

Pinterest For Business

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Should You Use Automation for Your Pins?

At some point in the course of running your online business, you will come across an offer that claims to auto-pin your pins. Many of these services may also auto-like for you and even auto-repin. They can even be set up to auto-follow to develop your following.

It seems like a great idea and one that can free up your time. Imagine being able to reap the benefits of social media without having to engage on Pinterest! It seems like something everyone should take advantage of.

The trouble is, with most social media platforms, it's against the terms of service. The strategy may work in the short run. In the long run, it's probably going to result in getting your account shut down. There are some solutions that Pinterest gives its blessing. Viralwoot is one of those. Others may exist as well.

The key is to double check with Pinterest. You don't want to take a shoot first, ask questions later approach. There is too much at risk. You could spend months developing a great account only to have it get clobbered by the Pinterest powers-that-be.

Don't rely on advice that others may give. They may tell you it's okay to use these automated tools. There are two problems with relying on advice from outsiders. The first is they may simply be wrong. They could be following the bad advice of someone else. Also, how do you know they aren't just telling you this advice to sell you the software package?

The second reason is Pinterest changes its rules. Unless these advice givers stay on top of the rules of social media and are willing to alert you when it happens, it's best not to trust this advice.

You should contact Pinterest directly. They are the only ones that can give you a definitive answer. They make the rules, so they are the authority.

Think about why most social media platforms don't want you to use these tools. It's because you won't have much control over what happens and you are no longer engaging directly with others. It skews their analytic data, and it makes you seem artificial. Imagine if you found out someone liked or followed you as a result of a bot. How would you feel about that? They removed the human factor and reduced your connection to a decision by a machine. That's not a very social way to connect.

Time to Check Your Pinterest Stats

It's amazing how few people know that Pinterest has statistics available. Even people who do know, ignore the option. This is a big mistake, especially if you have a business account. In Pinterest, there is a tab called Analytics. It is here that you can see the necessary information about how you are doing in the Pinterest world.

You may have been told that you should create a decent profile for Pinterest. When you start to view your analytics, you will see why. As interest in your overall account grows (through follows and repins), you will see that your profile is getting viewed. Create a profile worthy of those eyes.

You will also get a snapshot of the number of views and engagement from those views. You can track on a week-by-week basis and you have the ability to see the effects of any changes you make in getting people to your Pinterest account.

If you have a website associated with your account (and you should), Pinterest will give you statistics on who is visiting the site from Pinterest. Bloggers everywhere are reporting that Pinterest is a great source of traffic to their websites.

Finally, the main section of the analytics gives you information on which pins are the most popular regarding impressions, saves, clicks, and likes. It is a summary of the past 30 days.

As if all this information wasn't good enough, it gets even better. Each section described above can be clicked on so that you can get more detailed information. For your profile, you see the top pins (same as before) and also the top boards, with statistics associated with that. You can drill down into the repins and clicks. You can control the date range that you

want to view. The other sections have their own set of details that you can peruse as well.

If the statistics report a high number of clicks, analyze if those are clicks to your website. If they are not, this is an indication you may be sharing other peoples' pins too much. Try to determine why their pins are getting clicks and incorporate that into new pins that get clicks to your website. Some people will advise you to switch the links from other peoples' pins to your own website. This is probably not going to be viewed as being ethical. If it hasn't been already, it will probably be prohibited at some point by Pinterest. There is no reason for causing ill will among the Pinterest community.

Treat Pinterest Like a Search Engine

Why do you use Pinterest? For some, they love the feeling of having others like and share what they post. For others, though, people use Pinterest as an organizational tool. They pin their recipes, favorite vacation destinations, etc. They also use it to find out what's in style or what the hottest deals are.

If you scrutinize these uses, you will see that Pinterest has evolved into a search engine. Therefore, your strategy to pin should be centered around that fact. Treat Pinterest as if it were a search engine.

If you have been creating content for any length of time, you would know there have been many changes made to Google's algorithm. Some of what worked several years ago, will not work and may even get you penalized or banned. Other techniques, such as keeping your content relevant and high quality, worked back then as it does now, and will work ten or twenty years from now.

The point is, Google is looking to deliver quality, highly relevant search results. This requires quality, highly-relevant content. The Pinterest search engine is not yet as robust as the search engine in Google. You may be able to get away with some tricks in Pinterest that Google would slam you for. You may be tempted to trick the Pinterest engine. However, eventually, Pinterest is going to implement changes similar to Google so it too, can deliver quality search results to pinners.

This means you don't want to be caught having to backtrack all of your pins to comply with new changes. If you stay above the board from the beginning, you won't have to go through the trouble later. What this means is you want to offer the Pinterest engine worthwhile, quality content. It's okay to use some keywords and hashtags in the description of

your pins. But, don't go overboard. Make sure the content is readable and makes sense. Don't stuff the description with a bunch of keywords.

Also, try to limit the amount of promotion you are using on Pinterest. It's okay to divert the pinner to your website with a quality article. But, if you are bringing them to a sales page, it could turn people off.

As of this writing, Pinterest discourages the use of direct affiliate links in pins. In fact, if you try to add an Amazon affiliate link, the engine will remove the affiliate part of the link. It's not easy to do this with all companies offering an affiliate program. But, if Pinterest finds out that you are doing this in excess, they could delete your account.

Try to Tie Together Your Pinterest Posts with Your Blog

When a pinner sees your pins or boards for the first time, they have no idea who you are. Within seconds they will make a determination about whether they want to continue with what you are offering. If you can hook them in, they may even click through to your blog or website.

If you happen to get lucky and they arrive on your site, there is no guarantee they will read your content, but you will get some people who will. If you don't make a logical connection between your Pinterest pin and your blog, they will likely disconnect once they hit your website. In some cases, this can make matters worse, as you've lost them on Pinterest as well as on your blog.

You need to get pinners to associate what they saw on Pinterest with who you are on your blog. Pinterest is a visual engine. When they get to your website, and it is nothing but text, you run the risk of them heading for the exit. Therefore, make sure you get some graphics or other visuals onto your website. You should be doing that anyway. But, if you are expecting a good number of visitors who come from Pinterest, this becomes a necessity.

One strategy that seems effective is to include a mascot in your pin that appears on your blog post as well. This creates an immediate association that gives pinners a hint of familiarity. It happens at a subconscious level, but it does happen nonetheless.

It doesn't have to be a mascot, but the more places you can make this connection, the better. If you have a call-to-action such as a lead capture page, place that mascot or graphic into your confirmation newsletter. Once they see this again, their minds are immediately set at ease, and you have warmed them to you or your brand.

It's a good idea not to go crazy with this strategy. Using it once per each of the mediums you expose your audience to, is probably enough. You can also keep it going in subsequent communications with them. After a while, your brand will become synonymous with this connection.

While a logo can serve as the communication means, it's not quite as effective because people associate logos with companies who are trying to sell. After they become familiar with you, then the logo can be a strong reinforcement. But, it should not be the initial connector.

With Pinterest, It's Nice to Share

Sharing is caring, it's nice to share, these are both expressions you have probably heard in your life. They are especially useful for social media. With Pinterest, you will find that if you are generous with sharing what others have produced, they will appreciate it and return the favor.

At the very least, people will follow you when you share their work. They will want to see what else of theirs that you may be willing to share. Also, when you share something that is yours, your chances greatly increase that they will share this as well.

When you are looking for something to share, consider branching out from Pinterest itself. It's okay to repin what you see on your dashboard. But, if you go the extra step to pin from the outside into Pinterest, this will get you noticed.

It should go without say that the pins of others should coincide with the topic or subject of your boards. You aren't doing anyone any favors if you pin irrelevant topics. The readers won't appreciate it and neither will the source of the original pin. You will continue to find pins that show a graphic, and when the user clicks to see the website, it has nothing to do with that graphic. Think about how you would react if you saw that yourself. You probably have seen it. If not, it's only a matter of time before you will.

When you do find external material that you want to pin, don't be afraid to reach out to the creator and let them know of your efforts. Specify that you will be on the lookout for more of what they are offering and will continue to pin anything you determine to be fitting. This can help you establish a relationship with others and these relationships can grow to significant collaborations.

On occasion, you may find a webmaster who does not want his or her material shared. By reaching out to them, they will alert you to this desire. This can save you some headaches down the line as you can immediately remove any shares. Be courteous when this happens. People have their reasons for not wanting to share. It should be respected. Offer to keep the channel of communication open in case they later change their minds.

You should hold the material of others to the same high standard as your own. If you start posting junk just for the sake of getting attention, it will reflect poorly on your sharing efforts.