

Two New Social Media Services To Look Out For

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It isn't easy to become a winner in today's tough high tech market. The competition is fierce. There are many great ideas that don't even get out of the starting gate. Here are two winners from last year who are doing very well so far in 2010.

Foursquare

Foursquare is a location-based [social network](#). It is also a game. Users "check-in" at venues using text messaging or device specific applications. Then they are awarded points and "badges." Badges are earned by checking into various venues. Some cities have city-specific badges that can only be earned in a specific city. Foursquare recently changed the way they handle badges, and now when a user gains a badge, he or she has the same badges across all cities. Once a player earns a badge, it will remain on that user's profile indefinitely.

Foursquare's slogan is: Check in. Find your friends. Unlock your city. It started out in 2009 with limited availability in 100 cities. In January, Foursquare changed their location model to allow "check-ins" from any location worldwide. Now the website has about 275,000 members. It is being hailed by some as the next-generation social network and the next Twitter. Is it? Only time will tell.

HootSuite

HootSuite was one of the big newsmakers last year. This [platform](#) makes Twitter easier and more manageable for users. You can manage multiple accounts, schedule tweets and updates, and more efficiently utilize the power of social media and networking sites, such as Twitter and LinkedIn. This year, CEO Ryan Holmes introduced HootSuite 2.0. What does the new and improved HootSuite offer that is different or better than any of the competing tools available?

HootSuite 2.0 is a solution for business users and groups to make Twitter even easier and better. It is customizable and has many rich features including: team workflow, multiple twitter accounts, tweet scheduling, RSS/Facebook integration and people grouping.

Focus and timing are essential keys to success of any product. And had it not been for the mainstream embrace of social media sites such as Twitter, ideas like Foursquare and HootSuite would not have made it off the drawing board.