



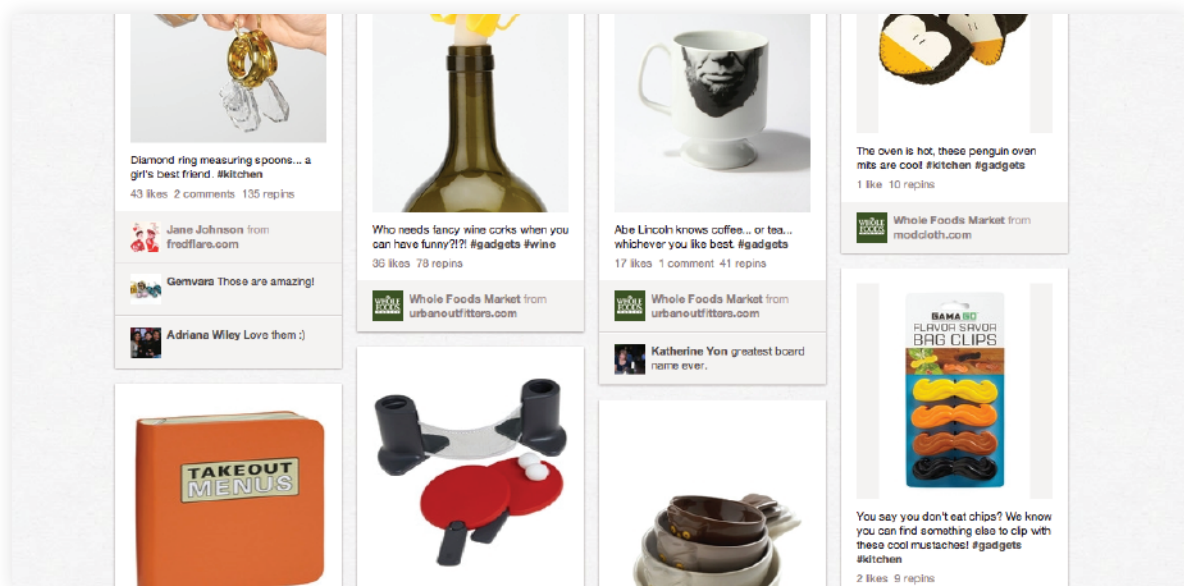
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Should My Brand Be on Pinterest?

Did you know there's a new social media site out there driving more referral traffic than Google+, YouTube and LinkedIn combined?

It's Pinterest.

Pinterest is an online community that allows users to save, or 'pin', images from around the web onto their own personal, virtual bulletin boards. There are popular categories - home decor, food, crafts, fashion - but users can create as many boards as they want, on any topic they desire. The idea is to express your personality and share the things that you love with your followers.



Sure, Pinterest is popular. In fact, it reached the 10 million monthly visitor mark faster than any other standalone site in history. *But can Pinterest be used for marketing?*

Marketing on Pinterest is in its infancy, and most brands are still experimenting with how to use it. Whole Foods is a great example of a company taking advantage of the site to market themselves. Their boards are relevant to their brand - recipes, green living, cool kitchen design and even recommended books. They actively share content from their own site to drive traffic, as well as share content from other sites and from their followers.

Whole Foods is a B2C brand, as are many of the other brands currently using the site for marketing purposes. Certainly, a B2B brand with the right content could find success on Pinterest, but the truth is, it may not be right for everyone. Here are a couple of questions to ask before you decide to add Pinterest to your marketing efforts:

Are there compelling images associated with your brand? Pinterest is essentially a visual bookmarking site. The most popular pins are compelling images (that link out, of course, to great content). If you want to use Pinterest to drive traffic to your website, you need to have great images and graphics to share. Sharing your own content is an obvious benefit of Pinterest - you're promoting your company and improving your website's SEO with inbound links. You can even add a 'Pin It' button to your site, similar to existing Twitter and Facebook share buttons, to make it easy for visitors to share your content on Pinterest.

How much time do you have? Pinterest is just like Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites - it's free to use; all it will cost you is time. You need to have time to dedicate to respond to your followers' likes, comments and repins. You also need time to find and share inspiring content from around the web.

How well do you know your brand's core values? The boards you create on Pinterest should reflect the many different sides of your brand. No brand is only one-dimensional. You should create multiple boards covering an array of topics related to your brand story. And as mentioned before, you should share your own content as well as relevant content from around the web.

Remember, Pinterest is just another piece of the marketing puzzle. You've got to decide if it's the right thing for your company. It's not a place to post ads or blatant marketing pieces; it's a place to express your brand's core values and engage in conversations with your audience. Cliché, perhaps, but Pinterest is a place to express your personality, and that's true whether it's a personal account or a branded company account.



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