



The Secret Social Media Channel You Should Be Using

By Susan Saldibar

When was the last time your community posted on Pinterest? The reason I ask is that it's the third most popular social media channel for older adults, according to a Pew research study.

You may not have known that (I didn't). So, if you don't have a Pinterest account or don't know what Pinterest is, no worries. You're not alone. But you do need to know that adults are using social media in larger numbers than ever before. Number one is Facebook, as you may have guessed. YouTube claims the number 2 spot, as you may not have guessed, but it makes sense when you think of all the video sharing that goes on (most of which eventually take you to a YouTube video). And, number 3 is [Pinterest](#).

Why You Should Join

So what is Pinterest and why are people so crazy about it? Maybe it's time you found out, according to Debra Gawet at Sage Age Strategies (a Senior Housing Forum partner). We talked about Pinterest, along with the other social media channels recently. Sage Age has just launched its own Pinterest site and, as it turns out, all the top industry influencers are hopping on board. "Pinterest gets a lot of traffic," Debra tells me. "And it's no longer just about pinning

up cute pictures. It's become a real treasure trove of data," she says. She does a lot of research using Pinterest, often for the infographics alone. But more importantly, she's seeing senior living communities take advantage of the Pinterest platform to reach potential residents and families of residents.

A "pin" will take people back to your website. Did you know that? I didn't!

I asked Debra what kinds of things communities are posting on Pinterest. And apparently, it runs the gamut, from blogs to videos to checklists and tips about things like dementia-friendly summer activities. That sort of thing. And what I didn't realize is that, if an item you put out on Pinterest is content you've produced and has been linked back to your website, if it gets "pinned" by someone, it's going to link right back to your website. That's a cool way to increase traffic.

Debra shared five things communities need to consider when creating and maintaining a Pinterest site for your community:

1. Make sure your Pinterest profile has been set up as a "Business profile" so you can track all aspects of the social media channel's performance. This also ensures your brand's website is included in the profile and it encourages visitors to click and be driven back to the website.
2. Make sure your Pinterest profile has been fully optimized and the profile image shows brand consistency with other social media channels. Make sure you've completed the website verification process. This verifies your website's authenticity and helps pinners recognize you as a trustworthy source. It also provides access to website analytics for insight into what content your audience saves the most.
3. Make sure you've set up boards with names and descriptions that have been optimized. It's especially important to use a cover that incorporates branding. It will help give a more cohesive feel when visitors come to your profile and it allows them to easily see the purpose of the board.
4. Take advantage of your brand's content and be sure to pin blogs on your board. This will help to drive visitors back to your website and encourage them to learn more about your brand.
5. Do not set and forget. You must pin to your boards regularly. This is a central part of the experience and how visitors discover new content. Additionally, be patient as it takes time for the following and engagement to grow. Determine your strategy, execute the tactics then review your analytic findings periodically and remember to adjust accordingly.

You Can't Afford to Ignore Social Media

People don't realize how powerful social media is. So they dabble in it. Big mistake.

I asked Debra why more communities aren't rocking their social media. And, as it turns out, social still has a credibility hurdle to overcome. And it's more than just whether or not to use Pinterest. "People don't take social seriously. So they don't dedicate the resources. They just don't see the value there," Debra tells me. "What we're trying to do is to drive home the value to our clients with a fully integrated approach. So social isn't just 1/8 of the strategy, it should have an entire strategy dedicated to it. All pieces working together."

By the way, Sage Age Strategies is doing more than talking about Pinterest. They have just rolled out their own Pinterest site. Here is the [link](#) if you'd like to take a look.

For more information about Sage Age, please visit their [website](#).