

Google+ Communities offers brands a fresh way of engaging with social network users, says Punch Communications

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Punch is a boutique PR agency with the skill set and client base of a global agency.

Communications.

Brands can utilise the latest feature to start conversations with current and potential customers on topics they choose, search for relevant discussions happening in other public Community locations and reach out to join those dialogues. Topics are searchable and easy to explore with Google+ and users can find discussion topics via categorisation tags; this means Communities are an authoritative method by which to attract new fans to a brand's G+ Page.

All posts can be seen by all members of a Community, meaning brands

London, UK ([RPRN](#)) 12/13/12 — Google+ Communities, the latest functionality to be offered within Google+, brings the opportunity for brands to create interactive forums where they can have specific product, service or brand related discussions with like-minded consumers and engage with social audiences in a new way, says integrated social media, PR and [SEO agency](#) Punch

wishing to increase visibility or awareness of a particular topic can use such discussions to their advantage. However, negative conversations also have the potential to escalate. Therefore, brands and their [social media agencies](#) must ensure the necessary crisis communications, procedures and strategies are put in place. Additionally, sufficient resource should be employed prior to using Google+ Communities in order to effectively manage the community conversation from the start and as it grows.

Pete Goold, the managing director of integrated social media, search and [PR agency](#) Punch Communications, commented: “With 235 million active users and it being hailed as the fastest growing social network ever, Google+ is already a viable platform with which to meaningfully connect with a target audience, but the new functionality, Google+ Communities, proves to be a particularly interesting engagement opportunity. If well-managed, the forums can work in tandem with a brand’s Page, capturing both new fans for the Page and new members for the Community topics.

“Whilst they will act as a hub for discussions about all manner of brand, product or service related issues, brands and their agencies must be sure to get their houses in order before jumping in with both feet. As with any social channel, there is a potential for negative as well as positive, so businesses must have processes and resource in place to deal with whatever should arise.”

Google+ Communities was announced on 6 December and, already, a large number of both private and public communities have reportedly been created.

For more information about Punch Communications and its range of integrated social media, PR and SEO services, please visit www.punchcomms.com or call 0044 1858 411 600.

Media Contact Name: Keredy Andrews

Media E-mail: keredy.andrews@punchcomms.com

Media Phone: 0044 1858411600

Media Web Address: <http://www.punchcomms.com>

Company Contact Name: Keredy Andrews

Company E-mail: keredy.andrews@punchcomms.com

Company Phone: 0044 1858411600

Company Web Address: <http://www.punchcomms.com>

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