PROFESSIONAL PINNING

After last month’s column, you’ve mastered basic Pinterest skills. Now, let’s put the hottest social media platform to work for your business.

Get Started
Log out of your personal account and click “Join Pinterest.” Sign up again, this time using the business email you use to manage your shop’s Facebook page.

Next, create a username. Because this is your professional site, choose something simple and easy to remember. Ideally, you can coordinate usernames across social media platforms, so you have a strong, consistent brand, not to mention fewer usernames to memorize. I recommend using your business name, as one word without spaces (renatosflorist). Your username will be your Pinterest URL (www.pinterest.com/renatosflorist).

Build Up Your Page
As you start to populate your Pinterest page, pay attention to your website’s existing subsections or taxonomy: “Get well,” “Anniversary,” “Wedding,” etc. To ensure your website and Pinterest page complement each other, create boards that reflect these business categories and position these boards as a product catalog on Pinterest.

Once you have solid (and highly searchable) categories, how about a board for daily specials? Seasonal sales? Wedding themes and colors? Some florists also add boards with non-floral themes (home décor, fashion). These give your page a personalized touch, show users where you find inspiration, and position your page as a place to linger and explore.

If you want to drive serious buyers to your website, you can add a price to pins by typing the dollar sign ($) followed by the numerical price in the description area. (Remember, people can’t buy products directly from Pinterest.)

As a general rule regarding descriptions, keep them short but loaded with strong keywords (flower variety, color, arrangement description and venue). If you get comments, add more detail about the product in a reply.

Collaborate on Boards
As you found out last month you don’t have to go at Pinterest alone. You can allow contributors to post pins on a board. Doing so is easy: Choose the “+Contributors” option.

Your staff members — particularly those who are already familiar with Pinterest — are obvious candidates to help build your Pinterest catalogs, but you really want pins from other users. Why not create topical boards such as “favorite wedding bouquets,” and ask favorite customers or brides to contribute content? Your board will immediately go from promotional to collaborative — and the spirit of sharing is what Pinterest is all about.

The obvious risk is that someone might post a gorgeous arrangement from a competitor’s website; but, remember, you have creative control. Ask customers to post from the wedding section of your website.

Cross Post and Engage
If you have a vibrant Facebook fan page, promote Pinterest by adding it as an application. As with most things, there’s an app for that. Recall we wanted you to create the Pinterest account with the same username you used for Facebook? Log into Facebook with that account and visit www.woobox.com/pinterest. Click “Install Pinterest Tab” and follow the prompts. The next time you visit your Fan page, you’ll see your Pinterest Boards.

For savvy florists, Pinterest is a powerful tool to separate your business from the competition. Good luck and happy pinning.

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FORCIBLE PINNING Raimondi’s Florist makes sure brides who like what they see can easily pin (and tweet, like and share) photos of bouquets and other bridal pieces when they visit the shop’s wedding site, by including the “Pin it” icon under each photo.

Fill in the rest of the form and hit “create account”. You technically have a professional Pinterest now, but you’re not quite ready to start pinning.

Prep Your Website
You’ll want to make it easy for customers to engage with your shop by making your website pin-friendly. To do that, add a Pinterest button on all of your website pages. An even better way to encourage pinning: add a “Pin It” button next to every product photo. You may need help from your web provider to do this. For an example of a florist using this technique, visit raimondisweddings.com. (You’ll find complete instructions on embedding a “Pin It” button on web pages at pinterest.com/about/goodies.)

PIN-WORTHY PHOTOS
What draws your eye to pins? Beautiful photos. When you take your own, you don’t have to worry about copyright infringement and you know that your photos will be unique to your shop. Find out the five key items in your photography toolkit, at safnow.org/moreonline.