

The Ultimate
Social Media
Guide to Pinterest





Pinterest is one of the hottest new social networking sites. This last year, Pinterest has become one of the fastest growing traffic referral sources, even surpassing Yahoo! in website traffic referrals. By allowing users to share inspiration, ideas, and knowledge, Pinterest stimulates users visually, while allowing them to showcase their interests.

Pinterest helps people discover new products and brands (like your practice) and helps companies achieve greater visibility among search engines.

Getting Started

Before you can dive into the addictive and inspirational world of Pinterest, you must first set up an account.

- Start by heading to <http://business.pinterest.com/>.
- Click on the red button titled "Join as a business".
- Select "Local Business" as your Business Type.
- Fill in all remaining fields – thoroughly and thoughtfully.
- Be sure to include your website URL and a short description of your services that includes where you service patients (i.e. what city or cities).
- Agree to the Terms of Service and click "Create Account".

* Note: Your username will display as your Pinterest URL. (e.g. A doctor who creates their username as "Eye_Doctor" will have the coordinating Pinterest URL of "www.pinterest.com/eye_doctor", so be sure to choose a username you want affiliated with your practice.

While Pinterest's setup process is a little more involved than other social networks, it's recommended that you thoroughly fill in each field to better optimize your profile for search engines and help other users easily find your page.

Here is an example of a completed profile:

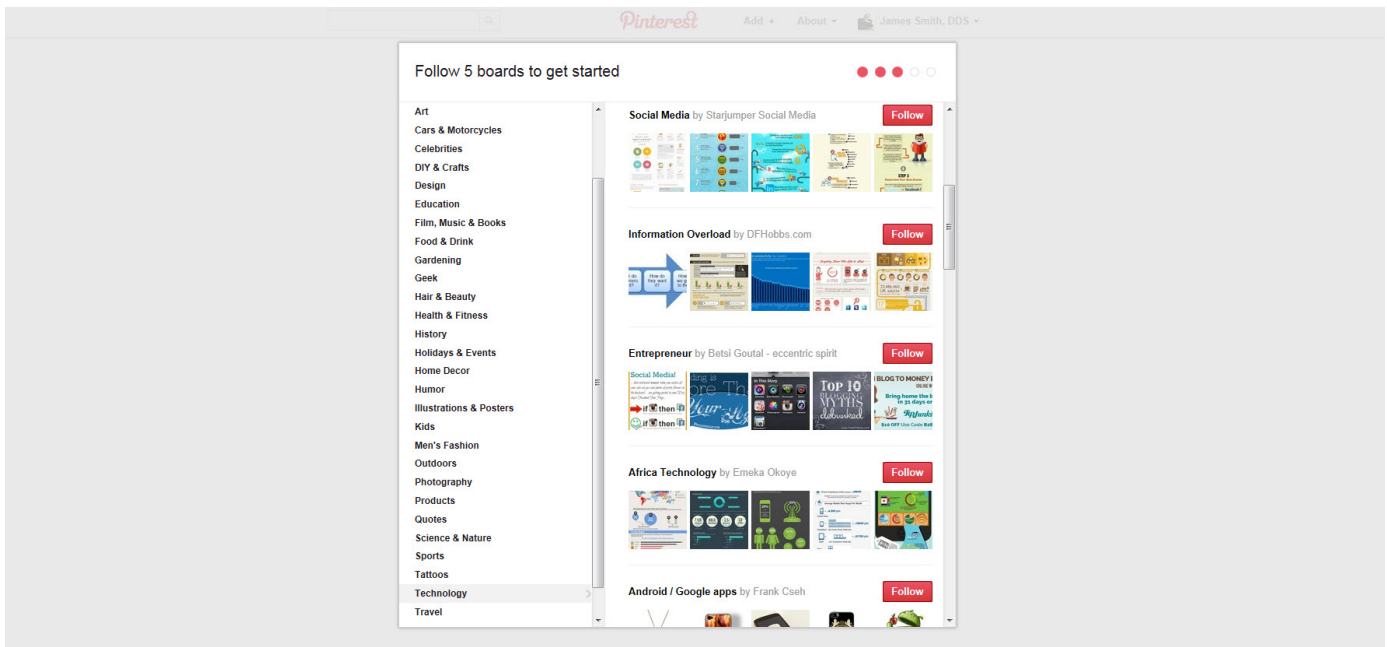
The screenshot shows the Pinterest business profile setup form. At the top, the Pinterest logo is visible. The form includes the following fields and information:

- Business Type:** Local Business (dropdown menu, with a note "Can be changed later").
- Contact Name:** Doctor Smith (Person managing your account).
- Email Address:** admin@doctorsmith.com.
- Password:** [Redacted with dots] (6 characters minimum, with a "Weak Password" warning).
- PROFILE INFO (shown publicly):**
 - Business Name:** James Smith, DDS (How you will appear on Pinterest).
 - Username:** http://pinterest.com/doctorsmith (The username is already in use).
 - Profile Image:** A photo of a man in a suit, with an "Upload Image" button.
- About:** James Smith, DDS provide high-end cosmetic dentistry services to Los Angeles and surrounding areas. (101 characters remaining).
- Website:** doctorjamesmith.com (or your website.com).



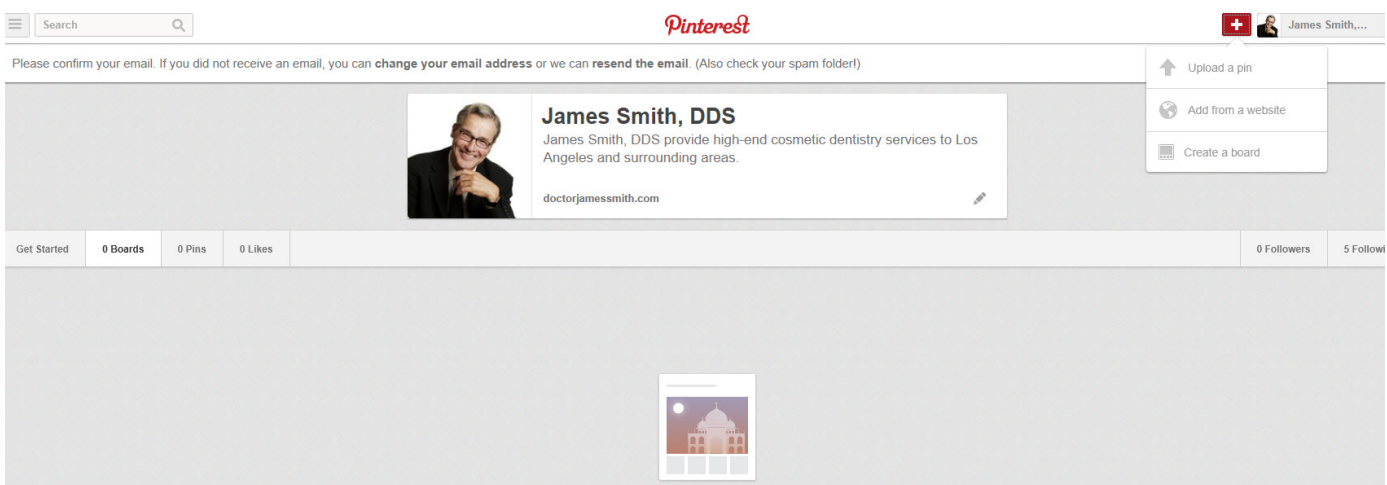
Within a few minutes, you will receive a verification email from Pinterest. Click the link within the email to verify your account. After verifying your account, you will be prompted to complete setup. The information below can help guide you through this process:

Following Boards – You will first be prompted to select 5 boards to follow from current, active Pinterest users. Use the categories in the left-hand column to navigate to boards of interest. After choosing 5 boards from one or multiple categories, click "Next". (You may follow more than 5 boards before clicking "Next" if you so wish).



Your Profile – After Pinterest has you follow your first 5 boards, you will be directed to your profile page. From this page, you can create your own boards and upload your own pins.

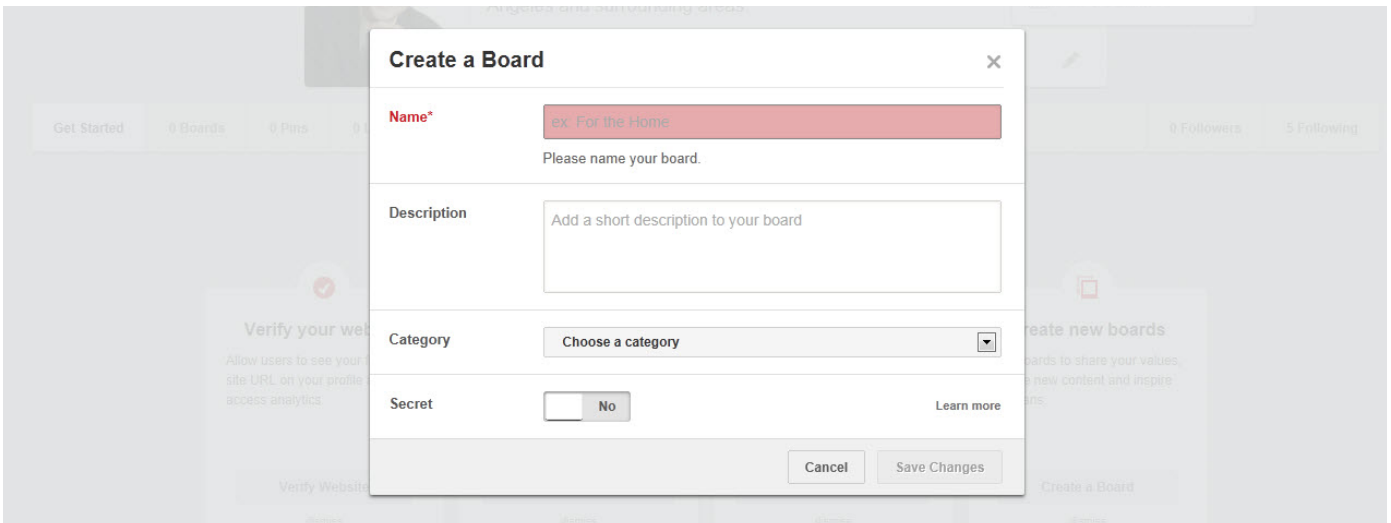
Create a Board – To create a board, you can either click "Create a Board" in the middle of your page, or click the plus sign in the upper right-hand corner and select "Create a Board" from the drop down the menu.





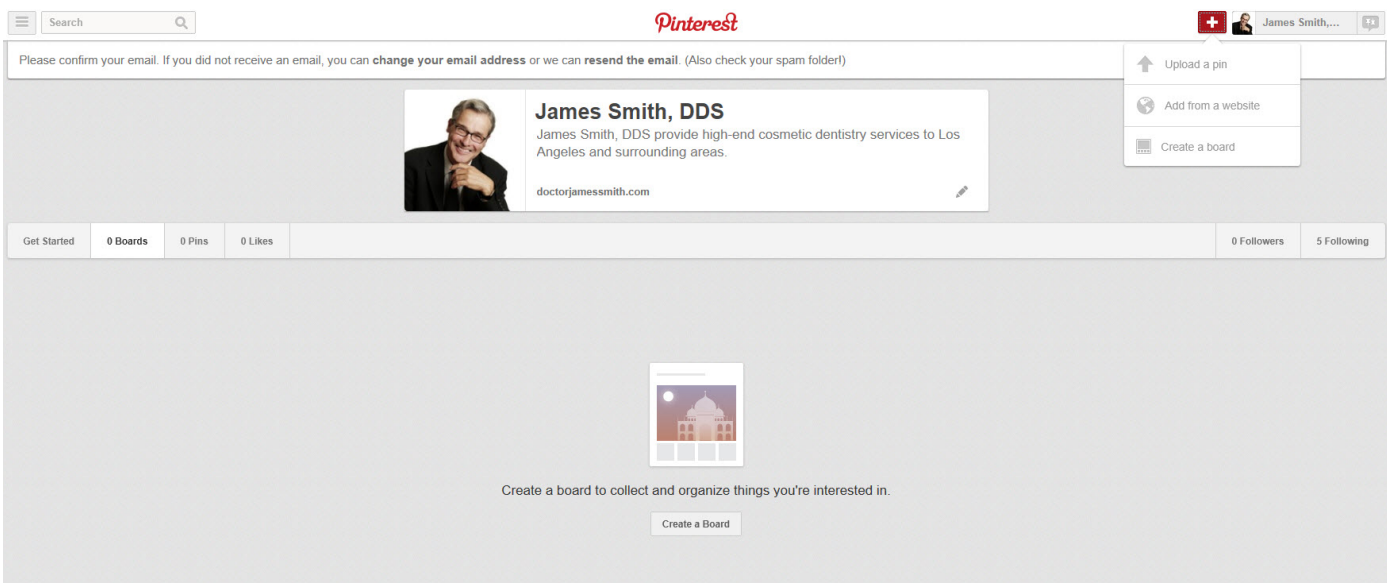
You will then be prompted to fill out the information pertaining to your board, including a name for your board, a brief description of what your board contains, and which category it falls within.

If you wish to create a private board that only you can view, click the “No” button next to the Secret option. This will hide your board from search engines and other Pinterest users. Anything you pin to your secret board will not be public on Pinterest.

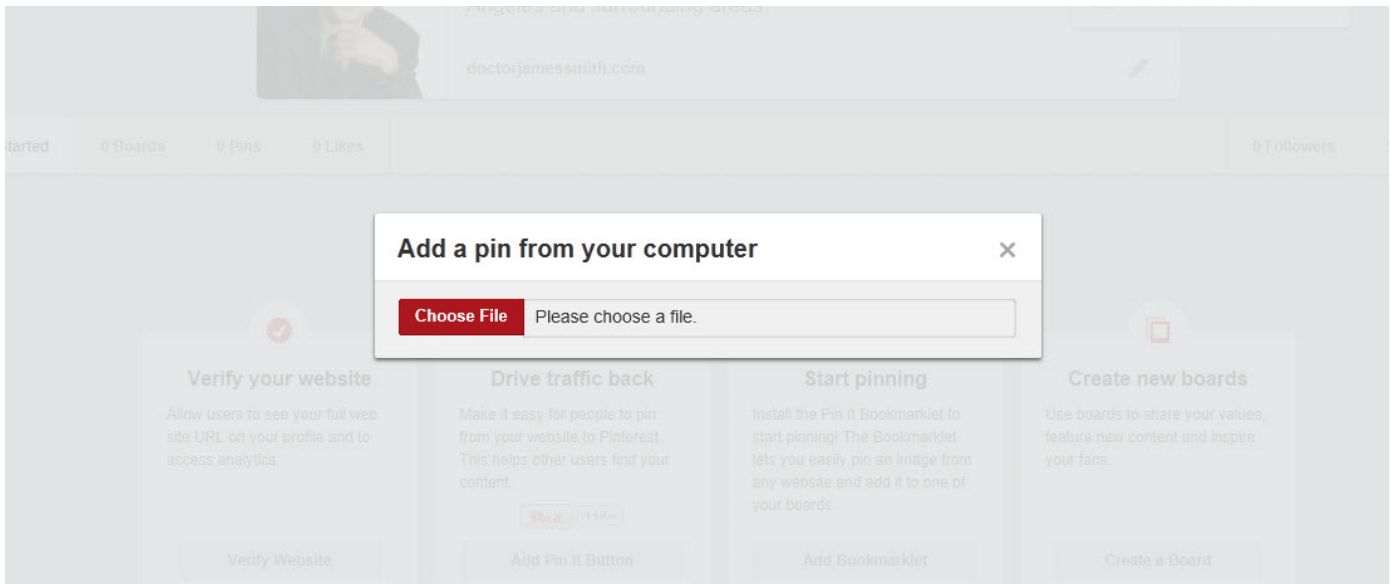


Save your changes and start pinning to your new board!

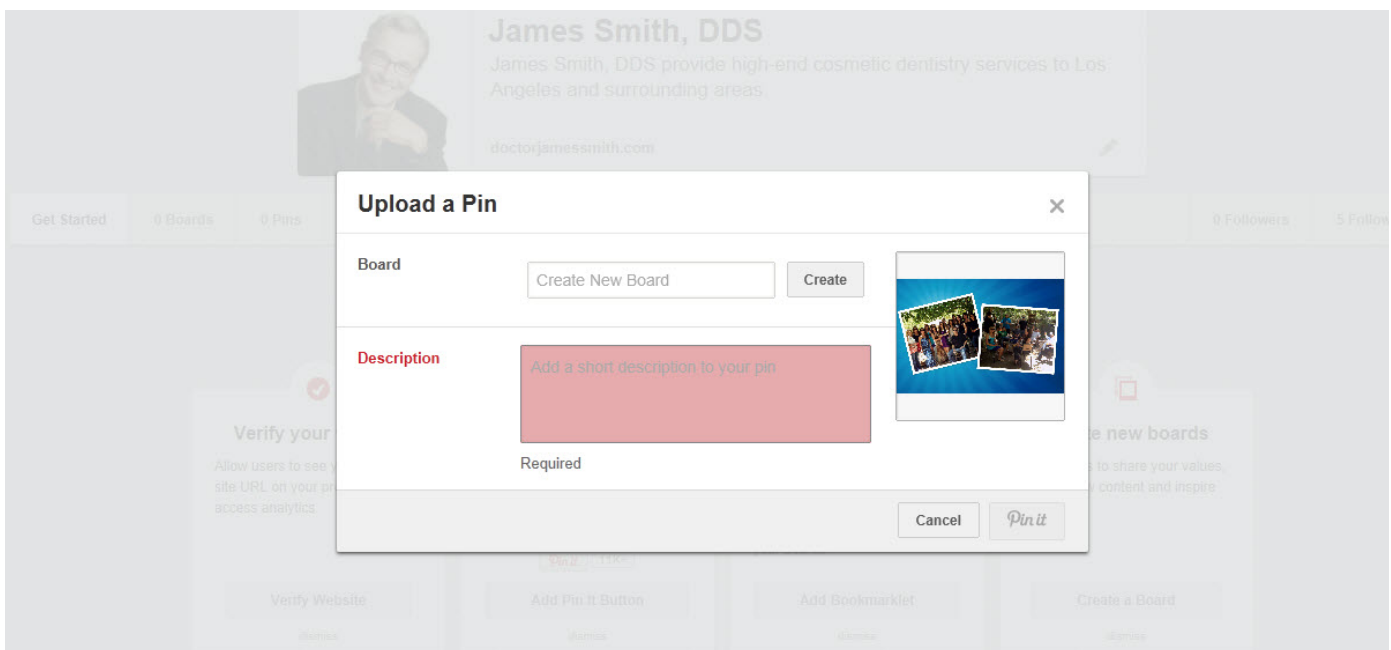
Upload a New Pin – Most activity or pins within Pinterest are Repins – the pinning of items already shared by other users; however, you can upload and share your own original content as well. To share your own pin, click on the plus sign in the upper right-hand corner to and select Upload a Pin from the drop down the menu.



Next, you will browse your computer for the file you want to pin.



Finally, you will assign your pin to a board and write a brief description of the pin.



Pinterest Glossary

- **Board** - a self-labeled category of pins that you have bookmarked. Boards may be public (for all users to view) or kept private (only you can view).
- **Categories** – Pinterest's pre-selected grouping of users' pins. Pinterest categories include: women's fashion, photography, hair and beauty, home décor, among many others.
- **Comment** - another pinner's thoughts attributed to a particular pin. Comments are visible by any pinner viewing that pin.



- **Description** - the words you use to clarify what a pin contains. Descriptions are visible below each pin and are capable of being repinned.
- **Follower** - another pinner who has opted to be notified of your pins. Followers may choose to follow one, several, or all of your Boards.
- **Following** - the process of choosing to be notified of another pinner's pins. You may opt to follow one, multiple, or all of a pinner's boards.
- **Homepage** - the "Home Base" of your Pinterest account. Homepages display the most recent pins from the pinners you follow, as well as your most recent pins.
- **Like** - a virtual approval or admiration of another pinner's bookmark (pin).
- **Pin** - an online visual bookmark that links to the original webpage source of the image or the act of bookmarking an intriguing image or concept.
- **Pinner** - any Pinterest user.
- **Repin** - the bookmark or bookmarking of an image or concept that someone else originally pinned. You do not need to be following someone to repin their bookmarks.
- **Vanity URL** - a personalized web address within a social network that provides a direct link to your profile (e.g. <http://www.pinterest.com/doctorspectacle>).

Repinning

Pinterest has mastered the method of supplying pinners with images that peak interest. By selecting the lined button at the top left-hand side of your screen, you can browse popular categories and pins from other users. Additionally, you can use the "Search" feature located at the top left side of the page, to search by keyword.

The screenshot shows the Pinterest website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Search" and a magnifying glass icon. To the right of the search bar is the Pinterest logo. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with a hamburger icon on the left. The menu is organized into three columns of categories:

- Column 1: Home Feed, Popular, Everything, Gifts, Videos, Animals, Architecture, Art, Cars & Motorcycles, Celebrities, DIY & Crafts, Design, Education
- Column 2: Film, Music & Books, Food & Drink, Gardening, Geek, Hair & Beauty, Health & Fitness, History, Holidays & Events, Home Decor, Humor, Illustrations & Posters, Kids
- Column 3: Men's Fashion, Outdoors, Photography, Products, Quotes, Science & Nature, Sports, Tattoos, Technology, Travel, Weddings, Women's Fashion

Below the navigation menu, there are several promotional cards. One card on the left says "Verify your website" and "Allow users to see your full web site URL on your profile and to access analytics." Another card in the middle says "Drive traffic back" and "Make it easy for people to pin from your website to Pinterest. This helps other users find your content." A third card on the right says "Start pinning" and "Install the Pin It Bookmarklet to start pinning! The Bookmarklet lets you easily pin an image from any website and add it to one of your boards." A fourth card on the far right says "Create new" and "Use boards to share content with your fans."

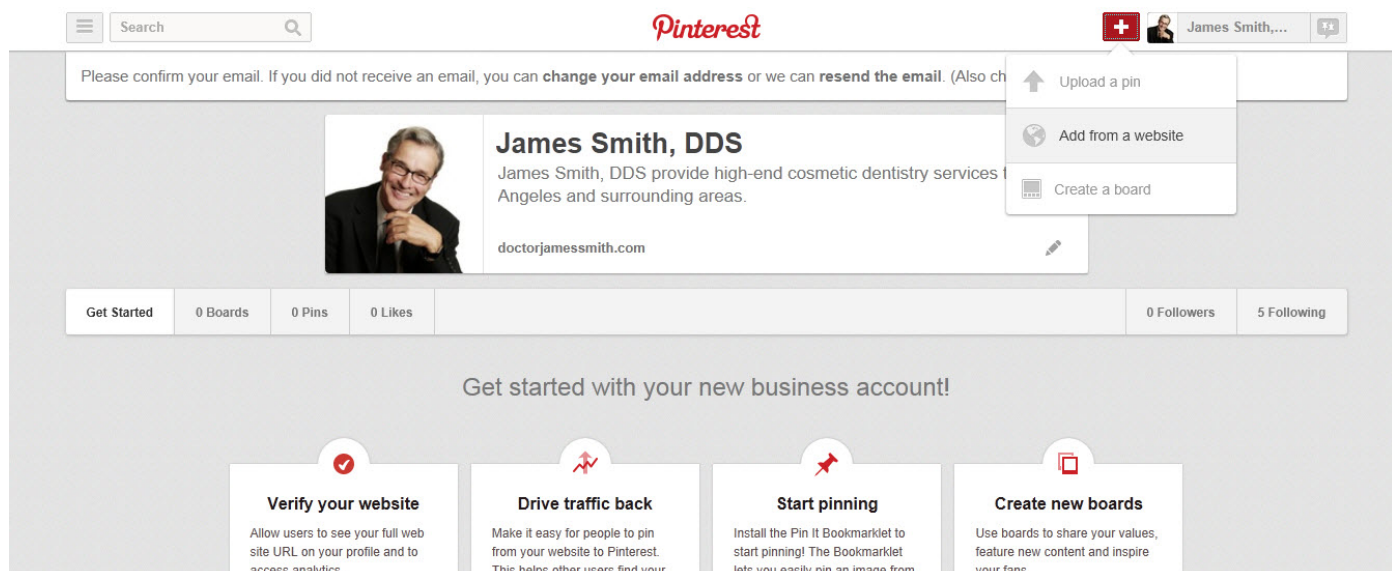


Pinning Any Image Online

One of most inventive aspects of Pinterest is the ability to pin any image across the web. Whether you pin an image from your professional blog, website, or another site you enjoy, you can bookmark it and share it with the entire Pinterest community.

To pin an item on a website, click the plus sign at the top right-hand corner of the screen and type the URL of the website on which your desired pin is located.

If you do not know the URL of the website on which your desired pin exists, you can select the button that says "Add Bookmarklet" and follow the on-screen instructions to employ the functionality to pin items from any website as you are browsing the Web!



What to Pin

Pinterest truly is a "social" network. Pinners choose to follow users with similar tastes and interests to their own, which creates huge networks of users relying on each other's' opinion about products and services. Being active within these communities creates an opportunity for hundreds of followers to recommend your practice and services that you offer.

Similar to other social networks, having a set strategy to what you pin can help increase your exposure among new followers and prospective patients. Because Pinterest's popularity stems from its simplicity and beauty, be sure to bookmark pins that are visually appealing, as this will increase popularity among other pinners.

While adhering to the concept of pretty and uncomplicated, it's important to post images that others will find useful, interesting, or visually appealing. By creating boards titled "Good Deals" or "Things We Love", you can pin your own products when running a special, to promote the service to your followers and their networks. Also, give followers and the Pinterest community insight on the services you offer with an "Insider Tips" or "Industry Trends" board.

Don't forget to create boards that show your personal interests. Whether you're an avid runner or collect comic books, showcasing your personality and hobbies adds the "human" element to your Pinterest account that patients are interested in seeing.



Following Other Pinners

Connecting with others in the Pinterest community is an extremely important aspect of maintaining your visibility. Following users who share similar interests creates curiosity among them and their Pinterest communities.

You can follow others when you stumble upon a pin that interests you. After clicking the pin, there is the option to “Follow” above the image and the option to “Follow” below the image. The “Follow” above the image will allow you to follow every single pin that user creates, updating your homepage whenever they pin something.

You will notice the “Follow” below the image is preceded by the phrase “Pinned onto the Board _____”. Following with this method will only allow images pinned to this specific board to display on your homepage. Often, other pinners share one or two similar interests, but not multiple. By following specific boards, you can prevent pins you aren't interested in from crowding your homepage.

Pinterest via Tablet & Mobile Phone App

Android and Apple users can easily access Pinterest wherever they go. With mobile apps, anyone operating an Android or Apple device can access their account and pin 24/7. Pinterest even allows app users to post images they take with their mobile or tablet device. This is extremely useful for doctors who want to pin images of their practice or new products and attach a link to their professional website along with it.



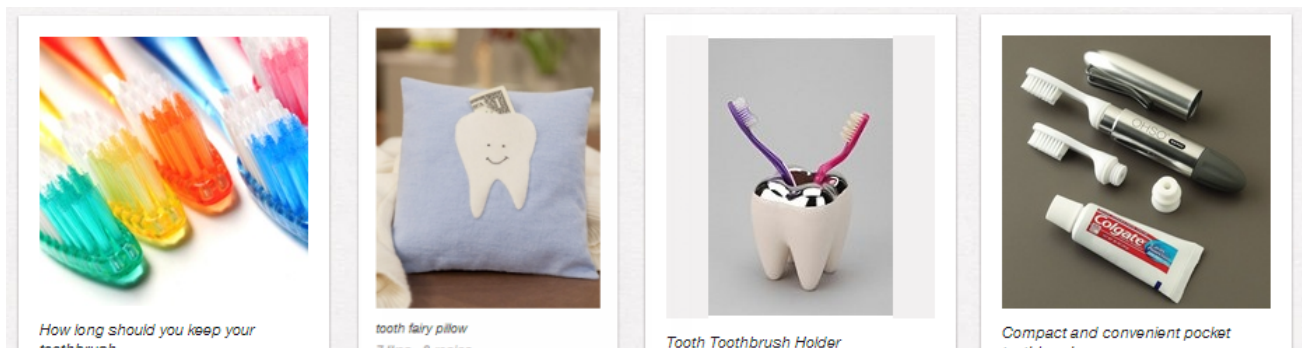
Pinterest Etiquette

With any social network, there are rules of decorum that encourage users to play fair. As Pinterest is a social network that thrives on links, make sure you preserve the original URL associated with the pin. Replacing the image's original source with your web address, in an effort to obtain more website traffic, is not only illegal but conflicts with Pinterest's “Terms and Conditions” and is a surefire way to get banned from the social network.

Also, remember to give thoughtful descriptions that are positive and highlight a product, idea, or service. Negativity is frowned upon.

Tips and Tricks

- Pinterest is an easy way to build links to your practice website. By pinning images from your website or blog, your web address is automatically pulled into the pin. For popular images that are repined tens or hundreds of times, your website gains valuable exposure from hundreds of Pinterest users. To see all images people have pinned from your website, input your web address into this URL, <http://pinterest.com/yourdomain.com>
- Following, repinning, and liking others notifies them of your actions. When you interact with other pinners, they become more likely to reciprocate interest and like, repin, or follow you. Each of these actions can increase your exposure to hundreds of new users online.
- Encourage your staff to create their own Pinterest accounts and spread the word about yours by following, repinning, and liking your contributions to the Pinterest community.



- Create boards that showcase products and services beyond your offerings, while keeping them industry-related. For example, a dentist could pin cool tooth-shaped coffee mugs, tooth fairy letters, pocket electric toothbrushes, or toothbrush bracelet tutorials.
- Add a Pinterest icon to your website that links to your Pinterest profile; let patients visiting your website know about your Pinterest activity.
- Advertise your Pinterest account on other social networks. Tell all of your followers and fans across all social networks about your new activity on Pinterest.
- Pinterest allows videos to be pinned! Pin informational videos, a tour of your office, or real patient before-and-after videos to showcase your practice.
- Pinterest is a social network that recognizes and implements the use of hashtags. Add hashtags to your post descriptions to further optimize the post.*

*Refer to our blog post "[Why #Hashtags?](#)" to learn more about implementing hashtags in your pins.

Ideas for Boards

Boards

What to Pin

Brands We Love

Brands and products you use and recommend.

In the News

Informative articles about services you offer (e.g. a bariatric surgeon pinning an article about Lap Band surgery vs. Gastric Bypass surgery).

Celebrities

Highlight your services relating to Hollywood (e.g. plastic surgeons pinning Jessica Biel's highly requested nose, or dentists pinning Julia Robert's perfect smile).

Inspiration

A perfect place to pin your life's ambitions; whether it be ideas on how you want to redesign your practice, or wanting to take a seminar at Yale.

Places I Love

Show different places that you find beautiful, your favorite spots to visit, and don't forget to include a picture of your practice!



Philanthropy	If you volunteer for local or global organizations, upload images of your service to others, and pin images of other organizations you find inspiring.
Behind the Scenes	Patients are curious about what goes on when they're not in the exam chair. Are your hygienists making goofy faces? Or is your nurse reading about your new 3D X-ray machine? Share these images on a board to give patients insight into your practice.
Videos	Pin your office tour, patient testimonial videos, or commercial, among other entertaining videos.
Stats and Charts	Americans consume 130 pounds of sugar each day?!...find a chart online depicting these astounding, practice-related statistics and share them with your fellow pinners.

Pin Ideas

- Images you have on your practice website.
- Images posted on your practice blog.
- Images on your practice Facebook page.
- Foods that aid your patients' health.
- Baked treats (cupcakes or cookies) that are formed in practice-related shapes. (e.g. one of the all-time most popular pins was an image of cupcakes that were shaped like molar teeth, a great pin for a dental practice!).
- Contests you're running in-office or promotions you're currently offering.
- Any images that you find beautiful and inspiring, because chances are, other pinners admire those same images. Getting their attention will spark them to follow you or take a look at your other pins, some of which will lead them directly to your practice website.

Get Pinning

After joining the Pinterest social network, you will soon learn its addictive nature. The Pinterest obsession is a well-known side effect of being an active pinner and is the exact reason that implementing Pinterest into your social media marketing can be hugely successful. Tap into the overwhelming growth of the network and start utilizing it to refer new patients to your practice.

