

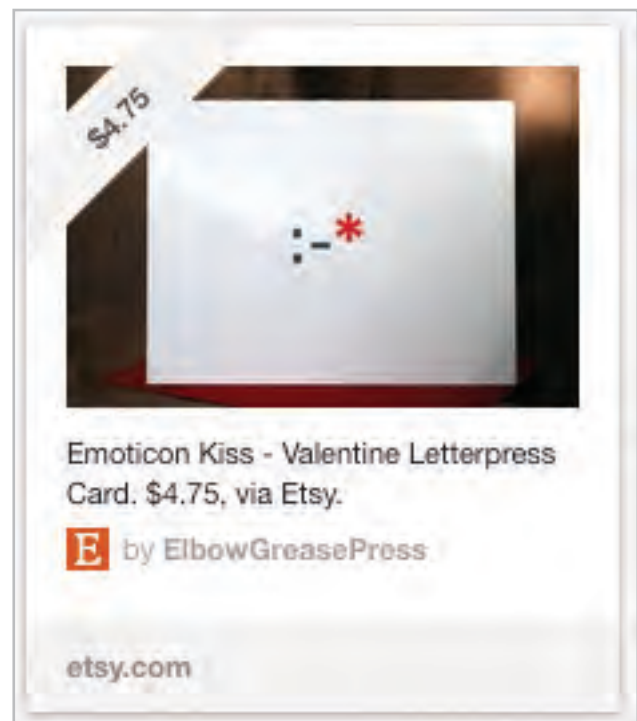
A SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE TO



Pinterest

From status updates to hashtags, small businesses are seeing the value in maintaining a social media presence. Most businesses have tackled the big two: Facebook and Twitter. Now, Pinterest is gaining steam and you may be wondering if your business needs another social media site. While learning a new social media network may seem like something to add to the bottom of your to-do list, there are some compelling reasons to get started with Pinterest.

The basic set up of a Pinterest account is to create boards, where you can “pin” pictures, creating a marketplace that’s eye candy for potential customers. And once you’ve pinned an image, you can add a price and link it to your website. More and more businesses have started to use Pinterest to showcase not only their products, but also other items



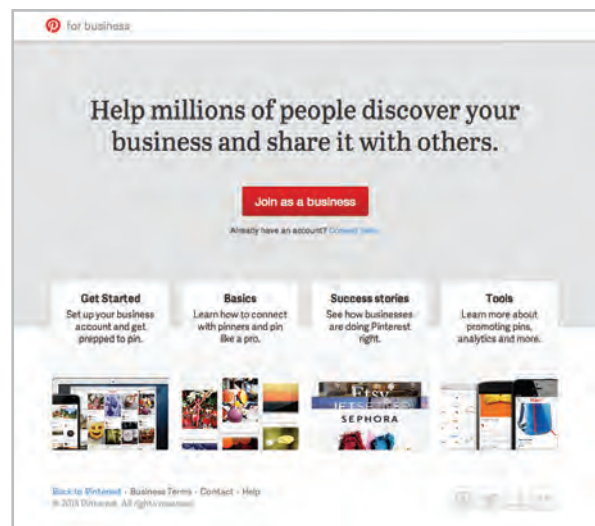
related to what they do, or sell. Because of the fun visuals, the ability to add a price and link, your business could see more traffic and more customers.

It's not just the visual aspect that's appealing to small business; Pinterest has the potential to reach new customers and increase your website traffic, says Wanda Anglin, the owner of SEO Buzz Internet Marketing. "You'll reach people on Pinterest that you couldn't reach any other way and that can translate into additional revenue," she says.

How to set up a Pinterest business account

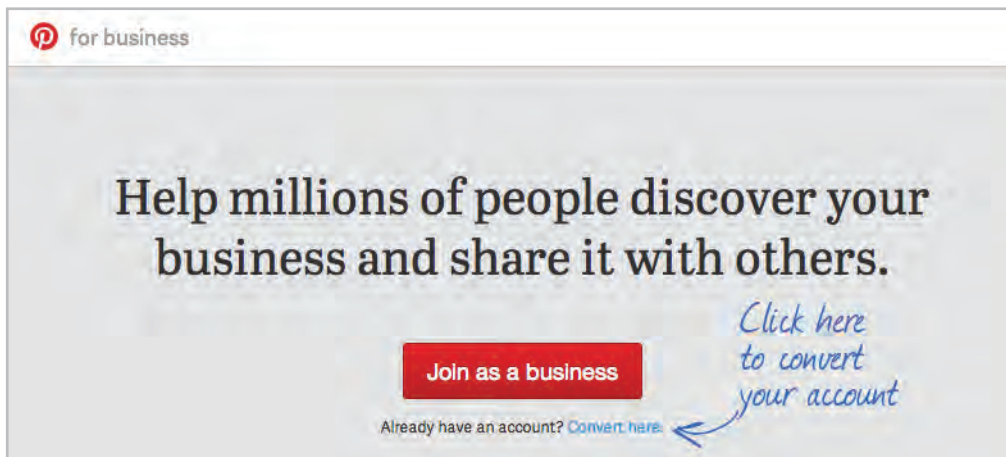
Starting from scratch

- Go to [Pinterest for Business](#) and select "join us as a business."
- Fill out the business profile entirely.
- Click "create account."



Converting a personal account to a business account

- Log into your Pinterest account.
- Click [Pinterest for Business](#).
- Click “convert your existing account.”



- Make adjustments to your profile that reflect your business.
- Click “create account.”

Once you’ve set up your account, you’ll be prompted to do a few other tasks, all of which will improve your Pinterest business site.

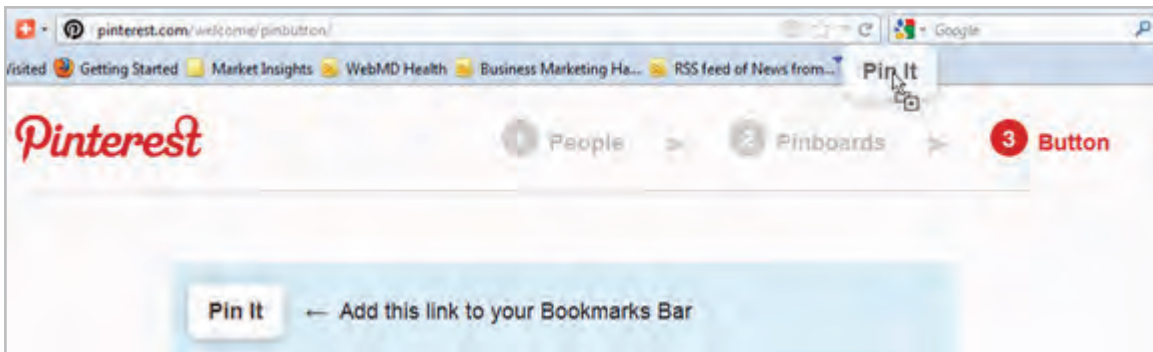
Verify your website

For starters, you'll want to verify your website. This allows people to see your website on your Pinterest page and allows it to show up in search results. Pinterest has a [guide](#) to help you do this.



Add the Pinterest bookmarklet

When setting up your account, you'll also want to install the pin widget on your computer. By adding this bookmarklet, you'll be able to pin an image from any website and add it to your boards. Just follow the prompts, or read this [short guide](#).



Add Pinterest buttons to your site

You'll want to install two buttons on your website: the pin it button and the follow button. The pin it button allows people to pin images from your website to their boards. The follow button helps you grow a Pinterest fan base. Again, Pinterest makes it easy with this handy [widget button](#).

Start pinning

Pinning is the act of virtually tacking a picture to your boards. Click the picture and you should go back to its original source. As with other social sites, you have a home feed where you see pins from those you follow. You can also like pictures and share posts from others, which is called repinning.

Before you start pinning anything and everything, check out these tips to create boards that represent your business in the most engaging way.

Remember your target audience

Everything you pin should be of interest to your target audience, Butterson says. For example, a women's clothing store can pin pictures of jewelry trends or articles on organizing small spaces. "You don't have to fill your boards with pictures of clothes," she says. "Think outside the box and offer a broad range of information to your followers."

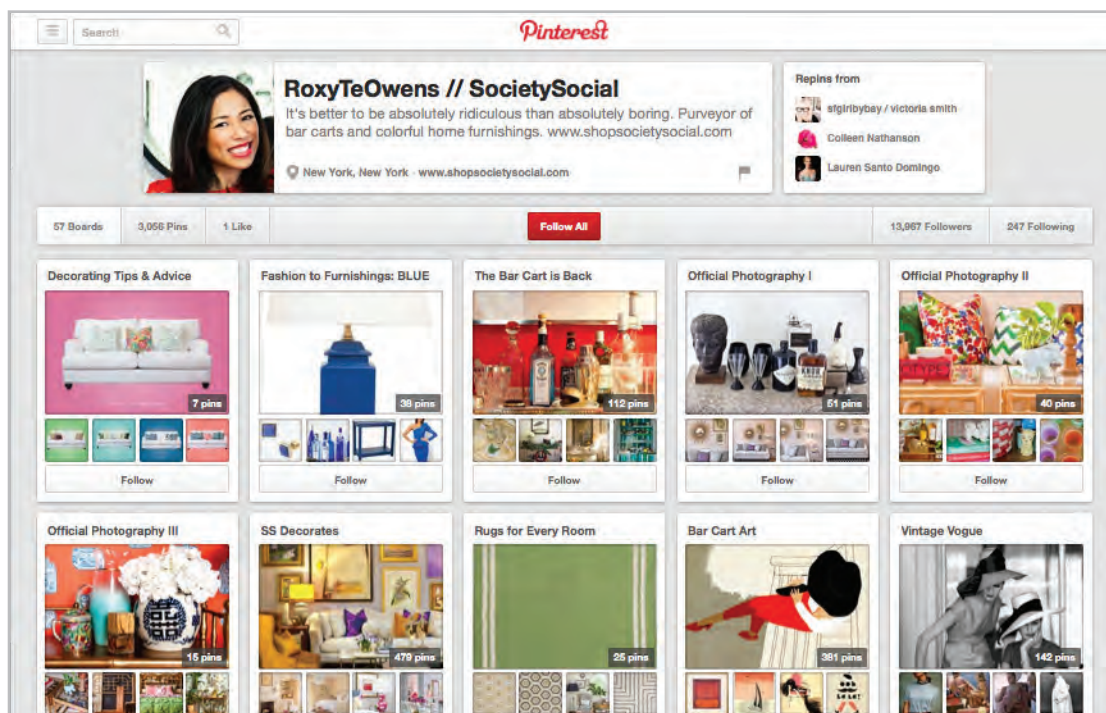


Go easy on self-promotion

You don't just want to fill your board with pictures of your company's products, says Butterson, who suggests keeping product posts to less than 25 percent. It's an easy problem to slip into, she says, even [hot shot retailers](#) are guilty of doing it.

Stay organized

You can separate your pins into categories by creating separate boards, which keeps your page neat. “Don’t create a million boards at once,” Butterson says. “Start slow, keep it manageable.” To see organization at its best, Butterson suggests checking out the Pinterest page of Society Social, [a home furnishings store](#).



Find good images

Pinterest is visual; so don’t bother posting subpar photos, Butterson says. “Make sure your site is known for its high quality images and content,” she says. “Don’t settle for anything less.” Need image inspiration? Check out this list of [most popular pins](#) and these tips for selecting great images to go with your blog posts and [a @!& } ^} dE](#)

Pinning frequency

How often you pin will vary from business to business, says Anglin. “It’s not a one-size-fits-all deal,” she says. “Each business has to experiment, but I advise clients to start by investing a few hours a week.”

Tactics to grow your audience

Repin great images

Repinning is the equivalent of sharing a post on Facebook.

Essentially, you’re pinning someone else’s image because you think it has value. “Repinning is the social part of Pinterest,” Butterton says. “It’s a great way to engage viewers. It’s likely that person will repin something of yours.”

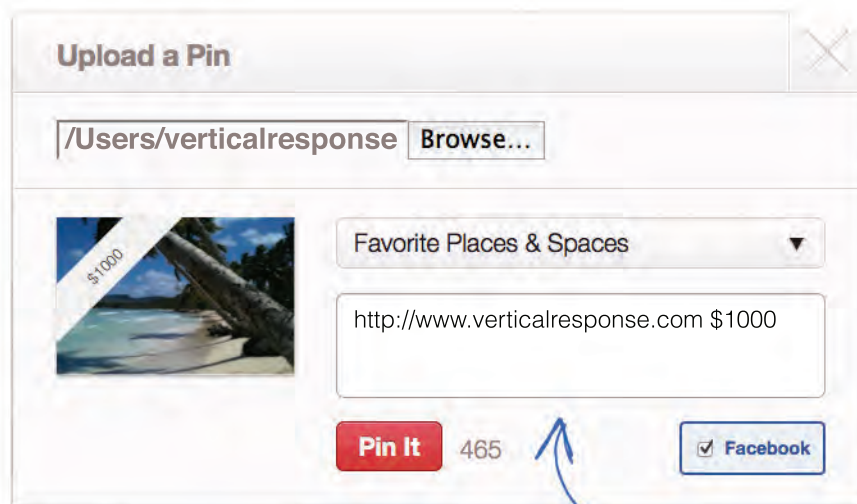


Follow industry leaders

Find the best of the best and follow them, says Anglin. “You don’t necessarily have to follow sites with massive amounts of followers, but you do want sites that are relevant to your business and offer high quality content.”

Fill in the image description

The focus of Pinterest is certainly visual, but that doesn't mean you should leave out descriptions, Anglin says. Your pins will show up higher in search results if text is provided. And if you're pinning products, you can include the price in the description, which has additional benefits such as showing up in the gifts category. Think how beneficial this could be during the holidays and through the year.



To add a price to your pin - include the exact url of the item for sale and the price with the \$ sign first!

Bring traffic back

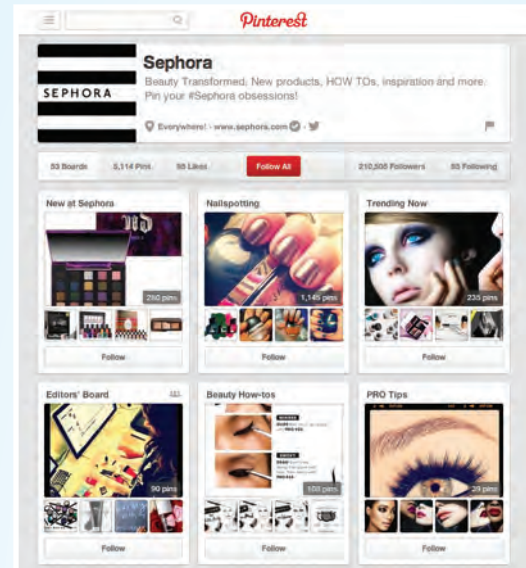
If your business recently released a new product or just posted a great new article to its site, pin it on one of your boards. When a person clicks the image, they'll be taken to your site for more information. "One of the biggest values of Pinterest is in its referral power," Anglin says.

Become a rich pinner

Make it easy for people to buy your products by becoming a rich pinner on Pinterest. [A Rich Pin](#) will offer real time information to your viewers, including current pricing and availability. It's a feature on Pinterest that's available to four categories: articles, products, recipes and movies. To enable the [feature](#), you have to make a few adjustments to your website and be approved by Pinterest.

Monitor and Measure

So, you've pinned for a few weeks now and you want to know if it's paying off. To find out, head to the [analytics page](#). Under your name in the top right corner, you'll see an analytics option. (Your company website needs to be verified to see this option.)



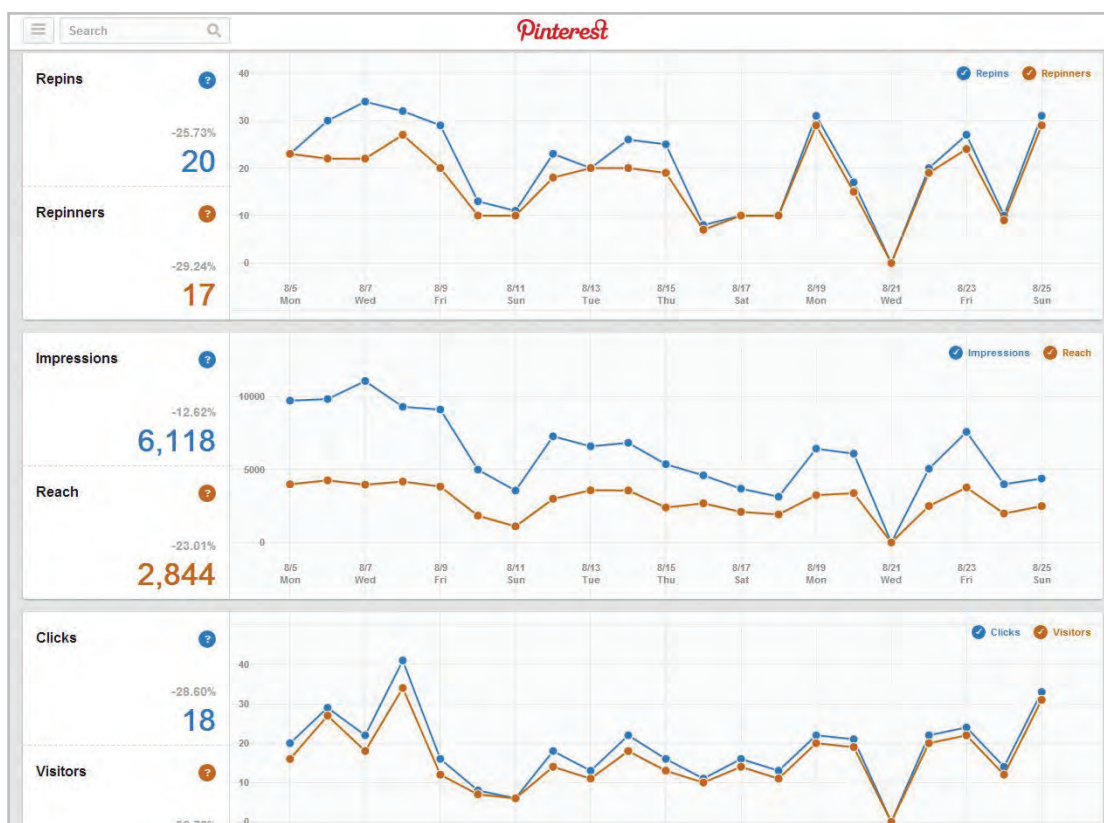
Sephora nails Pinterest strategy

Sephora, a company that specializes in beauty products, saw the value in Pinterest in early 2012 and started implementing it into their marketing strategy. The company added Pinterest information to its emails and eventually created a Pinterest-specific email that allows people to pin images directly from the email. The company also interacts with followers, asking which products are favorites. The strategy worked. In less than two years, Sephora has 140,000 followers and 2,500 pins.

To help decode the charts and information, here are a few helpful tips:

The metrics you should care about

Jason Ginsburg, director of interactive branding at Brandemix, says there are two metrics you should pay special attention to: most clicked and most repinned.



“The most clicked category represents click-throughs, meaning a person went to your website because of something they saw on Pinterest,” he says. “That leads to transactions.”

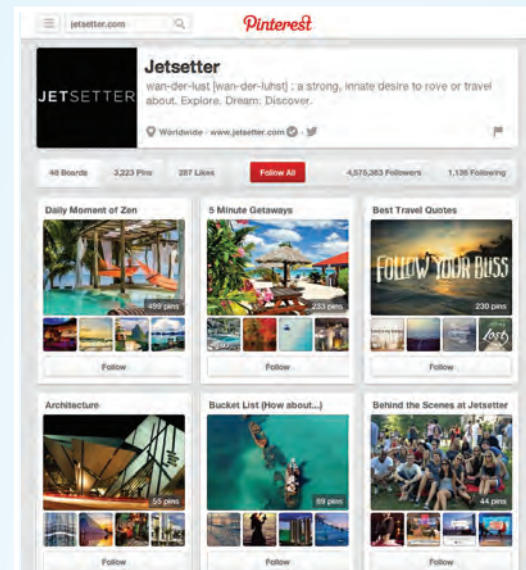
Most repinned is the other big one, Ginsburg says. “The more people repin your stuff, the more exposure it gets,” he says. “Just like a video can go viral, so can the images you pin.”

While there are other metrics on the page, Ginsburg says some are what he calls feel-good metrics. “Knowing how many likes a pin gets might make me feel good, but if it didn’t translate into an action, like a purchase, it doesn’t really do much for you.”

Monitoring tips

Watch for spikes

Once you have a few weeks of pinning under your belt, take a look at the charts provided on your analytics page. If you see a spike on the chart, it represents successful pins and that’s what you want to investigate. Change the date range so you’re only



Jetsetter grows fan base fast

Jetsetter, a flash sale travel site, created Pinterest boards in hopes of engaging travelers. The company created a group board for a popular Jetsetter customer. Together they posted pictures of travel destinations and lists of what to pack. The board got 720,000 followers. In combination with other Pinterest marketing efforts, Jetsetter saw a 150 percent increase in web traffic.

looking at data from the successful days and see what you pinned. “If you see a pin that’s doing well, make a mental note and try to find similar images or information that will bring similar success,” Ginsburg says.

Look for trends

At the bottom of the most repinned tab, you’ll notice a helpful feed that shows other pictures that were pinned next to your image. It could inspire other things for you to pin. “Once you find something that works, run with it,” Ginsburg says.

Change the time of day

If some of your pins aren’t doing well, Ginsburg suggests pinning at different times throughout the day. By checking the most recent tab on your analytics page, you can see how well that pin is doing. Afternoons between 2-4 pm seems to be popular with the Pinterest crowd, as does after 8 pm. See what works best for your followers and adjust accordingly.

Best Time to Pin

