

## Marketing Minute ~ The Top Social News of 2014

The social Web seems to get larger with every passing year.

Because of this, many brands are stretching their resources to maintain a presence on all of the Web's most popular social networks – from the power players like Facebook and Twitter to the up-and-comers like Tumblr and Snapchat. In doing so, however, it is easy for social media managers to miss some of the updates and new features that the social networks release throughout the year.

Fortunately Website Magazine is helping to keep social media managers up-to-date, as we have put together a robust list featuring some of the top social news stories of 2014.

### Facebook

As expected, Facebook unveiled numerous updates in 2014, which impact regular and business users alike.

\* Facebook started the New Year by [unveiling a “Trending” section](#) in January, which aims to keep the social network’s members informed with the most popular conversations of the day.

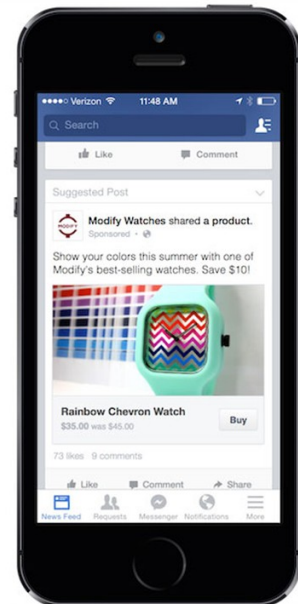
\* Facebook took steps to improve its newsfeed in 2014. For starters, the social network [announced a decrease](#) in the distribution of text-based posts from brands in January, citing that this type of content is not as engaging for fans. Then, in August, Facebook [took aim at “click-bating” headlines](#), noting that vague headlines that encourage people to click a link without providing much additional information will be shown less in the newsfeed.

\* The world’s largest social network rolled out a variety of updates for advertisers in 2014. For example, Facebook unveiled a [Premium Video Ad offering](#) in March for brands that want to reach a large audience with high-quality sight, sound and motion. Moreover, Facebook enabled game developers to [start selling virtual goods](#) from ads that appear directly in the newsfeed in July, as well as unveiled a new “[bandwidth targeting](#)” feature to advertisers in August. Then, in October, the social network launched [local awareness ads](#) to enable businesses to deliver targeted ads to groups of people within certain proximity of a business’s brick-and-mortar store.

\* In July Facebook shook up social commerce by announcing that it was [beginning to test](#) a “Buy” call-to-action button on ads and Page posts.

\* Facebook launched another feature in July, dubbed “[Save](#),” which aims to boost content consumption on the social network.

\* Just a couple of weeks ago Facebook unveiled an update to its Graph Search functionality. With the update, Facebook notes that users will be able to search for past posts via the social network’s search bar.



(Continues on Page 2)

## Twitter

Twitter was very busy in 2014, releasing a slew of updates from analytics to new ad targeting features.

\* In January, Twitter unveiled a [new analytics offering](#) to help brands gain insights into the performance of Twitter Cards.

\* Twitter rebranded its Ads API program in February, giving it the new title of "[The Twitter Marketing Platform Program](#)."

\* A [new profile design](#) was introduced by Twitter in April. At launch many compared Twitter's new design to the design of Facebook profile pages, as the new layout features larger profile and header images as well as the ability to highlight a user's best content.



\* Twitter and Amazon partnered up in May to enable consumers to add products to their shopping carts by using the [#AmazonCart](#) hashtag. The two companies then partnered up again in September to enable consumers to add items to their Amazon Wish List via the [#AmazonWishList](#) hashtag.

\* Twitter started [supporting animated GIFs](#) on its social network in June.

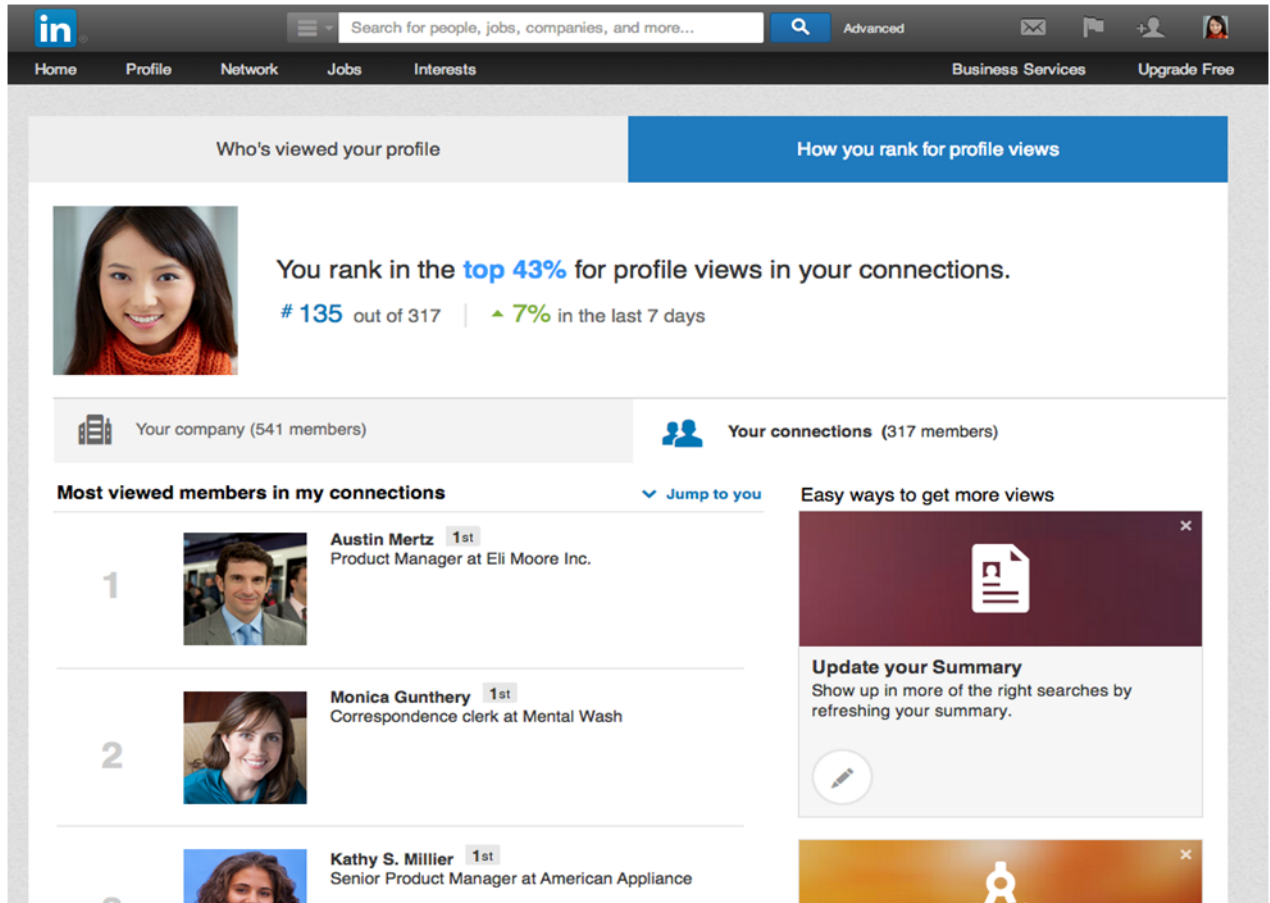
\* Twitter launched a variety of updates for advertisers in 2014. For starters, the social network rolled out [mobile app promotion ads](#), which help advertisers drive app installs and increase app engagement. Twitter also unveiled a [new tool](#) for creating, managing and activating tailored audiences, as well as a new targeting feature called "[tailored audiences from mobile apps](#)" that enables advertisers to create audience segments based on mobile app actions. Moreover, the social network began beta testing [Promoted Videos](#) back in August.

\* In addition to Twitter's partnership with Amazon, the social network dabbled in the social commerce waters a few other times in 2014. For instance, Twitter [acquired payments infrastructure company CardSpring](#) back in July, announced the testing of a "[Buy Now](#)" button in its social stream in September and unveiled a feature called "[Twitter Offers](#)" in November that enables advertisers to create and share card-linked promotions.

(Continues on Page 3)

# LinkedIn

In 2014, LinkedIn not only launched features for Internet professionals, but also for nonprofits and college students.



- \* To kick off the New Year, LinkedIn launched a “[Volunteer Marketplace](#)” to help nonprofit organizations find professionals that want to donate their skills for a good cause.
- \* LinkedIn acquired job-matching and data insight startup [Bright](#) in February for \$120 million. Then, in July, the social network also entered into an agreement to acquire B2B marketing platform [Bizo](#).
- \* LinkedIn reached [300 million members](#) in April.
- \* LinkedIn users can see how they stack up next to other professionals in their network thanks to the social network’s “[How You Rank](#)” tool, which was unveiled in May.
- \* In [LinkedIn’s Q2 earnings report](#), the social network unveiled that approximately 15 million people have access to the company’s publishing platform, which was only available to 25,000 members at its launch in February.
- \* In October LinkedIn took aim at college students with the [introduction of new tools](#) that help students find the right college to attend and the best subjects to study.

(Continues on Page 4)



## Google+

Google+ unveiled a few subtle changes in 2014, including:

- \* In April Google made it possible for Google+ users to see the [total number of views](#) that their content and profiles have generated.
- \* Google [eliminated its rules](#) restricting what names users can select on Google+ in hopes to bring more users to its social network.
- \* In December, Google+ introduced a new feature that enables desktop users to [see mentions of a page or personal profile](#) without using the notifications option.

## Pinterest

Pinterest focused on discovery in 2014, with a variety of updates that impact how users find content.

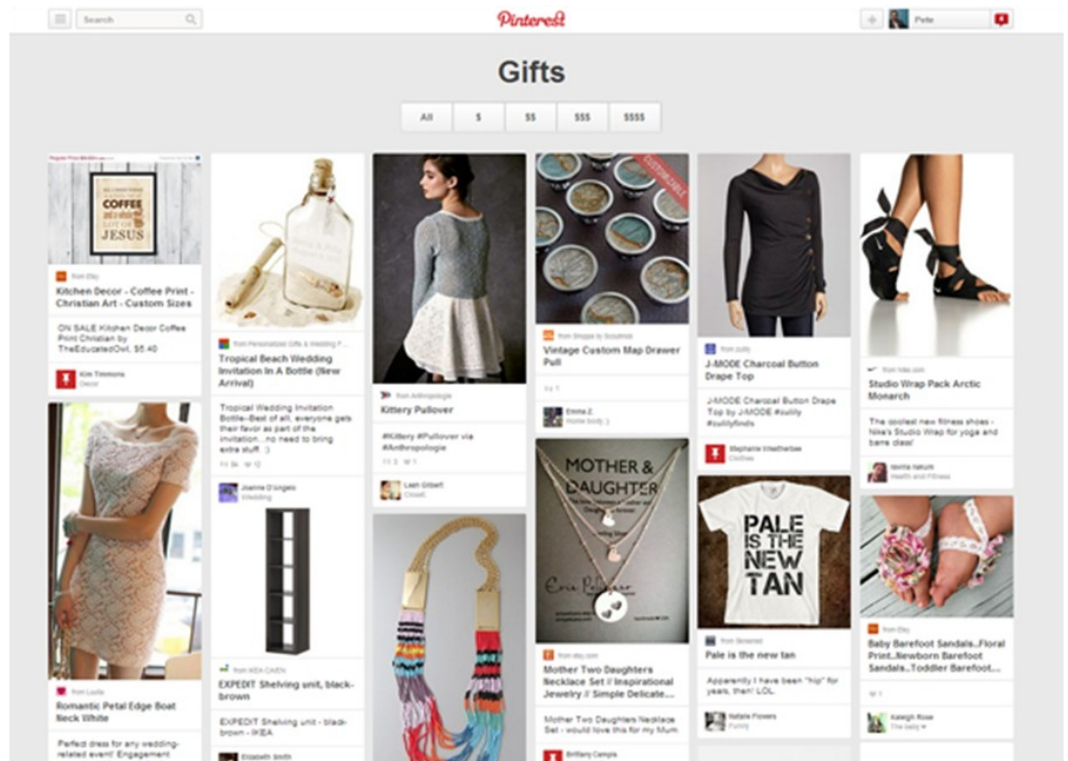
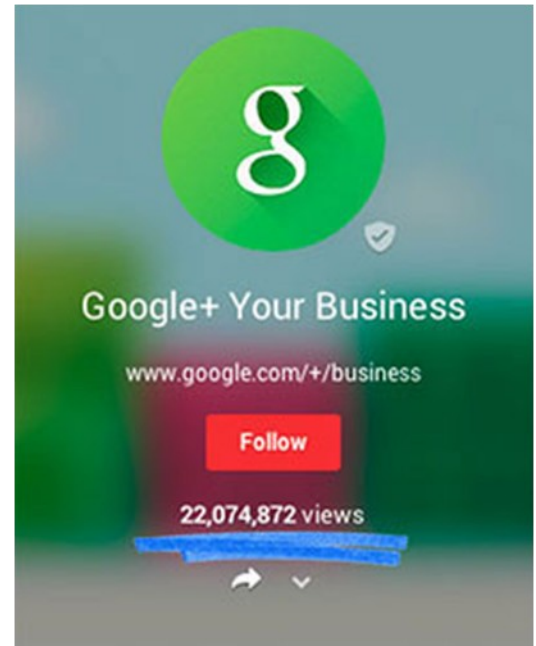
- \* Pinterest started off 2014 with the acquisition of [VisualGraph](#), which is a machine vision, image, recognition and visual search technology provider.

- \* The pin boarding social network started [supporting GIFs](#) at the end of January.

- \* The first of Pinterest's discovery updates in 2014 was the launch of the ["Interests"](#) feature in February, which aims to help the social network's members discover Pins related to subjects they like. Then, in April, Pinterest introduced a ["Guided Search"](#) feature that uses visuals to lead members through the content discovery process. Lastly, the social network launched another update to help members discover content in July. This update features a selection of [specialized interests](#) every time a member visits a category on the social network. Members also have the ability to follow these specialized interests in order to see Pins in their newsfeed from other members who share the same interest.

- \* In March, Pinterest unveiled a ["Gifts Feed,"](#) which profiles products available for purchase.

- \* Pinterest rolled out a [paid test](#) of its Promoted Pins ad format in May, which is a sign that the ad format could be made available to all brands in the near future.



Instagram

Instagram continued its growth in 2014, not only increasing its member numbers but also introducing new business features.

\* In April, Instagram [updated its “Explore” tab](#) to help users discover more personalized content. Then, in November, the social network updated its Explore feature again, enabling it to also [feature people](#) in addition to photos.

\* Instagram began rolling out a [suite of business tools](#) for advertisers on its platform in August. That said, ads are still only available to handful of brands on the social network.

\* In December Instagram not only announced that its platform reached [300 million members](#), but also that it was [adding five new filters](#) to its social network.

Snapchat

Snapchat gained more steam in 2014, as the mobile app unveiled a variety of updates, including its very first ad.

\* In May, Snapchat introduced a “[Chat](#)” feature, which enables users to have conversations with others in a private chat screen.

\* Priming its platform for advertisers, Snapchat unveiled a “[geofilter](#)” feature back in July, which enables users to include unique, location-based image filters to their snaps.

\* In another move that could eventually open up monetization opportunities for Snapchat, the company [expanded its “Our Story” feature](#) to cover more live events back in September. With this expansion, Snapchat started displaying more Stories contributed by the Snapchat community at a variety of Live events.

\* Snapchat [delivered its very first ad](#) in October. The ad, for the movie “Ouija,” was shown in the company’s “Story” feature and was only available for 24 hours.

Instagram | Graham's Coffee, Inc. > @grahamscoffee

joe@grahamscoffee.com

Campaigns

Ads Staging

Graham's Coffee Q3 Brand Campaign

Objective

Increase brand awareness

Dates

8/1/14 - 8/15/14

Target Demographic

United States M/F 25 - 54

Target Impressions

15,000,000

Current Impressions

1,379,257

Reach

707,311

Avg. Frequency

1.95

Overview

Audience

Ads (3)

Export data

Campaign Ads (3 active, 3 total)

AD	BRAND METRICS				SOCIAL METRICS	
	STATUS	IMPRESSIONS	REACH	FREQ.	LIKES	COMMENTS
<div><div></div><div>Come for the coffee, stay for the company #sipslowly #coffee</div></div>	Active	468,826	334,876	1.40	19,107	108
<div><div></div><div>Travel the globe one sip at a time #sipslowly</div></div>	Active	457,445	329,097	1.39	23,124	160
<div><div></div><div>For once you'll enjoy the daily grind #espresso #sipslowly</div></div>	Active	452,986	325,889	1.39	16,962	112

Instagram

Business

Press

Privacy

Terms

© 2014 Instagram

K  
L  
M  
N

(Continues on Page 6)

## Tumblr

Yahoo-owned Tumblr unveiled a few updates to close out 2014, including:

- \* A new ad service called [Tumblr Sponsored Apps](#), which is a mobile ad product that enables companies to have app install ads displayed inside the Tumblr app for iOS and Android.
- \* New [calls-to-action](#) that are displayed on certain posts, including a "Buy" button.
- \* An "[Explore](#)" feature to help users discover trending content and recommended posts.

## Other Social News of Note:

- \* YouTube unveiled a [new design](#) in February.
- \* Foursquare announced in May that it was [splitting its business into two separate apps](#).
- \* Vine started allowing users to [import videos](#) in 2014. In addition, the video platform unveiled a new social metric called "[loop counts](#)" to help social media managers identify how many times people watch individual Vines.

More information at:

[http://www.websitemagazine.com/content/blogs/posts/archive/2014/12/24/top-social-news-of-2014.aspx?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsletter](http://www.websitemagazine.com/content/blogs/posts/archive/2014/12/24/top-social-news-of-2014.aspx?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter)



Information provided for you by ~

**Marilyn K. Dayton**, Business/Marketing Specialist

<http://www.marketingandbizpro.com> ~ [marilyn@marketingandbizpro.com](mailto:marilyn@marketingandbizpro.com)

**860-389-2521**

