

BIZfact

71,900

Manufacturing jobs on LI in June, down from 74,700 a year earlier.

Source: New York State Department of Labor

FRONTIER MARKETS DRAW U.S. INVESTORS

Bulgaria, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan. An itinerary for a traveler with a flair for languages, or a list of scenes for a spy thriller set during the Cold War?

Neither. It turns out they're among the countries with the best-performing stock markets in the world this year. And the success of these so-called frontier markets, mainly in Asia and Africa, has attracted U.S. investors eager to find the next set of rapidly growing countries now that Brazil and other emerging markets have fallen into a slump.

"These places might scare some people," says Russ Koesterich, global chief investment strategist at the money-management giant BlackRock. "But they're seeing some of the fastest growth in the world."

People had a similar response when investors were dabbling in emerging markets during the 1990s, Koesterich says. "Brazil and India — those used to be scary places, too."

Thanks to rapid economic growth, the MSCI Frontier Market index has gained 22 percent over the past 12 months. That compares with a 3 percent rise for MSCI's emerging market index, and 25 percent for the Standard & Poor's 500, the benchmark U.S. stock index.

But investing in frontier markets carries plenty of dangers.

"Buying into them has to be a long-term play," says Jack Ablin, chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank. "You have to take some leaps of faith." — AP

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Google+ user Paul Biedermann chats with Cheryl Bochniewicz during a free group video call known as a hangout.



Redesigned Google+ gives professionals ANOTHER PLACE TO CONNECT

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Randi Busse, a customer service trainer, knows what it's like for a non-techie professional to squeeze social media into an already brimming day. Yet, in addition to connecting via Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, she's also on Google+, and posts there once or twice a week.

Has it translated into business? No, said Busse of Amityville. Are "more people finding me and hearing about what I do? Yes," she said. "I don't know what the value is, but you can't not be there."

Indeed, 190 million users were active in the social site's commenting stream, Google said this spring, when it launched new features. So much for the "ghost town" image the 2-year-old site had gotten, said Paul Biedermann, owner of a design and branding business in Huntington.

Facebook is still the social media leader, with more than a billion members, some 700 million of whom were deemed to be "active" users in a recent online global survey. But Google+ ranked second for active users, just ahead of YouTube and Twitter and well ahead of LinkedIn in the survey, by Global-

WebIndex, a London-based digital researcher.

The site is "quickly becoming my number one social platform," Biedermann said, adding that he's found "the conversation goes a lot deeper" than, say, the "short bits flying by" on Twitter.

Google+ can also be good for professionals looking to raise their visibility. Another robust public online profile "can help Google's search algorithms do a better job understanding what you're about," said Jason Freidenfelds, Google communications manager for search.

For those reluctant to opt for a new social site, Hilary Topper, who owns a Melville-based public relations firm, said Google+ can be efficient for connecting both personally and professionally in one place.

Among its key features:

■ **Circles:** Google+ users set up personalized "circles," where they group people they follow. Biedermann has put 1,970 people in his 10 or so circles, including those for business types, creatives and those whose posts he doesn't want to miss.

■ **Communities:** Another myth, Biedermann said, is that users are predominantly techies and early adopters. People with varying interests — including

food, photography, animals, country music, and even Sherlock Holmes — participate in special-interest "communities" with other enthusiasts.

■ **Profile:** As for your online presence, "you want to be in the driver's seat," said Joyce Sullivan, who runs a Manhattan-based social media consulting firm for those in financial services. Keep that in mind as you create a profile, sharing your profession, skills, links to websites and other social media profiles, as well as including a tagline and "bragging rights."

Busse "brags" that she's co-author of a customer service book called "Turning Rants Into Raves." Topper's tagline is "Queen of Social Media."

■ **Hangouts:** Up to 10 people can participate in no-cost group video calls via computer and Android and Apple mobile devices. "It's clear and easy to use," Topper said.

■ **Sharing:** "Status updates are much more like Facebook than ever before," making it easy for newbies to post, said Topper, also president and founder of the Social Media Association Inc., a group on Long Island.

Instead of "liking," you give a post a "+1" and, as with Facebook and LinkedIn, you can tag people in posts by typing a + and then the person's name.

TOP GOOGLE+ USERS

- Lady Gaga**
7.27 million followers
- Britney Spears**
7.15 million
- Larry Page**
6.22 million
- Snoop Dogg**
5.93 million
- David Beckham**
5.92 million

Source: SocialStatistics.com

As for hashtags — think #wine, #jobs, #Syria — which allow you to filter the conversation, Google+ introduced them shortly before Facebook. And, if you don't include one, Google+ will include one or two, deletable if you choose.

Said Busse: "I share content I think will strengthen my credibility as a subject matter expert." As for her once-or-twice-a-week posts, she said, "I think the name of the game is to get on there and don't worry about being perfect."