

# Pinterest Guide

Everyone can use Pinterest, and everyone should. Pinterest is organized by topics and themes, and so it is less about who you are, and more about what you have to offer. It is like an online magazine that connects people who share your interest by photo. If they've pinned it, you are likely to be connected, whereas most sites will never connect you with people outside of the friends of your friends, which limits your reach. The home feed on Pinterest includes anything and everything related to the interests you choose to be connected with when you first start an account. In addition to choosing interests that you are connected with, you may also follow pinners or Pinterest boards from people you know.

Because Pinterest is still growing, you still have the opportunity to ride the rising wave, and become an innovator. You can create boards that haven't yet been created, and you can expand your network much faster as new people join and need pins to make their profiles interesting and abundant.

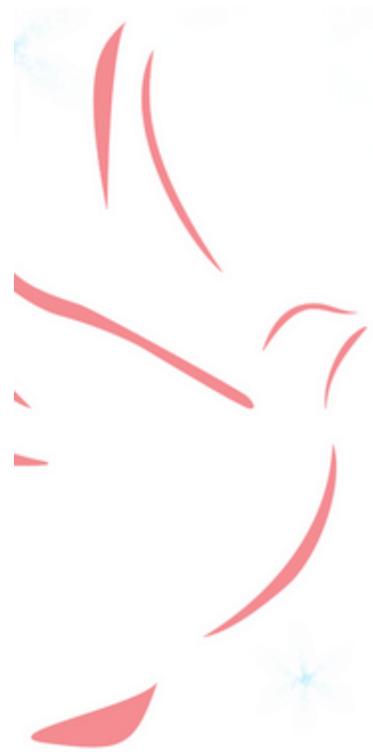
Still need to be encouraged to use Pinterest? Here are some fascinating statistics and facts about this leading social media site:

- Pinterest was one of the fastest growing social media sites in 2012, and was amongst the top four leading social media sites in 2014 (next to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn)
- The demographic of users is within the age range of 18 to 55 years, most with college degrees and financial stability. The number of pins that lead to online sales is unlike any other social media site. Visitors become leads on Pinterest faster than other social media sources. A lead, in this case, means that a viewer clicked to your blog or made a purchase from your website.
- The population of female users is currently larger than males, but the number of males using Pinterest is increasing, and is expected to be more equal to the number of female users in the coming years. The implication is that it will soon be one of our leading social media sites.

Here, the basics of Pinterest will be offered, so that you can become a highly effective and strategic Pinterest user. Topics will include:

- how to make pins go viral
- how to create the best pins
- how to expand your Pinterest network
- how to use the best image size for Pinterest
- and how to do search engine optimization (SEO) for a pin

A few things you may want to know before reading about Pinterest strategies: individual pins are posts; pinners are like-minded people with



# Pinterest Guide

similar interests that you can follow; and boards represent a topic, category, or interest you have, and thus use to represent your account.

One more note: If you are starting an account for the first time, please be sure to create a business account right away, instead of a personal account. If you have a personal account for a business already created, you can convert it, and Pinterest's help section will give you the steps to do so.

## **How to make pins go viral:**

The most viral pins are those that get repeatedly re-pinned, bringing the number of views into the thousands. You want to be re-pinned so that more people are exposed to your pins. The more exposure people have to your pins, the more likely you will have more visits to your website, and a growing network of followers.

Here are some tips to help your Pinterest content go viral:

Pins in the categories of Food and Drink and Do-it-Yourself (DIY) are the most viral types of content. If you are going to create boards, it will be in your best interest to include one or both of these categories. Remember, also, that pins with quotes, jokes, or cute pictures are shared the most.

If you want to appear first on the Pinterest home feed, most recent is what counts, which is why it's so important to pin at the appropriate times of day. The best times of day to pin are Thursday, Friday and Sunday nights, from 6:00 to 9:00pm, and Saturday mornings. The lowest priority time is Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm, due to the common work schedule. If you want to show up in the Pinterest search engine, you will need to both have a large network and get your pins shared (re-pinned). Showing up in the search engine also entails using hashtag keywords effectively.

Pins can go viral more than once. Therefore, it is helpful to periodically re-pin your favorites. They may rank higher in the search this time, and new people might pick them up and share them with their networks. When re-pinning, tune into the current season, and choose content that is particularly relevant at the given time of year. However, don't get carried away with re-pinning, and avoid posting a pin more than once in a 24-hour period. If you post pins too often, your pins become spam, which can have the effect of people removing you from community boards (which, of course, you don't want). Instead, strategize your frequency of pinning.

In the effort to strategize the type, quality, and quantity of your pins, rather than trying to figure out what kinds of pins will go viral, learn to use Pinterest analytics and track your results. Also, check your Google Analytics to see if you are getting website hits from

# Pinterest Guide

Pinterest posts, and which pins are leading people to take action (leading them, for example, to make a purchase or sign up for your newsletter).

## **How to create effective pins:**

Be interesting. Be creative. Be funny. Brainstorming is an important first step, for it takes thought and creativity to make a pin that is dynamic and attractive. One way to spark pin ideas is by browsing images on Google. If you see one that you love, do one like that is even better, and pin it.

Learn from the best pinners, such as Whole Foods Market, which is ranked number one. They succeed by selling, not food, but content about healthy lifestyles. Concepts outdo products. Therefore, if you are going to sell shoes, don't put up product pictures. Instead, make an infographic that shows how to run faster. With business accounts, showcase the core values that you represent, and the points of concentration or themes you have in your marketing plan.

Make each board reflect some facet of who you are and what you have to give. As an extension of this, make the photos reflect the vibration, or feeling quality, of your brand. Focus on creating pins that apply to more than one category, and they will get pinned to more places and larger audiences. Variety is helpful. Create pins for multiple boards so that people of varied interests can see you and follow you. You can keep the number of pins to each board around 30 or less.

On your pins, always provide a link to your website in the source section, directing the viewer to the exact page they want to see. If it's a product page they want to see, therefore, take them to the exact page on the site where they can make a purchase. Otherwise, you will end up wasting their time. Directing viewers to the proper page also ensures that when someone re-pins your pin, Pinterest will generate all of the other pins you have created with that website, so that large numbers of people will be recommended by Pinterest to follow you.

## **How to expand your Pinterest network:**

Here are some tips for creating magnetic and engaging boards on Pinterest, to attract more followers:

In order to increase networking, and to show that you are not merely spamming or self-promoting, post pins to your board that are outside of your organization and its products and services (this is more important for personal accounts, but it also helps to identify your brand as a friendly and trustworthy source). Those whose content you share will see that you're sharing their pins in notifications, and may also take the opportunity to connect with you.

# Pinterest Guide

In addition, make sure the link you associate with your pin goes to a web page—also known as a landing page—that is associated with your content, so that your board will be trusted and followed. Doing so also shows sincerity, and builds respect.

You can also connect and link your Pinterest account to other social media sites, so that a small amount of energy can go a long way. You may also notice some Pinterest users have an @ symbol in the title of their boards or in pin descriptions. That is someone optimizing their pin or board for Twitter, as Twitter is easily connected within Pinterest—a great way to have crossover between fans from different social media accounts.

Once you've strategized how you create pins, boost the sharing of your content by requesting to join community boards that show recent usage, and a large number of followers. You can also try connecting with local businesses by following their boards. If there are sparse boards for your area, create your own board, and make it the place other pinners from your area share pins to their board.

## **How to use the best image size for Pinterest:**

Use a 700 pixels in either height or width. It will appear large on the screen of the person pinning it, as they scroll through the latest pin activity, and yet it will not be distorted when viewed up close. In addition, successful images are colorful and clear (high resolution). Make use of the instructographics method, which is goal oriented, and teaches through a series of pictures. If you are unable to use graphic design programs that create instructographics and other custom graphics, you can use a single picture, and write instructions or catchy quotes in the descriptions related to the photo.

Tips for creating instructographics or infographics:

- Pins that take up the most board space will be more readily sighted and more frequently pinned
- The most successful image size is 500px wide by 3000px long
- Titles on instructographics should be large and easy to read
- Place your product or logo (for branding) in the right corner. Include your website's URL address so that, even if someone doesn't click, they know where to find you in the future
- One of the downfalls of Pinterest is that it is easy for your photo to lose its source and any form of credit. Every so often, you may want to check that people aren't using your photos or graphics without crediting the source. If they are, ask that they site your website address as the source. TinEye is a tool to check who is using your photos, and Google Images can be used to see if your images are being used by others.

# Pinterest Guide

Despite the importance of high quality graphics, startups should focus first on building a following, and then on refining the quality. Otherwise, who will be there to see your lovely graphics?

## **How to search engine optimize a pin:**

SEO ranks pins by keywords and content that is related to a search phrase. To stay high on search rankings, keep the associated phrases and keywords true to the content you're pinning.

The Pinterest search is located in the upper left hand corner of the Pinterest home page. It allows people to search for individual pins, pinners, or boards.

Showing up in the search sooner than others is based on a combination of optimized keywords in your pin, your profile name and website URL address, and your boards. It is also based on how many times your pin has been liked or repinned, and how many follows your board or account has.

Like most social media sites, coming up in a search is based on strategy as well as the strength of the content you create.

## **SEO Checklist:**

When you pin content of your own, or when you pin from websites while browsing the Internet, use descriptive keywords in the board title and board description. Especially use hashtags (#) in the board description and pin description. Keep it simple—one or two hashtags in your pin's description is enough. Separate keyword phrases into one word each, rather than bunching them together into one hashtag. Experiment to see what words work best. It is helpful to create a list of keywords that you can implement for different boards within your areas of interest. For example, a yoga board might use keywords like #yoga, #asana, and #namaste. We have a meditation and visualizations board, and the pin below on meditation fits that board well (see below). It uses meditation as the hashtag, and also has meditation as the first word in the pin.

Your keywords will change from board to board, and from pin to pin. Help your boards get discovered by taking the time to make use of this wonderful tool.

Know your brand and know your audience by doing the necessary marketing research beforehand. Identify your niche and the audience's needs. Know, especially, what vibration you want your pins and boards to have, so that you can be sure to use keywords that fit with your overall content marketing plan.

## Pinterest Guide

If you want to show up on Google Image searches and even the main Google search engine, ensure the original image file name on your computer that you use for a pin is also descriptive. To change the filename, find where your image is saved, and “save as” in the form of keyword-keyword-keyword.

Practicing these simple Pinterest tips will help you soon reach your goals for success.