

Google+ abandons need to use real names

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The Google logo seen at headquarters in Mountain View, California on September 2, 2011

Google+ apologized Tuesday and stopped requiring people to use their real names while mingling in the online social network, as it looks to gain ground on market leader Facebook.

"When we launched Google+ over three years ago, we had a lot of restrictions on what name you could use on your profile," the California Internet titan said in a post at the social network.

"This helped create a community made up of real people, but it also excluded a number of people who wanted to be part of it without using their [real names](#)."

Google said that it has been slowly loosening the requirement with changes such as letting people use YouTube account names, but conceded that the names policy got a bit muddled.

"Today, we are taking the last step: there are no more restrictions on what name you can use," Google said.

"We know you've been calling for this change for a while. We know that our names policy has been unclear, and this has led to some unnecessarily difficult experiences for some of our users.

"For this we apologize, and we hope that today's change is a step toward making Google+ the welcoming and inclusive place that we want it to be."

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