

# Pinterest: How long will it last?



With the global shift from social to contextual networks, *Daniel Scheffler (@danielscheffler)* investigates social scrapbooking – the current golden boy (or is it girl?) of the social media world

**THE GREATEST BENEFIT** of Pinterest seems to be its ability to break through the clutter that the internet so masterfully generates. The biggest critique of over-loved sites like Facebook is that there is just too much to do and so it takes up too much time. That said, the popularity of checking in at your favourite bar or liking your friend's status is definitely rising (according to *Fortune* magazine, March 2012) yet savvy 'netsters' are excited with Pinterest's simplicity – a sort of 'plug and play'.

Also impressed with Pinterest's simplicity is Alistair Fairweather, from MailandGuardian.co.za, who has a theory that Pinterest taps into a primal desire for creativity. This brings an interesting debate to the forefront of Pinterest's rise to fame – 18 million users registering in the first month. Could these 'pinners' all be frustrated artists looking for a way to be creative, albeit online or is choosing an image and effortlessly uploading it to a specific site necessarily art or merely a way to (again) waste time.

The co-founder and CEO of Pinterest, Ben Silbermann has said that the site is the fastest growing website of all time even with its complete facilities not totally open to the public – a request to join is still necessary for now. As it grows the potential for boosted sharing options and of course

monetising the platform with sponsored pins and pinboards will definitely be something to look out for. Brands will be able to demand insight tools and possibly infographics on the successes and attention they will get on Pinterest.

### THE STICKY T&CS

Recently Pinterest has done what they should have done since the beginning; clarified their terms and conditions. The media has had a real tackle with Pinterest's terms of service (into effect 6 April) and the original content license that included the right to sell content a member pinned. Pinterest will now have a 'no ownership claim' to anything you pin but the bottom line is that you, as the pinner, should only pin content that you are licensed to pin or which you can pin under a copyright exception like 'fair use'. The regrettable part of the new terms remain that users are exposed to possible liability just by using Pinterest.

But Jonathan Cherry, from Cape Town's innovative CherryFlava, is actively using Pinterest for Camissa Bicycles as a space just to share visual ideas: Camissa bicycles Pinterest. His feeling is that it is great to share and build a community

around visual elements and believes that often words can get in the way of exactly that. He states, like with all social media, that it isn't necessarily right for everyone, but for them specifically it's a superb space to share their collection of lifestyle imagery. If it's right for the brand, it adds that visual element to the existing mix of branded content portals used to engage an audience of fans. 'We could just as easily have slapped it up on a notice board in the studio, but it would feel rude not to share,' says Cherry.

What Pinterest does best is inspire users to find new things to buy – it gives users great visibility of available products and the platform lends itself to an easy click through to retail. The majority of users according to Pinterest are female right now and they hope to capture a male market by promoting less scrapbooking and more sharing with the boys.

The key for all brand building is a relationship and Pinterest needs to focus on exactly that. With a huge following, an enormous amount of media attention and an extremely captive audience Pinterest is potentially the new Facebook but what it needs now is to retain our interest by adding incentives to build this very relationship.



## Examples of how to use Pinterest (and take real value from it)

**1.** In Israel, the agency Smoyz launched a campaign in March this year where 50 influencers across the country were selected for a 'Women Inspiration Series' where custom boxes of gifts were distributed to these women based on their Pinterest pins. The projects has had over 3 000 interactions and a grand amount of 700 000 potential impressions.

The agency is already winning awards for the campaign and other brands are quick to follow.  
**Kotex Pinterest**



**2.** The American mass retailer Gap has introduced their own Pinboards (examples: 'Denim Icons' and 'Everyone in Gap') and has used it to drive sales as a great way to engage with users and show off products.

### GAP Pinterest



**2.** The Travel Channel has introduced their own Pinterest that has content categorised depending on interest: for instance street food, a bucket list or islands in the Atlantic. It also includes behind the scenes footage showing a human side of the channel and everyone involved.

### Travel channel Pinterest

