



THE MATTE PAD

MARKETING KNOW-HOW FOR
THE LEGAL PROFESSION

What's all the talk about Google+ and should my law firm join?



While Google+ has some new and interesting features, and is poised to give Facebook some strong competition, it is currently only available for individuals and not companies or firms.

Unless you've been living under a rock you've probably heard about the newest entrant in the social media arena, Google+. Currently in its beta run, Google+ is positioning itself to be the challenger to Facebook. We already know the benefits for businesses and law firms when they invest time on Facebook, i.e. the ability to interact with clients, provide immediate client service, post pertinent information, to name just a few. But will Google+ provide the same sort of venue for businesses and firms? And if so, what makes it so different from Facebook?

Well, before we get ahead of ourselves, let me state up front that Google+ does not offer business pages. Yet. According to [a blog post on Forbes](#), Google+ is currently allowing only individuals to create profiles. However, Google does plan to have profile pages for businesses and brands in the future, but the timing is still to be determined. There will be a few businesses allowed on as tests, but those will eventually be closed down until the final decisions are made regarding business pages.

So for now, there is no immediate rush for law firms to secure another social media page. You will probably want to create one eventually though. Yes, this is yet another page, but as we all know, different people like to get their information in different ways. And with Google+ being the new kid on the block with a lot of buzz, and let's be honest, it's got the power and cache of Google behind it, it is wise to jump on the bandwagon and get your firm in front of this audience.

That being said, you may want to create your individual page now so you can "get to know" Google+, and when they do allow business pages, you'll be that far ahead of the crowd.

But is Google+ really that much different from Facebook? On its face, Google+ isn't drastically different. Users have "Friends," they can add photos, there is a news stream and they can add locations. Where it differs is the ability to organize this information. Users can categorize their Friends into segments, like actual friends, family, acquaintances, business colleagues, etc. From there, they can segment the information they share based on the groups they've created. This targeted sharing is going to be where firms can really connect with users once they have access. Messages can be tailored and targeted without having to do the typical "cast a wide net." And by being able to segment connections into targeted groups, there is the ability to restrict who sees what information, so that one can have all their connections, personal and professional, in one spot without the worry of saying the wrong thing in front of the wrong person.



