury NZ**  
Site contains information on chocolate, products, Cadbury World, Cadbury Kitchen, Cadbury Kitchen, fund raising and the company, plus games, puzzles, ...

**Cadbury India**  
Cadbury India ranked 4th amongst the Most Admired Companies of India by ...  
Cadbury India launches a new TVC for CDM Shubh Aarambh - Child's Play view> ...

# Pages in Search

## Influence how you appear in Search, in real time.

1. Create a Google+ page with a photo and engage your followers frequently with high quality content.
2. In the 'Website' section of your page's 'About' section, make sure that you include the green URL that appears in your search result snippet, exactly as it appears in Search. ex: <http://www.cadburydairymilk.co.uk/>.
3. Submit the request for verification using [this form](#), or contact your Google representative to get your page verified.



**Authorship**

Authorship lets you connect your site with your Google+ profile, allowing users to easily discover more of your content.

**Choose your picture**

If you upload a high quality picture (not a logo), you may influence what users see in your Knowledge Card.

**Real-time**

If you post frequently with high quality content to Google+, users may see your most recent post right in Search.

**Follow from search**

Fans can add you to their circles directly from search

# Profiles in Search

Influence how you look in Search, in real time.

1. Create a Google+ page with a photo and engage your followers frequently with high quality content.
2. In the 'Contributor to' section of your profile's 'About' section, make sure that you include the green URL that appears in your Search result snippet, exactly as it appears in Search. ex: <http://www.davidbeckham.com/>

3. Contact your Google representative to get your page verified.

**Pro tip:** To enable authorship, link your Google+ profile to your website. [Learn More](#)

# 04 Growing your Audience



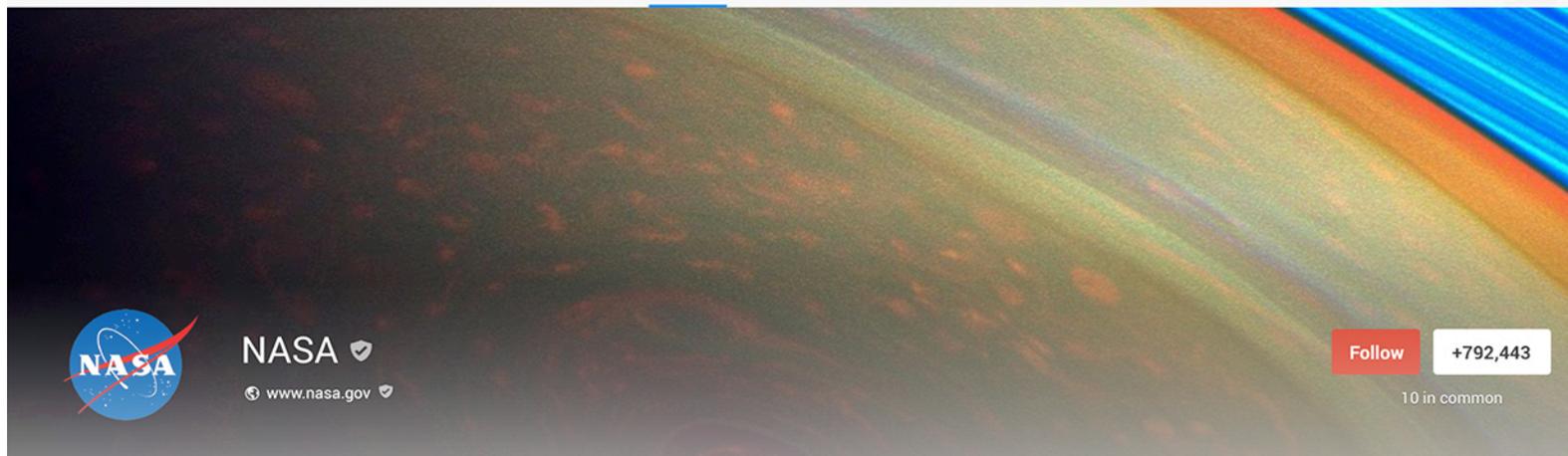
About

Posts

Photos

YouTube

Reviews



NASA

Shared publicly, 17 hours ago

I remember that one fateful day when Coach too me aside. I knew what was coming. "You don't have to tell me," I said. "Oh off the team, aren't I?" "Well," said Coach, "you



NASA

Shared publicly, 20 hours ago

A test version of NASA's Orion spacecraft landed safely during a simulation of two types of parachute failures. In the test, conducted in Yuma, Ariz., on May 1, a mock Orion crew

In their circles (24)

[View all](#)

Juan Anorga

San Francisco

Add



Darwin Yamamoto

# Growing your audience

Maintaining an active Google+ page is a great way to grow an audience and get the word out about your HOA. Focus on engaging your followers and getting them more involved.

## 5 tips to grow your audience

### 1. Circle up

- Welcome viewers and followers with a video greeting (Example: [Bar Refaeli](#) and [Conan O'Brien](#))
- Give your viewers access to exclusive content
- Share public videos and podcasts on your Google+ stream
- Add a Google+ badge to your website to gain followers externally

### 2. Host Hangouts On Air

- Interact with fans in real time
- Broadcast live, save the recording instantly on YouTube, and share it on your Google+ stream

### 3. Share photos and videos

- Build unique photo scrapbooks/albums of behind-the-scenes content
- See fans comments and track which ones they +1

### 4. Get recommended with +1s

- Measure your impact across the web using [Social Reports](#)

### 5. Communities

- Increase discoverability in [communities built around shared interests](#)
- Build a place for your fans to engage around your brands (i.e. [+Star Wars Community](#))

## Google+ growth checklist:

### ❑ Post regularly to your Google+ page

The more you post, the more likely users will find you in Google+ or when your content is relevant to their Google Search results.

### ❑ “Follow us on Google+”

Promote your Google+ profile, on your website, other social media channels and in email signatures.

### ❑ Link your Google+ page to your site

Link your website and your Google+ Page with the [Google+ badge tool](#) to help users find your +Page.

### ❑ Authorship in search

Link your content on the web to your Google+ profile and add an authorship byline to that content when it appears in Google Search results. [Learn more.](#)

### ❑ Direct Connect

Create a direct pathway from Google Search to your Plus page by enabling Direct Connect. [Learn more.](#)

### ❑ Connect Google+ and YouTube

Allow your HOA video to automatically post to your Google+ page and YouTube Channel.

To connect your Google+ **Profile** to your YouTube account, navigate to “Hangouts On Air” from your Google+ page. When you start a Hangout check “Enable Hangouts On Air” box. The first time you check the box, it will ask you to verify your account and connect your Google+ profile to your Youtube account.

To find out how to connect your Google+ **page** to your YouTube account, click [here](#).

**Note:** After your Hangout On Air is complete, it will automatically appear in your YouTube channel as a video. Post your YouTube HOA video publicly on the web, on Google+, and other social channels to spread the word to all your potential viewers.

# 05 Google+ for your Website or App

## Google+ helps businesses grow

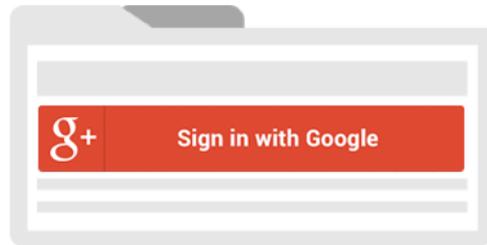
We have a number of features for your sites and apps to help grow your audience.



### +1 Button

Let visitors quickly recommend your brand and your content.

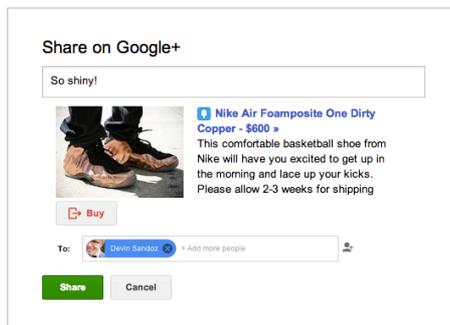
Inspire site visitors to tell the world about your brand by adding a +1 button to your site. One click lets visitors recommend your content on Google Search and share it on Google+. [Learn more.](#)



### “Sign in with Google” Button

Create more engaging experiences and drive more usage across devices.

Users can sign in to your app with Google, and bring along their Google+ info for an upgraded experience. In addition to basic authentication, you can let web users instantly download and install your app to their Android device. [Learn more.](#)

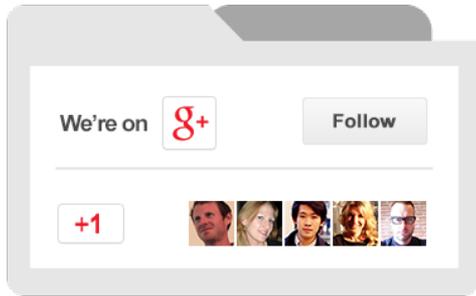


### Interactive Posts

Help users prompt friends to take specific actions in your app from a Google+ post.

Shares from your app can now include calls to action (like “listen,” “RSVP,” and “check-in”), custom thumbnails, and brand attribution — all of which help them stand out in users’ Google+ streams. These posts deep link to a specific piece of content inside your app, further improving engagement.

[Learn more.](#)



### Brand Badge

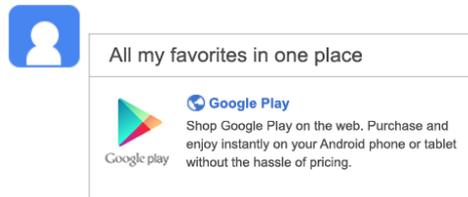
Help users prompt friends to take specific actions in your app from a Google+ post.

Increase your Google+ page audience by driving traffic from your site with an official Google+ badge and get more recommendations for your site in Google Search. Brand badges allow people to easily find you on Google+ and add you to a circle directly from a website. [Learn more.](#)



### Share Button

Provide an easy way for people to share your content with their circles. Spread the word and widen your circles with the Share button on your Google+ posts. When users see something they like in their streams, they can click "Share" to shout it out to their followers. [Learn more.](#)

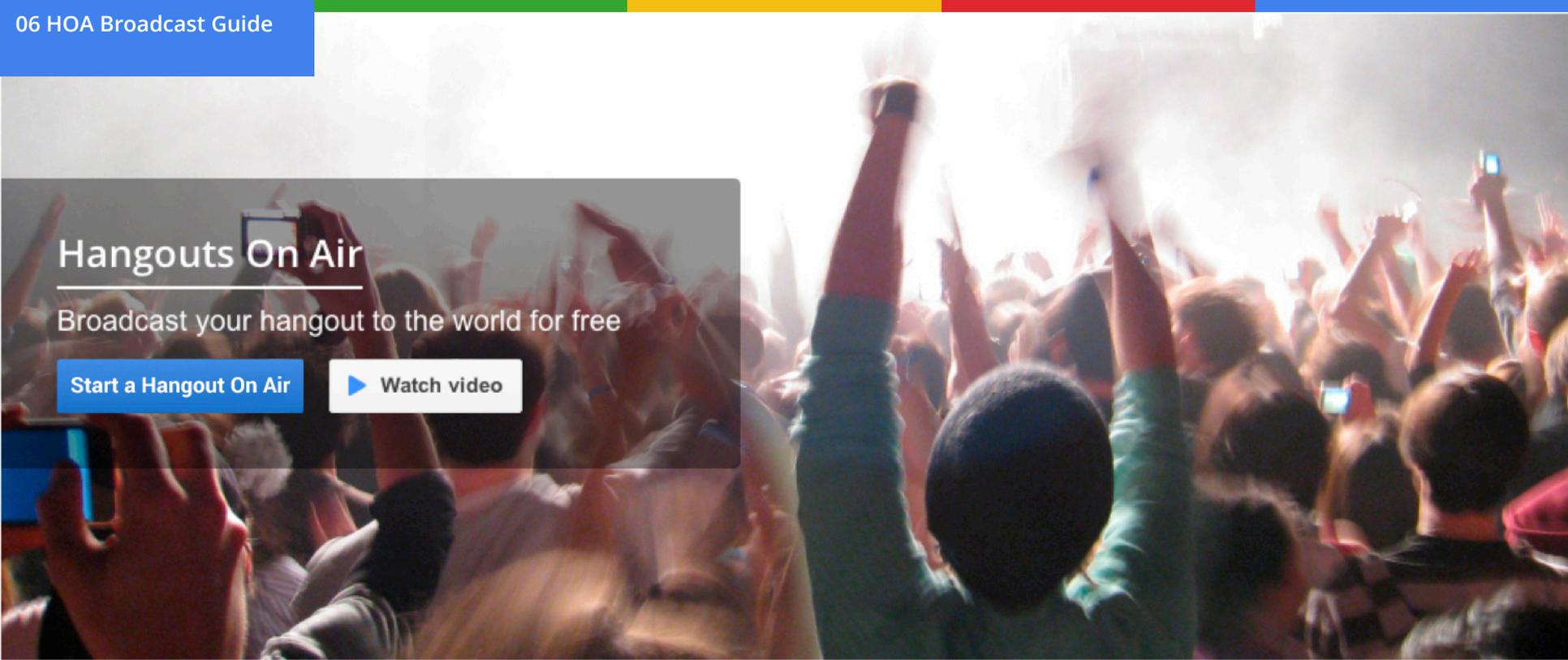


### Snippet

Customize the text and image that people see when your content is shared.

A post to Google+ that includes a link renders a preview, or *snippet*, that contains the page title, a brief description of the page, and a thumbnail image. You can customize this snippet to make your content stand out and be more engaging. [Learn more.](#)

# 06 Hangouts On Air Broadcast Guide



**Hangouts On Air**  
Broadcast your hangout to the world for free

[Start a Hangout On Air](#) [▶ Watch video](#)

# Hangouts On Air

## What is a video call?

Video calls are a simple and easy way to talk with up to 9 people at the same time. Face-to-face conversations can take place anytime, anywhere—and they're free (all you need is a Google+ account).

## What is a Hangout On Air?

With Hangouts On Air, you can broadcast your conversation to an unlimited number of viewers and instantly upload it to your YouTube channel afterwards. You can even embed the live broadcast on any website, just like a YouTube video.



## Hangout with the White House

The Obama administration uses Google+ Hangouts On Air to drive citizen engagement around major policies and initiatives, while expanding their reach. Their live HOA with Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan attracted 70,000 concurrent online viewers, with even more views afterwards on YouTube and Google+.

### How the HOA on mortgage refinancing became a success:

- The White House announced Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan as their featured participant, sparking national interest around the HOA.

- To reach a larger audience, the White House partnered with online real estate leader Zillow to moderate and promote the HOA.
- The White House attracted additional viewers with a blog post, call out video, and posts across all social media platforms.
- The HOA was live-streamed on Google+, YouTube, and [Whitehouse.gov](http://Whitehouse.gov). Afterwards, the videos were made available for sharing on YouTube. [Read more](#)

## System requirements for video calls:

### Supported browsers:

- Google Chrome 10+ [download](#)
- Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) 8+ [download](#)
- Mozilla Firefox 16+ [download](#)
- Safari 4+ [download](#)

### Supported Operating Systems:

- Mac OS X 10.6+
- Windows 7
- Windows Vista with SP1 or later
- Windows XP
- Chrome
- Ubuntu and other Debian-based Linux distributions

### Processor minimum requirements:

- Any 2 GHz dual core processor or greater

### Bandwidth:

- For 1:1 connections we suggest a 1 Mbps/1 Mbps (up/down)
- For group video connectivity we suggest 1 Mbps/2 Mbps (up/down)

The bandwidth used by video calls is adaptive and will vary to provide the best experience for the given conditions. Here is a guide for the minimum and maximum bandwidth requirements and expectations:

### Minimum bandwidth required

- Outbound from the participants: 1 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants: 2.5 Mbps

### Ideal bandwidth for the best experience

- Outbound from the participants: 3 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants: 3 Mbps

### With group video calls of more than 2 people you can expect bandwidth usage in ideal situations to be:

- Outbound from the participants in all situations: 5 Mbps
- Inbound to the participants in all situations: 5 Mbps

[Learn about the specifications and limitations of video calls.](#)



Picnic at Golden Gate Park

+1

Share event

Are you going?

Yes +2 guests

 **Roshni Malani**  
Shared publicly • 5 min ago

Details

# Scheduling your Hangout On Air

One of the best ways to announce a Hangout On Air is by scheduling a Google+ Event. Events notify everyone you invite of your upcoming Hangout On Air and automatically sync with people's Google Calendars. Anyone who RSVPs for your Event will receive an email notification the night before and the day-of, reminding them of your Hangout On Air.

## Hangouts On Air Event checklist:

### Create a public Google+ Event well in advance of your Hangout On Air

Events give your audience time to RSVP, and will automatically embed in their Google Calendar when they RSVP “yes.”

### Be sure NOT to select ‘Google+ Hangouts’ in the Event options

Selecting ‘Google+ Hangouts’ will automatically schedule a regular hangout, not a Hangout On Air.

### Choose a time and date that works for your audience

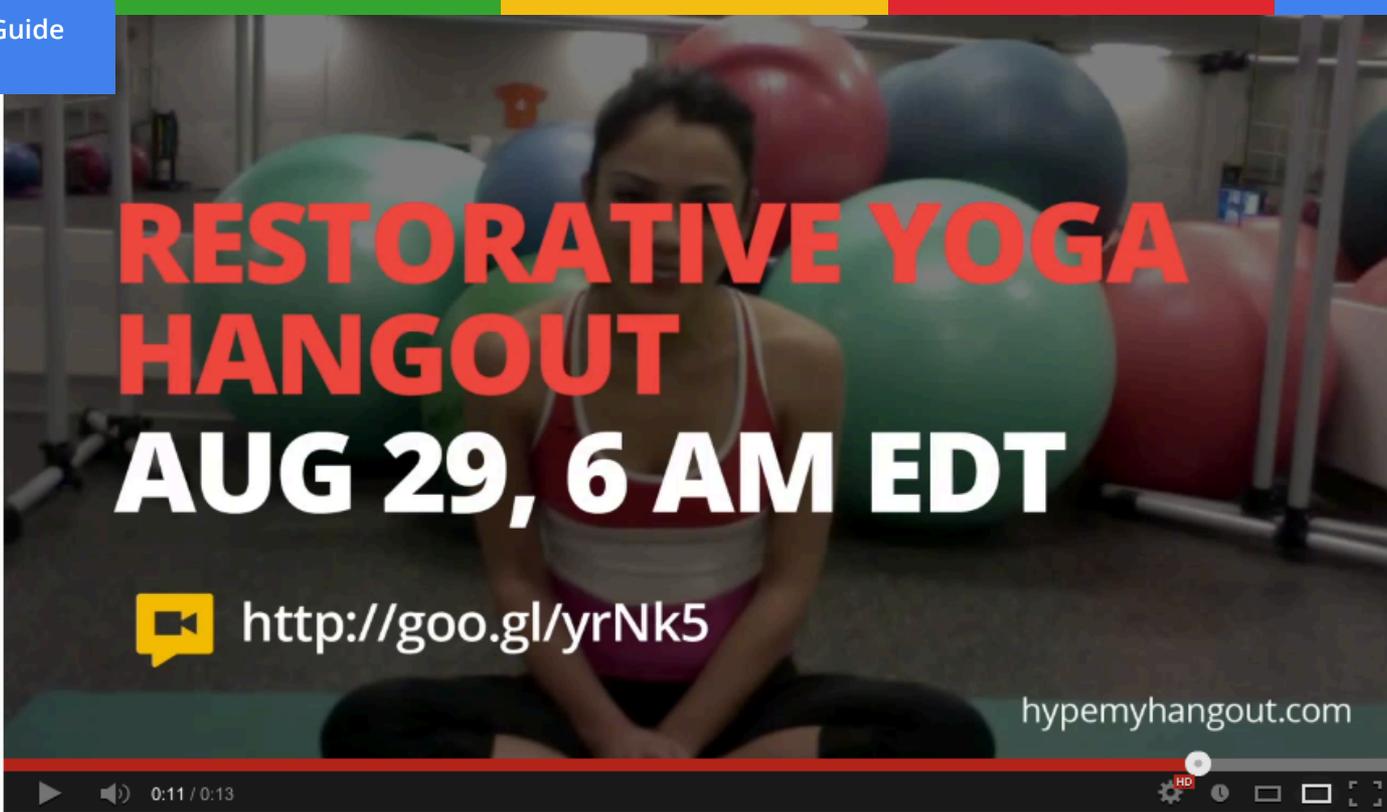
If you’re hosting a nationwide or global Hangout On Air, keep time zones in mind.

### Send announcements to get followers engaged and excited

Creating an Event for your Hangout On Air sends an announcement post to all of your followers. Sharing an Event sends another announcement reminding them to RSVP for the Event. A few days before the Event, consider creating an engaging follow-up post as well. Be sure to direct your audience to your Events page to find the hangout, since you will only receive the URL right before you’re about to start broadcasting.

### Don’t stop there

Continue promoting your Hangout On Air Event to maximize your audience. Make sure your messaging includes a call-to-action, such as an RSVP.



# Promoting your Hangout On Air

Start promoting your Hangout On Air early. Posting several times about an upcoming HOA is a good thing as long as the posts are different and creative. Be sure to post across all your social and outreach channels (including your email lists).

## Hangouts On Air promotion checklist :

### ❑ Start conversations

When you post your content to Google+, start a conversation around it—ask people directly what they think of your stories, and what ideas they have for topics you should address.

### ❑ Encourage audience-generated photos and videos

Google+ is a rich multimedia platform—make a call-out for people to submit photos or videos to you directly so that you can expand your social reach.

### ❑ Track influencers with Ripples and make them your “correspondents”

Ripples allow you to track how your Google+ posts spread. See who your most influential followers are and make them your informal digital spokespeople. [Learn more](#).

### ❑ Post reminders

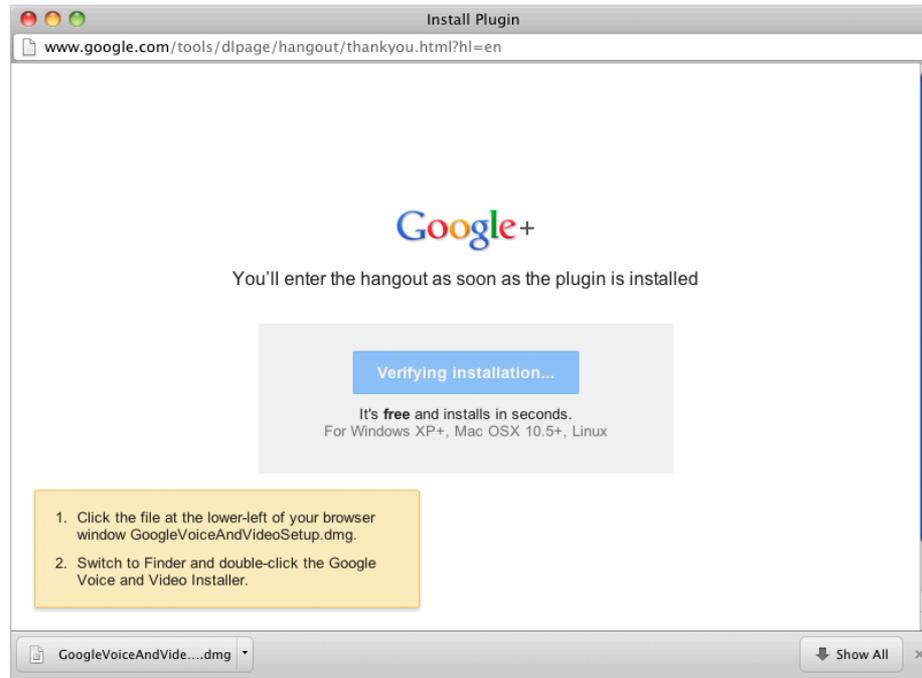
Remind your audience on the the day before and morning of the HOA to keep it on their radar.

### ❑ Use a hashtag

Include a hashtag for your HOA, like #helpdeskHOA, so your audience can follow and easily discover the conversation as the Hangout On Air broadcasts.

### ❑ Hype My Hangout

[Hypemyhangout.com](http://Hypemyhangout.com) is an unofficial website that makes it really easy to create a 15-second video to promote your HOA. Post the video to Google+, YouTube, and all other media channels.



## Preparing for your Hangout On Air

As always, preparation is key. Practice with your participants by doing a dry-run of your Hangout On Air before you go live. A rehearsal can greatly improve the flow of the conversation, shake out any last minute nerves, and catch any technical problems before you start.

## Preparation checklist:

### ❑ Sketch out talking points

Though you don't want your Hangout On Air to appear scripted, you do want to keep the conversation going. Having a topic list and talking points helps.

Before the HOA goes live, tell your participants:

- What topics you will be covering
- How much time you will spend on each
- Whether or not there will be a Q&A session at the end

### ❑ Be prepared technically

While the HOA should feel spontaneous to viewers, you should be well-prepared on your end. Make sure to test your Internet connection, cameras, background lighting, mics, and other equipment well ahead of time. Remember that every device that joins a HOA must have the hangout plug-in downloaded. [Download the plugin.](#)

### ❑ Choose the right participants

If you broadcast and record your HOA, give some thought to who you actually want to participate. While the Cameraman app allows you to hide select participants from your viewers, you will not be able to kick them out of your HOA.

### ❑ Practice using Hangout apps to add professionalism

Apps are a great way to increase the production level of a HOA, but you should be comfortable using them before the HOA starts. Just using visual overlays from the Hangouts Toolbox to display each participant's name can really make a difference.

### ❑ Sharing videos

Make sure you have the video ready ahead of time. Also, decide who will be sharing the video. Remember you can control which window is featured while the video is playing.

### ❑ Have an agenda

When you start broadcasting, let the audience know what to expect from your HOA. Consider posting the HOA's agenda ahead of time on your Google+ page, Event page, website, and other social media platforms.



## Breaking news with Hangouts On Air

The New York Times uses HOA to broadcast live breaking news directly from their website. Most notably was the HOA held just hours after the Supreme Court's monumental decision to uphold President Obama's Affordable Healthcare Act. The Times became the first major media outlet to discuss the decision via live web video.

### How they made news:

- Anticipating the news in advance, The New York Times secured participants one week out to ensure a smooth HOA at a moment's notice.
- On the day of the HOA, the Times team created a graphic placeholder for the live broadcast on the

NYTimes Opinion Page. The placeholder promoted the HOA, and provided participant bios and links to the evolving news story.

- They embedded the HOA into the site with simple HTML code, automatically generated and copied directly from the HOA page. The HOA was also broadcasted on their Google+ page.
- A homepage teaser linked the Times' large online audience directly to the live HOA.
- After the live broadcast, the HOA was quickly edited on YouTube and uploaded to the front page of the NYTimes.com. [Read more](#)

## Selecting participants

*We recommend engaging with your followers by sourcing participants directly from Google+.*

- ❑ Make a post announcing that you're looking for people to join your HOA.
- ❑ Ask folks to respond to your post with a thought-provoking question or a reason why they should be chosen.
- ❑ Make it clear that you're choosing a select number of people to join, but that the public will still be able to watch the Hangout On Air while it's happening.
- ❑ Initial screening: Select the best responses to your initial post and click through to their profiles for a quick screening.
- ❑ Create a shortlist: Chose a group of participants from the initial screening and schedule a quick video call with each one to ensure their bandwidth, audio and lighting meet the tech requirements.
- ❑ Create two circles of participants: a top picks circle and a backup circle in case someone can't join the HOA at the last minute.
- ❑ Make sure all the participants have downloaded the Hangout plug-in, added you to their Circles, and you have added them. For a Google+ page, your participants must first add you to Circles, then you can add them.

**Pro tip:** Create a Google Form to source participants easily.

## Assigning participant roles

### ❑ Celebrity, expert or special guest

Who will be the focal point of your HOA? If you're doing a Q&A, it helps to have a person who people are joining to engage with. Is it the news editor, a politician, a celebrity, or the inventor of the latest and greatest technology?

### ❑ Moderator

We recommend bringing in a moderator who can carry the discussion forward. The moderator's job is to call on participants to get their opinions, help the host transition from one topic to another, and ensure there are no awkward pauses in the conversation.

### ❑ Participants

Who are the other people in your HOA? Bringing in fans, constituents, citizen journalists, bloggers, and excited Google+ users adds to the richness and variety of the conversation.

### ❑ Assign participant roles

As your number of participants increases, you will need to moderate the discussion more to ensure a smooth discussion. We recommend between four and seven total participants for a smooth conversation.

### ❑ Delegate production responsibilities

During a HOA, someone needs to be watching the comments, controlling who is muted and which window is featured, checking the stream, starting/ending the Event and interacting via social media. Before the Event starts, think about who is responsible for all these tasks.

## Selecting who joins your Hangout On Air

### Regulating who joins your HOA

You can invite individuals or your Circles to participate in your Hangout On Air, but you can't invite extended Circles or the public. It is very important to make sure you are careful about who you invite. You are ultimately responsible for the content of your broadcast. Accounts that violate our terms will be disabled.

Your participants will not see an option to invite others. However if they copy and paste the URL of the HOA from the browser window and post it publicly, or email the link to someone, anyone who clicks on the link can join the HOA if it's not full. It's very important that you clarify with participants that they should not share the link with anyone else.

If you're hosting the HOA from a Google+ page, participants must add you to their Circles before you can invite them to the HOA.

## Connect with YouTube

### How to feature your Hangout On Air on your YouTube channel

For a step-by-step guide on how to feature your HOA on your YouTube channel, [click here](#).

### Important: Connecting your Google+ with your YouTube channel

Integrating your Google+ with your YouTube channel will allow you to automatically send your Hangout On Air to both your YouTube channel and your Google+ stream, saving you time and trouble. To learn how, follow our step-by-step guides.

- If you already have a YouTube channel and Google+ page, [click here](#).
- If you do not already have a YouTube channel and Google+ page, [click here](#).

### Changing your linked YouTube account

Currently you cannot change which YouTube account is linked to a Google+ account, but you can invite multiple YouTube accounts to manage a Google+ page. Follow the instructions in the above link.

### When to use Hangout On Air vs. YouTube live streaming

Both are great ways to reach a large audience, but they do have differences. Refer to [this sheet](#) to know when to use HOA and when to use YouTube.

Also consider integrating HOA into your YouTube live streaming to both add to audience engagement and access the streaming quality of YouTube. Here's a great example from [Bruno Mars](#).

### Embed your HOA on a third party site

#### Allow your audience to watch your Hangout On Air from a non-Google+ site

After you start your HOA, but BEFORE you start broadcasting, you will find the YouTube embed information by clicking "Embed" in your HOA, as shown here:



Embed this on a website to allow your audience to watch live from there.

Also, you can share the **URL** of the Hangouts On Air stream to direct your audience to a YouTube view page to watch your HOA.

#### Management during and after Hangouts On Air

HOAs have many tools that allow you to manage your broadcast easily. To see what features you can control, click [here](#).

## Hangout apps

Hangouts have two types of apps:

1. Apps built into the Hangouts' interface
2. Third-party apps you can add by clicking the 'Add Apps' button.

### Sticky click:

The featured screen will default to whoever is talking, or if multiple people are talking at the same time, whoever is talking the loudest. Alternatively, you can control which participant appears in the main video by hovering over the participant's thumbnail and clicking on it. You will see a blue box appear around the participant you selected. Clicking once more will return to the default setting.

### Mute:

You can mute a participant by hovering over their small video screen and clicking on the microphone icon. Click it again to unmute them. **Note:** users can manually unmute themselves to undo this.

### Block:

As a last resort, you can block a participant in a Hangout who is engaging in inappropriate behavior. When you block someone, their audio and video will cut out and they will appear to your viewers as a black box. To block someone, hover over the participant's small video and click the hand.

### Cameraman:

Gives you control over which cameras are broadcasting and allows the host to hide certain participants from a broadcast. Cameraman is only available for Hangouts On Air, and only the host may access it. You'll see a camera icon when hovering over a participant's thumbnail, which allows you to hide them from your broadcast. Note: they will still be in the HOA, but your viewers won't be able to see or hear them.

## Third-party Hangout apps

There are a variety of HOA apps that allow you to do anything from blocking disruptive participants to playing poker inside the hangout. For more helpful apps, visit this unofficial app database: <http://hangoutapps.com>.

### Hangout Toolbox:

Gives you the ability to create a custom lower third for your broadcast. Learn about Hangout Toolbox [here](#).

### Pro Studio:

A suite of tools that helps you produce a smooth, professional HOA. Find out more about Pro [here](#).

### Volume Control:

Allows you to mix the audio of your HOA participants during the broadcast. Start Volume Control [here](#).



## The Day of your Hangout On Air

On the day of your HOA, get the word out on all your social media and community channels. Make sure your audience knows exactly when your hangout is happening, and how they can watch it.

## Hangouts On Air day-of checklist:

- ❑ Post a reminder encouraging people to watch the HOA.
- ❑ Invite participants to sign on to the HOA **at least** 30 minutes ahead of the scheduled broadcast time. We recommend reminding them three hours before the start of the Hangout On Air, and testing their equipment 1.5 hours in advance.
- ❑ Once you have invited participants, remember to check the preview post in your stream to ensure the video looks good before you go live. Also check that your video and audio are synced. If not, reinitiate the HOA.
- ❑ If you want to embed the video or share the link, do this before you click 'Start broadcast.'
- ❑ If you created a Google+ Event, you will need to embed the Hangouts On Air in the Event before you broadcast. Just copy the HOA's YouTube URL, go to 'Edit Event,' click on 'Advanced options' and 'Additional fields.' Paste the URL in the 'YouTube URL' field. You'll be set to go.

- ❑ When you're ready to go live, click 'Start Broadcast' to broadcast to the world. There will be a 2-10 second countdown before the broadcast actually goes live. Be sure to account for the delay before you start speaking.
- ❑ Monitor your HOA and ask any participants who are streaming unauthorized third-party content to stop. This includes, but is not limited to, unlicensed music, pictures, and video. It is the HOA operator's responsibility to block users misusing third-party content.

A warning will be given if we detect that copyrighted content is being broadcast live. Failure to stop broadcasting copyrighted material will result in the live broadcast being shut down and you will lose access to Hangouts On Air.

# Start a Hangout

Hanging out is fun with friends. Start typing below or click a friend to invite them.

Friends × + Add more people

[+telephone](#)

N=

Enable Hangouts On Air <sup>1</sup>

Close

Online

Telephone



Nick Strada



Shannon Chin



Rich Elmore



Thea Boodhoo



Jessica Reynolds



Angela Garcia



Ray Arnold



Jennifer Young



Jordan Chambers



Brian Lee



## Hosting your Hangout On Air

While hosting your HOA, remember to smile, have fun and keep the conversation going. Great Hangouts On Air are unscripted and spontaneous.

### 1. Audience etiquette

Before starting the broadcast, double check all of your participants' internet connections, lighting and sound. You may want to do a "dry run" of the show beforehand. Be sure to remind your participants of HOA etiquette:

- The broadcast will sometimes pick up the sounds of keyboards typing and people moving around. Remember to tell participants to mute their mics.
- Participants should be ready at their computers to join the Hangouts On Air at a specified time, and they should leave the HOA on a specified cue (i.e. if they are meant to leave the HOA to allow others to join ).

### 2. Preview your video

Upon initiating the HOA, you'll see an invite and a 'video player post' in your stream. The video player post is a preview **only visible to you**. It gives you the chance to see what the video will look like before it goes live. If everything is running smoothly, invite your participants. If not, restart the HOA. When you've invited the participants, they will receive an invite in their streams.

### 3. Start the broadcast

Click the red 'Start broadcast' button to broadcast your HOA on your Google+ profile or page. Until you press 'Start broadcast', your HOA is private and will not be recorded. Once you initiate the broadcast, a recording of your Hangout On Air will start and a live stream will appear in your YouTube channel.

- Do not start before you are ready (i.e. while you are still adjusting your camera).
- Make sure **no one** has the stream open in another tab or window. This will cause echo and feedback.
- For more details about starting the broadcast of your Hangout On Air, [click here](#).

### 4. Time is key

Shorter videos are easier for a wider audience to digest. Try to limit your HOA to 15-45 minutes. If you have a lot of things to cover, consider breaking it up over multiple HOA. Also, consider rotating the participants in the HOA to spark new interest or to get more audience participation.

## 5. Use your apps

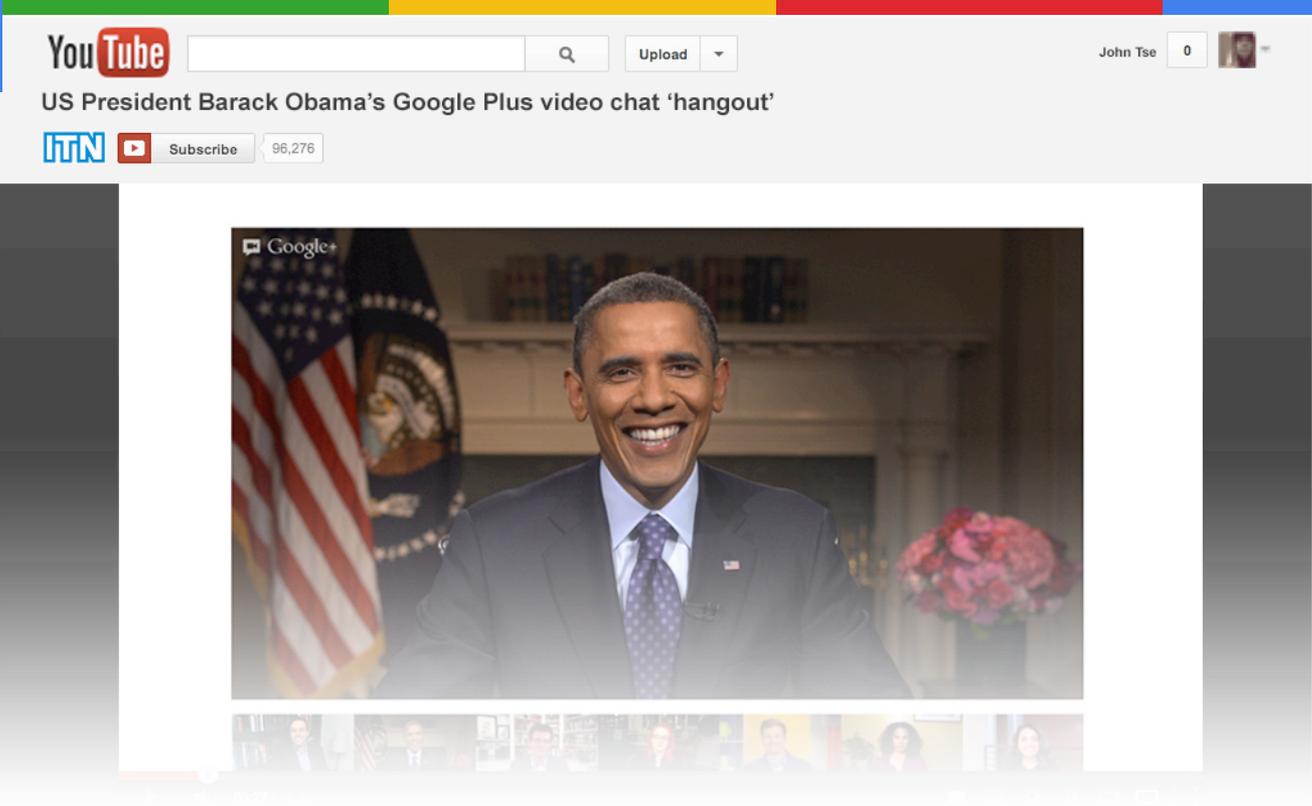
Apps greatly enhance the professionalism of your broadcast. If possible, have an app-savvy team member manage your apps during your Hangout On Air. If you are a one-person team, practice using apps before the day of your broadcast.

## 6. Maximize your reach

It's important to manage your social media during the broadcast. Post when the Hangout On Air starts and during your broadcast ask your audience to invite others to watch and comment the recording.

**Pro tip:** What do viewers see when they're watching your Hangout On Air? Exactly what you see—minus the left-hand and top controls, chat and app controls.

If any of your participants Sticky Click someone, viewers will not see it. They will only see what the main broadcaster Sticky Clicks. If you block someone and see a black box in your HOA, that is what they will see.



# After your Hangout On Air

Congratulations, you've hosted your Hangout On Air! Actively promote your HOA after-the-fact, and make sure it is easily discoverable for those that couldn't make the live broadcast.

### After a Hangout On Air ends

When you click 'End broadcast' the HOA will stop broadcasting, but the participants can stay in the video call to debrief privately.

After the broadcast, the video will begin processing on YouTube so users seeing your video (whether in their Google+ stream or an embedded player) can watch the recording.

### Find the recording

After the broadcast, a recorded video of your HOA will automatically post publicly to your YouTube channel, your Google+ page and any website where you embedded the video beforehand. If you'd like to edit or make changes to the video, just head over to your YouTube channel.

1. Click your username in the upper right-hand corner
2. Click video manager
3. Select your HOA. It will have the same title you selected before going live.
4. Click 'Edit settings'
5. Once your video is done processing, you can preview it and make edits. **Note:** The video will only be editable if it's less than two hours in length.

### Edit and post your video

Don't forget that your HOA is available for replay (on Google+ and YouTube) immediately after it finishes. Encourage your audience to watch and check out what they've missed. Remember, if you hosted a long HOA, you can download it on YouTube, break it down into smaller segments, then re-upload to YouTube for sharing.

### Ways to edit your Hangout On Air video

- Use the trim function to tighten any dead time at the beginning or end of your HOA recording
- Add a thumbnail photo
- Edit your title
- Add tags
- Download the video and edit it using third party software. You'll see this option in the video manager view of your recording.

### Hangouts On Air video privacy settings

Uploads of Hangouts On Air recordings are public by default, but you can modify the settings and information. You have three control settings for who sees the video version of your Hangout On Air: 'public,' 'people who have the video link,' and 'private' (meaning only you can see the video).

### Deleting a Hangout On Air video

To delete the video of your Hangout On Air, go to your YouTube channel and delete the video like you would any other YouTube video. In all the places where you embedded the video's URL, it will say, "This video has been deleted."

An alternative to permanently deleting the video, is setting the video to private via your YouTube channel video settings.

## Metrics for your Hangout On Air

### What metrics are available after a Hangout On Air ends?

With Hangouts On Air, you can see total Views\* of your completed HOA via YouTube Analytics on your YouTube channel:

1. Go to your YouTube channel's Video Manager ([youtube.com/my\\_videos](https://youtube.com/my_videos))
2. Find the upload of your recorded Hangout On Air, and click the 'View counts' next to it ([screenshot](#)).
3. On the Analytics page, you can see views of the Hangout On Air ([screenshot](#)). The views represent total live and recorded playbacks of the Hangout On Air.

*\*Recordings created on or after July 12, 2012 will include both live + recorded Playbacks.*

## Keep promoting your Hangout On Air

### Continue to promote your Hangout On Air

- Even Hangouts On Air that receive only a few live viewers can gain thousands of views after the Event. Post the YouTube video to all of your media outlets, and prompt your followers and subscribers to check it out
- Ask them to subscribe to your channel, follow you on Google+, or send in ideas for the next HOA

### Post a highlight reel

A couple days after the HOA, post a 1-2 minute highlight reel of the best moments. Be sure to thank your participants and viewers. Tell them to stay tuned for future HOA.

### Episodic engagement

One-offs rarely sustainably grow your audience. Set up episodic HOAs and regular postings so your audience continues to have reasons to engage and come back.

