

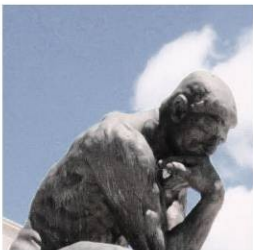
Pinterest

Business Boards

Increase Sales and Traffic with Images

Pin Images

Business Philosophy



Personal Interests



Business Interests



Stand Out



Connect



Network



Drive Traffic



Special Boards



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INTRODUCTION

As a business owner (online or brick and mortar), you are always looking for ways to gain visibility. When more people know about you and what you do, your list of customers grows. Social networking has done wonders for business marketing. In fact, it has in a way revolutionized the ability of enterprises to reach a wider audience in a more effective way.

The newest trend in social media business marketing is Pinterest. You may have heard the buzz about it but don't really know what it is all about. If you look at the social media icons on any website, many now carry the "Pin It" icon. What are you pinning and is it a good thing? According to those who have tried it, pinning is fun and influential.

Don't feel bad as a business owner if you are not sure or know nothing about Pinterest. You are not alone. The first step in the right direction towards finding out more begins here. By the end of this report we hope that you are sold out or at least gung-ho to give this medium a try. Like other social sites it is free to sign up, so the investment you will be making is in time and effort. And, as an entrepreneur, you already know the dividends to be paid out for such diligence.

In this report you will learn about all things Pinterest. To keep everyone on the same page, we'll begin by giving you a Pinterest 101 tutorial. Just about everything you ever wanted to know about it will be featured here. Then, discover how you can turn a fun activity into an extraordinary business opportunity. If you are ready to go, let's begin.

WHAT IS PINTEREST ALL ABOUT?

Pinterest is first and foremost a pinboard. Have you ever created a wish book? It is similar to that. Using images, you can share things that interest you on the internet. Group those items together to create a theme on your pinboard. Instead of cutting and gluing images from magazines or newspapers to a piece of cardboard or cardstock paper, you are capturing

images from all over the internet and posting them to your virtual board to create an impression to share with others.

Just like you, people all over are getting in on the act and posting what they find interesting on the Web. You can browse other boards with similar interests or find new likes that you want to follow. Pinterest users use their boards to collect images for their dream home makeover, dream wedding, business interests, favorite causes and even favorite recipes. The themes are endless and you might find a bit of everything.

What Is Pinning and Repinning?

A pinboard represents a collection of pins. Pins are the images that you add to Pinterest. You can upload images from all over the internet and your own computer. You can categorize those images for later use. When you are ready, bring them together as a collection and create a board.

When you “pin” an image, the source link is also captured. This ensures that wherever you got the image from, it is properly documented so others can find it too. It also avoids any copyright or trademark problems with your boards. Only pin from permalinks. This is the link that gives original credit for the image. If the image is not on the original site, track back so that the correct source is captured.

Add a description to each pin. Explain why you like it, what it means to you or what it is depicting so that viewers can easily understand your theme.

How do you pin an image? One way is to add the Pin It bookmarklet to your browser. In this way, when you see an image you like, simply click that bookmarklet. You are presented with the images on that page that are available for pinning. Some sites may not want you to pin their images and you will get a notice if this is the case.

From here, ready the image for inclusion to Pinterest. Select a category; type a description for your image; post it to an existing board or create a new one; add keyword tags to make the image easy to find. Choose if you

will also share that image on your social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. The last step is to click Pin It.

Repinning is much like retweeting. As you search through other boards on Pinterest, you might see an image you would like to include on your board. Repinning allows you to click and include that image. When you use the Repin button on that image, the name of the original pinner and the original source link also follow the image to your board. The source link always follows an image, no matter how many times it is repinned.

Following

As you browse the Pinterest site, you may find another person or business that posts boards that also reflect your style. Follow them if you wish. There are two types of following. First, you can follow a board. This means that you will be notified every time a new image is added to that board. Secondly, you can follow another user. If you like their style overall, you can find out when they add new boards to their page.

Just like with other social media, be prudent about whom you follow. Following everyone doesn't show a discerning taste. If you only like certain boards, following them is better than following the user.

Invite other users to contribute on your board by sending them an invitation. This is one way to engage other local business owners. You can also include your business staff in the pinning process by adding them. Everyone you send an invite to has to have a Pinterest account.

Adding comments

One way to get to know others is to comment on their pins. When you scroll over the image you will see a comment button. Click it and then enter your comment.

You can interact with other users by mentioning them in a comment or a description of your pin. In order to include a certain Pinterest user, you have to be following at least one of their boards.

USING PINTEREST FOR BUSINESS

Getting Set Up

We purposely waited until this point to tell you how to get started with your Pinterest account. As we stated before, sign up is free. Simply go to the website (www.pinterest.com) and click "Join Pinterest." At the bottom it will ask if you are a business. Click the link beside that for more information. It will take you to the business Pinterest page where you can click to sign up as a business. If you already have an account it can be easily converted.

Create your profile page. Just like any other social site, your profile gives other users vital information about you if they want to know what your business is all about. Include your logo if you have one and a short but engaging description of your company. Add your website address and official company name. This is what people will see if they view your boards.

Verify your website with Pinterest. They support top-level domains for businesses, meaning you need to own your domain name. Once you verify your website, others will know that it is a true site that they can visit.

Link your Pinterest boards directly to your website. Under the "Goodies" tab on the Pinterest website, you can find out how to embed the Pinterest follow button on your website. If you also want visitors and customers to be able to share your images on their boards, include the Pin It button with your other social media icons. Include the buttons on a specific post or attach it to a product. Again the "Goodies" tab will show you how.

Review the trademark and branding policies for using the boards. The logos for Pinterest are not to be altered in any way when you embed them in your site. Use only approved logos in the font and design specified by the site.

This means using the white logo on a black background and the red one on a white background, for example.

Be careful when promoting your business and even contests on Pinterest. It is against their policy to insinuate that Pinterest is somehow collaborating with you on a project. Encourage others to share WITH you on Pinterest.

Share Your Business Philosophy through Images

Now you are ready to begin sharing what your business is all about with other Pinterest users. Use your imagination to represent your brand in pictures. Humans are very visual people and a picture is worth a thousand words, they say. Check out some of the case studies on the Pinterest for business page to see how others have used this medium to their advantage.

In the meantime, here are some ideas of how you can go about producing eye-catching and must-see boards.

Promote your personal interests – Customers like to know that there is a real person behind the business name. Creating boards that show what you personally believe lets them know that you are just like them. You can gain a following from visitors who share the same personal interests as you.

Showcase business interests – Is your business interested in providing quality “green” products? Feature images that hone in your commitment to preserving the environment. Others who are also interested in saving Mother Earth will want to find out more about this company that so boldly wants to do the same thing.

Create “special” boards – Does your business want to thank its loyal customers? Create and promote monthly specials on Pinterest. Maybe you are giving away a trip or a free coaching session. Include images that show the benefits of coaching services or images of the destination for your trip.

With your business boards you can use imagery to highlight the positive end results of doing business with your company.

Make Your Pins Stand Out

Now that you know what pins are for, make sure that yours have an impact.

Add descriptions – For each pin, add a description so others know what you were thinking when you added it. For example, a fashion designer may talk about how a particular outfit would fit into your wardrobe. Use relevant searchable keywords so others can find your pins and boards on Pinterest.

Share useful links – Every image doesn't have to link back to your site. Readers will follow you if they know that you offer useful information that interests them. This includes adding links to relevant content from other sites via the images that you pin.

Go mobile – If you own a Smartphone, use the Pinterest app to pin on the go. You can build boards from anywhere and still have access to thousands and thousands of images. Use your camera to add unique images. If your business is promoting a local event, create a board. Use your phone and Instagram to capture every moment and pin the images.

Network and Connect with Customers and Businesses

Pinterest can be useful in making that connection with other business owners in your area or your niche market. Search out and follow other business pinners with similar interests. They may just return the favor.

How do you do that? Comment on their pins on a regular basis. Repin images that you like from their boards as pins on yours.

Create a board and then ask other businesses to collaborate on it with you. For example, if a local event is coming up such as a trade show, invite local area businesses to promote their business along with you by pinning to a board created specifically for that event. Remember, you have to follow at least one board for that business in order to invite them to collaborate.

Another option is to turn this idea into a live pinning event. Basically, you post images and quotes to your board in real time as the event is happening. You can pin Instagram images and tweets from others at the event, being careful that the original source is represented by the link. Mention that business in a comment or pin description and a notification will be sent to them. They might want to comment on their involvement for you.

Your event will not only bring traffic to your site but also make mention of other businesses who were there. It is a win-win situation for both parties. Viewers can easily find out more about you both by following the links back to your websites.

Connect with Your Customers and Potential Customers

Pinterest can be used as an integral part of your business. For instance, if you own a dog grooming business, create boards that can function as portfolios for your clients. Show different grooming techniques you offer for a variety of dogs by pinning certain images to those boards. When considering your services, potential customers can click your Pinterest board links from your website to make their choices.

You can create these mini portfolios for a number of different businesses. Customers can repin those images to create their own board for you to view their likes before completing their service.

Want to know what your customers think of you? Ask them the question on your social media pages or blog. When they respond, pin for each response and create a Pinterest board. Once the board is completed, let them know where they can find it on Pinterest.

What better endorsement is there than words from the mouths of your own customers? Create a customer testimonial board. Pin quotes from those who have offered positive words about you from your website to a board. Anyone interested in your expertise can see first-hand what is being said about your products and services.

What is trending right now in your business niche? Visitors to your site can view it all in one place when you link to your pin board that displays those images. Create more than one board that groups items that were purchased together. Attach a Pin It button to each product page so that it will link right back to your website store when it is clicked, for purchasing with ease. Promote your boards on your Facebook and Twitter pages to invite subscribers to view them.

Pin useful content as well as images. If you have a relevant article that would complement your image pins, add that to your board as well for your customers.

Driving Traffic to Your Site with Pinterest

Draw traffic your way with board contests. For example, Home Shopping Network (HSN) invited pinners to create a board of what their dream room would look like. They tagged their boards with specified hashtags for identification. The one with the best board won a room makeover.

Tailor the content to the nature of your business. Pinterest doesn't mind that you run contests to drive traffic to your site as long as you comply with the site's Terms of Use. On your website, link to your Pinterest account of the board where the actual content is mentioned. Be sure that the rules for entry are clearly stated for all to see.

Just like with any other form of advertising, it can be trial and error. See what others are pinning from your site. Perform a source search. This allows you to see what people have pinned (if anything) from your website or blog.

Remember, in order to facilitate the pinning process, it is best to embed code for Pin It buttons where needed on your site. Visitors can download their own bookmarklet for their browser toolbar, but it would be far more convenient if you gave them the button yourself. Make sure that the most popular product pins come together on a board that you can promote to drive traffic your way.

So, What Should You Post on Your Boards?

Now that you have an idea what Pinterest is about and how it can assist you in promoting your products and business brand, what kinds of pins will you choose? Let's begin with the research.

Initiate a Pinterest search. What types of images are people pinning? What kind of boards are trending or most popular right now? Browse those feed and investigate what you find there. Use that information as your guideline for creating your own pins to be shared.

Follow businesses with similar interests. Read their comments and see how many likes and repins they are getting. It can give you ideas about how strong their presence is on Pinterest. You might also gain ideas for presenting your images to your followers.

Follow the Pinterest for Business boards. Here, find out what is new with the site. They are keen to keep people coming back so also comment and offer your suggestions for ways that businesses could better be served.

Constantly review your boards on Pinterest. If some are not as popular, find out why. Delete pins that are not working or attracting traffic. Replace them with more inviting images. Delete boards that no longer work. To remove a board means that the pins associated with it will be removed as well.

CONCLUSION

You now know more about Pinterest than you did before. This site offers a unique way for businesses to engage visitors. Through pins that contain images, content and quotes, others can find out more about your services and you can begin building a brand.

It is free to become a business member of Pinterest. Before you begin pinning anything, take a look around. Perform a little leg work to find out what's popular, trending and hot on the site and also within your niche.

As far as branding is concerned, you can use thought-provoking images from hundreds of thousands of sources to bring the emotional side into your marketing strategies. Link your business with images that portray your personal beliefs as they relate to your business and its purpose.

Communicate with others through repins and comments. Get to know other business owners and your customers as well. You may just find a new business partner for a joint Pinterest event that can benefit both enterprises.

Customers can promote viral marketing for you by repinning images and leaving comments. You can in turn reward your customers with contest boards and ones that promote product specials that can only be accessed through your Pinterest board.

Read the case studies. This avenue may be worth exploring to enhance your current marketing efforts. Who knows; it might become the wave of the future.