

Pinterest Marketing for Resorts

Presented by The Resort Developers Association
by Michael Grimm



Overview

Pinterest is blowing up faster than Facebook and a lot of developers have still never heard of it. So to help you get started fast, and stay ahead of the pack, we're giving you the information in this report.

You've already shown your commitment to keeping up with technology by signing up on the Vault to be notified of new content like this, which I applaud you for. It's important for all of us to consistently update ourselves on what's new in the tech world.

Even though Pinterest is brand new many resorts have already jumped on top of the platform and started using it for their benefit. Even Steve Lamb has recently jumped on the Pinterest band wagon and is actively exploring it's possibilities.

Currently Pinterest is limited only to people who have been invited to use it. But we have the ability to invite you if you haven't already secured an account. I've already mentioned it's growing faster than Facebook. But I have to remind you again because this is a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of the platform in it's infancy before other businesses and advertisers infiltrate it. Opportunities like this are very rare and can be extremely valuable.

So read through this report to discover how you can use this new viral image based marketing tool to launch your marketing programs to new levels.



Facts

- Pinterest had 17.8 million views in February (2012)
- Pinterest is now the 3rd most popular social network online
- Pinterest's traffic grew over 50% just from January to February
- Pinterest users spend an hour and a half per month on the site
- 55% on Pinterest users are women between age 25-44

Here are some of the questions we'll answer in this report:

What is Pinterest?

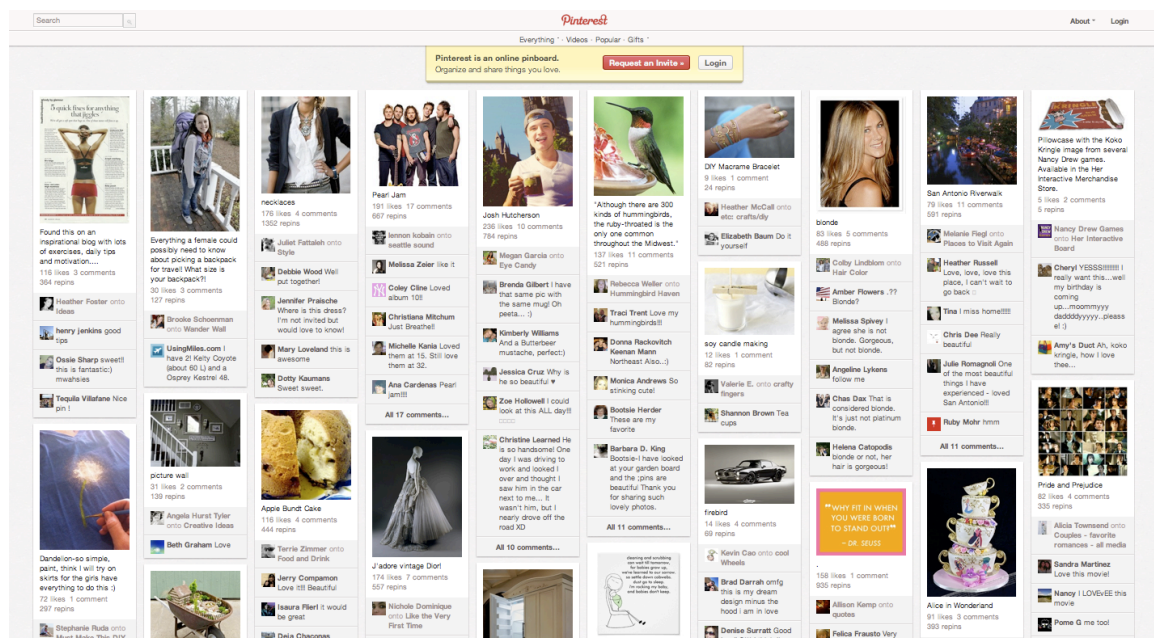
Why is it worth my time?

How does it work?

How do I get started?

What can I do with it?

What is Pinterest?



This is a screenshot of the Pinterest home page

Pinterest is a giant online pin board where people can put images they like. It's as simple as that.

Why is it worth my time?

Some people look at Pinterest statistics and instantly dismiss it as a viable marketing tool when they see that their key user base is women between the ages of 25-44. But in the world of social marketing, that's exactly who

we want to market to. Because 92% of women pass along information about deals or good finds to their friends...**92%!**

Pinterest's primary demographic is these women who share with their friends, between 25-44 who are focused on family, half of which already have children. It's top interest groups include parenting, home, and family. As developers we work primarily with families, we are their home away from home, we connect parents with their kids when they drive through our gates. These are our people, this is the newest, hottest tool to connect with them. Additionally a large portion of the Pinterest users that our industry appeals to are in the more affluent income ranges.

How does it work?

People see images they like on the internet and they "Pin" them. Basically (with the click of a button) they tell Pinterest, "I like this image, put it on my pin board so everyone can see it, because maybe someone else will like it too." Then that image shows up on the Pinterest home page and on that person's pin board. Now everyone who goes to Pinterest.com and everyone who follows that person's pin board is going to see that image.

There's also the ability to "Like" and "Comment" on other people's pins.

How do I get started?

Go to one of the recent posts on the Vault and fill out the form requesting an invitation to Pinterest and we'll send you one right out. That way you can jump on step one – sign up.

When you create an account, Pinterest asks you to log in using your Facebook or Twitter account. They do this for two reasons. One, to collect your personal information, and two, to make their own site go viral by sharing everything you do with your friends online. For this reason I encourage you to create an account for the resort by signing in with the Twitter account that the resort uses. If you try doing it with your Facebook account you may wind up tying it to your personal account as Facebook automatically associates your resort's account with the administrator of the account.

Once you've set up your account you'll start setting up your boards. These are where all of your pins are going to live. Pinterest will set up a few boards for you by default, these are things such as Places to Visit, or Things to Eat. They are just suggestions from Pinterest, you can keep, change, or delete them as you see fit.

You'll also want to add the "Pin It" button to your browser so that you too can pin images that you like online. You have the option to upload images straight to your Pinterest account, but sometimes it's easier to pin them straight from your website.

Next you'll need to add a Pinterest sharing tool to your website. I won't go into detail here because your web developer should be able to take the reigns on this. If you *are* your web developer let me know and I'll walk you through it.

What can I do with it?

Market to people of course. Get more tours, more referrals, more **sales!**

The most important thing to remember when starting to market on Pinterest, is that people aren't there to be marketed to. They are there to collect interesting things and share them with their friends.

So what you want to do, is put interesting things in front of people. This is a great place for Activities staff to spend time. If you do something creative with people, take pictures of that and share it on Pinterest.

You have to blend your marketing in with your genuine content. The easiest way to do this is to produce professional photographs.

Here are a few marketing approaches:

1. Direct Approach
This is who we are – Look at our Resort
2. Friend Approach
Follow members and other people's boards, re-pinning, liking, and commenting on their content
3. Hands-Off Approach
Create Pinterest ready content for your site and encourage

Pinterest users to start pinning from it

The Direct Approach

In the direct approach you're going to create boards like "The Resort", "Activities", "[Holiday] Weekend Celebration", and "Amenities" or "Accommodations."

These will likely be images you uploaded directly to the site that you or your team took at the property. They are strictly promoting your resort. They may even include an image that is a graphical representation of a special marketing deal you are promoting. This is the most simple and direct way to market with Pinterest.

The Friend Approach

Using the friend approach you must engage socially with other people on Pinterest as the resort. Your goal with this approach is to find members on Pinterest and find their friends. These are the people whose boards you are going to browse and follow. There is a blind reciprocation factor in social media. Roughly one out of three people who you follow, on just about any social network, will follow you back, no questions asked.

When you follow someone on Pinterest, everything they pin will appear on your page. That means that if you follow three hundred people on Pinterest you'll get roughly a hundred of them following you back, and seeing everything you pin. This is a great way to keep your message/resort/promotions in front of people and increase that programs response rate.

The Hands-Off Approach

The hands-off approach is for the developer who says:

"I don't know what Pinterest is and I never want to. I certainly don't want to learn how to use it. But I respect that my members and prospects are using it (a lot) and want to engage them through it."

This takes a coordinated team effort. The first thing you'll want to do is open the coffers and "splurge" \$50-\$100 to get a photographer up for the day. (I've spent \$400/day on photographers before and the pictures we got for the resort were worth every penny.) Get some professional

photos that highlight everything you want to promote around the resort, be it family fun, relaxation, or luxury. Put these photos up on your website, then share on whatever social platforms you do engage on, that your site is ripe with new photos for those who Pin.

Some of the most commonly pinned photos are food related, to-do project related, or destination related. So have your activities team come up with some clever holiday themed recipes, make them up, take good pictures of the, then post the recipes with the associated picture on the blog on your website. You can do the same with specials in your restaurant if you have one. The same idea works for to-do projects.

The third genre of popular Pins is "Destinations." This is an easy one as you resort **is** a destination. It's the place everyone wants to be. So get a photographer up there and get some pictures to prove it. Pay a little extra to have them do some touch up work to the photos to really make them look like a million bucks. The more powerful the image, the greater chance it will engage users.

The final step in the hands-off approach is to have your web developer add "Pin It" buttons to these images on your site. When I did this last month for a site it only took about fifteen minutes. What this does is make a "Pin It" button appear over any image you choose on your site when the users mouse hovers over it. This is not actually required

Once you start sharing with your members and guests that you have optimized your site for Pinterest with all this new stuff, you will see a temporary surge in traffic to your site. Everyone is interested in checking out something new. It's why we're able to get tours in the door and sell them, because we're something new. So you share with members and guests that your either on Pinterest, or your website is Pinterest ready, now you sit back and let them do the work for you. They will tear through the site and cannibalize your images for their pin boards. Then you will see an increase in new organic visitors to your website. As long as you have your website set up to capitalize on new traffic by having an automatic lead capture and follow up system in place, you should begin seeing an influx in tour requests.

Wrap Up

The internet is always changing. Pinterest is hot today, but who's to say where it will be in a year or two years. There will always be hot trends. There will always be potential in those trends. How you come out on the other end of them depends on how fast you take action and the actions

that you take. Jump on Pinterest now, while it's hot and you'll have an incredible opportunity to profit from the latest hot trend.