

# Becoming Buzzworthy

A GUIDE TO MAKING YOUR  
STORE e-SAVVY

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## FOR INSPIRATION, JUST PIN HERE!

Many creative-type people have some system for keeping track of ideas and projects they find inspiring. Whereas these people once relied on corkboards hung above workspaces or handy portable binders, they now depend more and more on digital sources. They use virtual clipping services or social bookmarking sites to create an ongoing list of favorites. These “inspire-me” compilations kept in the cloud make a handy reference guide, but lack the visual impact of yesterday’s inspiration boards. Until now. Enter Pinterest.

Pinterest.com is a “virtual pinboard,” where you can create “boards” made up of individual “pins” to bookmark ideas and projects you want to remember. You can also browse and follow pinboards created by other people—a great way to discover new things and get inspiration from people who share your interests. In fact, one of Pinterest’s goals is “to connect everyone in the world through the ‘things’ they find interesting” ([pinterest.com/about](http://pinterest.com/about)).



**SOME SAVVY RETAILERS** have started using Pinterest, not only to bookmark inspirational ideas, but also to promote their businesses.

Debbie Dusenberry, owner of Curious Sofa, a creative lifestyle online store, is one of those retailers. When she closed her brick-and-mortar storefront, the primary customer complaint was the absence of Dusenberry's trademark visually inspiring displays. Dusenberry sees Pinterest as a way to provide visual inspiration for her customers, similar to the inspiration they once found by looking at her in-store displays.

"Pinning boards with various styles and ideas helps me to give them a little something to look at," she explains. "I also personally like it because I miss all my shelter magazines, and this is a great source for me to file away ideas."

Since mentioning her Pinterest account ([pinterest.com/curiousdeb](http://pinterest.com/curiousdeb)) on her blog, Dusenberry reports that her followers have grown every time she posts something, usually about 12 new followers a week. Her followers currently number 390.

Dusenberry advises keeping a strict focus when identifying the best pieces to pin. "Now that I am an online retailer, Pinterest is strictly business for me, as is most of my networking. I want to be specific to what the Curious Sofa brand is about. My purpose is always focused on visual ideas in home decor, art, and style. I am not interested in recipes, nail color, bridal dresses, cute quotes, etc. That is not what customers follow me for."

Pinterest can also act as a sort of "creativity curator" service. "It can condense thousands of publications into the best of the best," says Dusenberry. "It saves time. I discover magazines, blogs, websites, artists, countries, and places I would have never found on my own."

CraftsDirect.com, a brick-and-mortar retail store in Waite Park, Minnesota, with an online storefront, also uses Pinterest to promote their business and inspire their customers. Nicole Klein handles Crafts Direct's social media marketing. "First we always pin the store samples

## Curious Sofa and Crafts Direct on *Pinterest*



**CURIOUS SOFA** ([pinterest.com/curiousdeb](http://pinterest.com/curiousdeb))



**CRAFTS DIRECT** ([pinterest.com/craftsdirect](http://pinterest.com/craftsdirect))

and projects we create here,” she explains. “I think our core followers are looking to us for those project ideas that we provide.” She also seeks out pins from other Pinterest users that she can “repin” onto the CraftsDirect boards ([pinterest.com/craftsdirect](https://pinterest.com/craftsdirect)). “I try to repin things that I think our followers will enjoy seeing—crafty, creative, and fun things. I also always look for things that they can make or create using supplies they can find here at our store.”

“I also love that you can always link a pin to an original source,” Klein continues. “When we pin something of ours, we always have it link back to a project sheet, our blog, website, or Facebook page. That way we don’t have images of ours floating around without people being able to find us in the end. It is also helpful from the other side when we are trying to find more information about a project that we have found on Pinterest.”

Like many social media tools in their infancy, it may be hard to judge the efficacy of marketing efforts with Pinterest. You can look at your blog or website statistics and review the number of visitors referred by Pinterest, or you can talk to in-store customers to verify if anything pinned online brought them into the store. More than likely, pieces posted to Pinterest aren’t going to be a purchase decider, but rather another brand-marketing effort to establish your expertise within your field. Your audience will recognize that your Pinterest boards are a guaranteed creativity resource they can refer to when they need inspiration. Your other marketing communication efforts—such as email newsletters, Twitter posts about sales, and Facebook updates—can remind your customers to come into your store.

So add a little visual interest to your news feed with a Pinterest account—one pin may be all it takes to convince a customer, “Oooh, I want to make THAT!”

## ANOTHER TIP FROM KLEIN:

“Research which of your projects attract attention. If you go to:

[\*pinterest.com/source/YOURDOMAINNAME\*](https://pinterest.com/source/YOURDOMAINNAME)

you can see what people have pinned from your site,” she explains. “This is a great way to see what people like from our site. Of course, it doesn’t give a complete picture, but it does give us a glimpse of what catches people’s eye.”

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