



Social Networking Guides



imaginet team

1. Social Networking made Simple: the Ultimate Beginner's Guide to Social Networking

What's in this EBook?

1. [Intro and overview of the book](#)
2. [Twitter](#)
3. [LinkedIn](#)
4. [Facebook](#)
5. [Google Plus](#)
6. [Pinterest](#)

Intro and overview of the book

This eBook is intended for those who are new to the social networking scene. It will also benefit the reader who has a passing acquaintance with social networking and wants to find out more. You may for example have a Facebook page and possibly a Twitter account but you feel that you are not getting the most out of the social networking scene. While you may have tinkered with a LinkedIn account as well you might not be quite sure how this should be managed and how it relates to Facebook and Twitter. This eBook is intended to provide you with an overview of the main social networks and how to use them.

The social networking phenomenon has been accelerating rapidly during the past few years and has become more diverse and complex. Previously, when one thought of social networking one immediately referred to Facebook as a method of keeping in touch with friends and family. But the Social networking scene has exploded with a number of new and important players. These now include, among others, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn and the latest kid on the block, Pinterst.

Furthermore, social networking has matured. It is no longer seen as a 'hobby' or part time activity but is now considered as an essential component of professional contacting, business and marketing. Many companies see social networks as essential in order to compete in the market place at the same time many also feel at a loss to deal with this upsurge in complexity and interaction. This eBook is intended to ease your transition into the world of social networking.

Have the freedom to go wild without paying wild prices! Unlimited downloads for a super low fixed monthly price. From R149 per month at Imagnet.
http://www.imagnet.co.za/ADSL/#uncapped_products

In a nutshell then the **aim of this eBook is to provide a simple but holistic approach to the subject of social networking**. It is intended for those who have either just begun to dabble in social media or for those who are familiar with some of the terrain but are not yet experts. This eBook is **NOT** intended as a complete guide to the entire range and depth of social networking. That would take a very large book indeed. It is however intended as the ultimate guide for those who want to understand and make use of social networking to their advantage.

How is this book structured?

Understanding how social networks function and how to make optimum use of them is at the centre of this eBook. The key to understanding social media is the realization that the entire range of social networking sites and applications, from Facebook to Pinterest, are concerned with one central theme - **communication and sharing**. Each network has its own target demographic and different processes and methods to increase and improve communication and sharing – but communication and sharing are what they are all about. Once this basic concept becomes clear then making use of social networks becomes a matter of figuring out their various processes and procedures. This eBook is intended to provide the reader with an overview of the basic processes and methods that one needs to master to make the best use of a particular network.

What to remember at this point

While the range of social networks may seem daunting one should continually bear in mind that they are all concerned with the same issue of communication and sharing. However, each network differs in the way that they approach this theme.

Each network has a certain broad demographic that it appeals to – LinkedIn for example is aimed at professional and business connections and communication, while Google Plus provides for a wider range of possible types of connections.

Remember that Imagnet is busy preparing an entire range of advanced eBooks on each social Network. These publications will be announced via Twitter at @imaginetsa; as well as on our Website (www.imagnet.co.za) and on our Facebook and Google Plus pages.

Let's begin with...

Twitter



Let's begin with what on the surface seems to be the most simple and easy networking site – Twitter. Twitter however has become a complex and rich source of data and marketing possibilities. Essentially, Twitter is an online network that allows the user to receive and send messages of 140 characters – which refers to the

famous 'Tweets'. Twitter is also referred to as a 'micro-blog' and while it is limited by the fixed set of characters that you can input, it is a very effective communications tool. (Note: there are ways around this text limitation – but that will be dealt with in a more advanced and in-depth book on twitter that will be published by IMAGINET soon).

Twitter has developed into much more than just an online space for social conversation. For example, it is used extensively by researchers and academics to find and share information, as well as by many businesses to enable more effective customer relationships and to ascertain the perceptions and reception of their products. There are many different ways in which this social network can be used; for example, it can be used by a family to keep in touch, or a company to coordinate business, by the media to keep people informed - or by a writer or musician to build up a fan base.

What one needs to grasp about Twitter, and this applies as well to the other social networks we will be discussing, is that social networking is about making connections which are facilitated by following and being followed by other people with similar interests and aims.

Twitter enables you to send messages to those in your network (your "followers"). Information you share can be linked to other Web sites which are "tweeted" or sent to those who have joined or followed your Twitter site.

Getting Started

To get started simply register a username and password at www.twitter.com and you're ready to go. Twitter has a very user-friendly setup which guides you through

the start process. You will be asked to choose five people to follow from a list to begin with. Just follow the instructions in order to build your timeline.

Your bio or profile is the essential link in all the social networking sites that you join. Think of this as your introduction to a very big room full of strangers. This is the only information, besides your tweets, that others have to determine whether they would like to communicate with you or not. So spend some time on the creation your bio or profile, even if the space given by Twitter is very short.



Once you have set up your details in the settings section of the site the next thing to do is to connect with more users. This is a simple process of clicking on the Discover tab at the top of the page. This will open a side panel which enables you to find friends or to browse the various categories. Twitter also offers you possible connections to follow based on your profile. You can search for friends based on email accounts or find connections by subject category. The simplest way to find new connection is to use the search facility and search for a key word or keywords that will bring back a host of search results that you can investigate and join.

Did you know that Imagnet can manage the ADSL portion of your telephone line? By migrating your line to Imagnet you can save up to R360.00 per year, plus we'll manage the line for you. The line transfer is free of charge, so don't wait! Give us a call today! 086 111-1101.

<http://www.imagnet.co.za/html/misc/emails/newsletters/July2012/TelkomLineChanges.html>

TIP: How do you determine if you would like to follow a certain Twitter account?

This could not be easier. Clicking on the image of the individual, company or institution that you would like to connect to will bring up their profile. Read this carefully in order to decide whether to "follow" or not. One should also look at the timeline of that account. The timeline represents the tweets or messages associated with that individual or company that have been sent over time. By browsing through the messages you will be able to ascertain if this is someone who you would like to join or not. If you decide to follow these tweets then simply click the follow button. In the same way you can also click on the unfollow button to sever the connection if you find that the tweets do not interest you.



The most important part of following another account is to follow those people, companies or subjects that interest you and add interest and information to your site. Once again the main idea to focus on is communication. Ask yourself if the information and links that you receive from following others are beneficial and whether you would like to enter into an online conversation with that individual or group before pressing the follow link. The idea behind Twitter is that those you follow will hopefully follow you back if your interests, objectives and tweets coincide with theirs. In this way a network of interest can be developed among thousands of people.

However, a word of caution: it is tempting but not a good idea to just follow hundreds of people at random. Remember it is the quality and not the quantity of your followers that adds depth to your Twitter connections. Furthermore, Twitter has a limit of 2000 followers on every account, dependent on various ratios. Ideally you should follow those whose interests coincide with yours and build relationships with likeminded people. Twitter also has a Direct Message facility that enables private conversations between followers.

Remember that Twitter is a fast moving and very dynamic network. If you are going to have a positive presence and not have others unfollow you it is vital that you do not let your account become static. One should ideally twitter at least once a day with an average of four or five tweets to keep the account alive, up-to-date and interesting.

LINK: A useful introduction video to the basics of Twitter can be found at:

<http://whatistwitter.com/twitter-video-from-animated-explanations>

Things You Should Know About

There are some strange symbols that are commonly employed by Twitter users, but which are in fact simple to understand.

- The @ sign is used to refer to someone – such as @Imagnet – which is used to direct a message to specific user.
- The # key to tag is placed in front of a particular subject, which makes searching for that subject easier – for example, #socialmedia.
- The letters RT refer to re-tweet. This is a way of forwarding a message from someone that you feel is important to your followers. For example, if you feel

Imagnet: non-contract solutions offering unshaped data. Each package includes 5 static IPs, a free co.za domain registration, free Micro hosting and the router rental.
http://www.imagnet.co.za/ADSL/#business_products

that a certain message from one of the Twitter accounts you follow is significant and would be useful to those who follow you, then you simply press the retweet button and all your followers will receive the message indicating as well who the originator of that message was.

TIP: it is very easy to use the retweet function excessively. If you do this you might irritate your followers with an excessive or continuous flow of messages.

So much more....

The above is enough to get started with but there is much, much more to Twitter. This is only the tip of the iceberg as it were and there are many other exciting aspects to twitter. For example, there are many new online and desktop applications that enable you to manage and control who you follow and who is following your tweets. There are also many free and subscription applications available that provide analysis of your account, such as an analysis of your most influential followers, allowing you to connect and interact with others in a more meaningful way. Imaginet will be bringing out more eBooks in the near future on more advanced issues and ways of increasing your online presence. Keep tabs on these new publications and regularly visit. www.imaginet.co.za; or follow @imginetsa on twitter.

And now for something a bit different!!!

LinkedIn



LinkedIn is where one really sees the value of online networking in terms of communication and relationship building. Whether you are a writer, entrepreneur, candle stick maker or model, you need this network to provide you with a presence and to connect you to like-minded professional and business people.

However, while the principle of communication and sharing is the same as for Twitter, LinkedIn has a different demographic in mind. This social network is not aimed at casual chatting or sharing news about your family. The LinkedIn learning centre provides the clearest description of this site.

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with over 120 million members and growing rapidly. LinkedIn connects you to your trusted contacts and helps you exchange knowledge, ideas, and opportunities with a broader network of professionals. (<http://learn.linkedin.com/what-is-linkedin/>)

So, this network has a more serious intention in mind and is aimed at making professional or work-related connections. For example, if you are the CEO of a company and would like to connect with other members of your industry and possibly

create new business contacts, then this is the social network for you – and this applies to any profession or career path.

While LinkedIn may seem a bit daunting at first, remember that **ALL** social networks are just applications that provide ways and means of connecting and interacting with others. Here are a few quick and easy steps to start you off in LinkedIn.

Step One

After the registration process you can follow three easy steps to becoming connected to others and to establishing your dynamic network. Firstly, you should spend time on your profile. As mentioned above, your profile is your introduction to other members of the network. With this network the profile becomes even more important as you want to connect to other professionals and they will view your profile in order to decide whether to connect with you or not. Your profile should therefore include your education and work history, as well as referees, work expectations, skills etc. Luckily this site provides a very user-friendly profile building guide, which allows you to import your curriculum vitae. The site also provides guidance as to the quality and degree of completion of your profile.

Links to profile help: at LinkedIn: <http://learn.linkedin.com/profiles/>

And

How to Write a LinkedIn Profile: <http://www.blueskyresumes.com/free-resume-help/article/how-to-write-a-linkedin-profile/>

TIP: After having explored this site for a while you may consider upgrading to the business package as this and other levels of upgrade provide many useful tools for expanding your connexions – including a system of internal mail

Step 2: Making Connections

After you have set up your profile so that it is comprehensive you can move onto the next step, which is to make connections with other members. It is also important to remember that connecting to others is not an automatic process as it is in Twitter. The request to connect to another LinkedIn member or group is sent pending approval from that connection. This is the reason why you should not attempt to make new connections before you have made sure that your profile is optimized.

How do you make Connections?

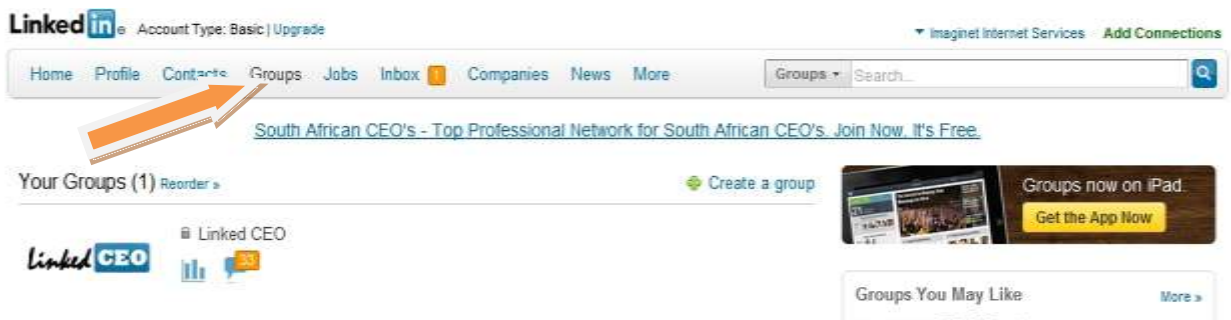
LinkedIn provides a wide range of ways to send invites to connect to others in the network but one has to follow some basic rules before just inviting anyone you find interesting to join.

The first rule in LinkedIn is that you make connections with people you know. To this end the site allows you to import your email contacts so that you can invite people you know who are already using LinkedIn to become connections.

However, you can connect to others whom you don't know by doing the following.

Firstly, make sure that the all-important profile is 100 percent completed, up-to-date and interesting. Then join some discussion groups in your industry or profession.

These are available from your LinkedIn page.



TIP: Joining relevant groups – and there are hundreds on LinkedIn - is one of the best ways to increase your presence and to make connections that may be important to your business and profession.

Step 3. Getting Involved in Discussions

As you involve yourself in the discussions and contribute to these groups by, for example answering questions, people in the group get to know you and it is very often the case that you will soon be invited to join their network. In other words, once you have established your credentials via your contributions to the discussion groups, you can begin to build the contacts to extend your network of connections.

Important Links

Making connection in LinkedIn can at first seem to be a rather complex affair. The following links will provide you with all the basic hints and tips you need.

An excellent and extensive video on the subject can be viewed at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkYvTtWHji4>

10 Ways To Build Connections On LinkedIn.

[\(http://networksboise.wordpress.com/2009/04/25/10-ways-to-build-connections-on-linkedin-1-5/\)](http://networksboise.wordpress.com/2009/04/25/10-ways-to-build-connections-on-linkedin-1-5/)

Unlock the Secrets of LinkedIn. <http://www.inc.com/marla-tabaka/make-linkedin-worth-your-networking-time.html?nav=next>

As noted above, joining and involving yourself in the groups in LinkedIn is a primary way of making new of connections with others in your business or profession. You can search for groups in a number of categories; such as peers, alumni, geographical, existing organizations, interest etc.

Advanced Notes

There are many other aspects and areas of this intriguing social network that you will come to grips with as you explore the range of possibilities here. For example you can set up you own discussion group in LinkedIn by following these steps:

1. Go to **Groups** in the navigation menu and select **Create a Group**.
2. Fill in the form that will be provided. Enter your Group Name, type, description and other required areas.
3. Once you have created your group you will need to publicize it or let others know of its existence. LinkedIn provides you with the facility to send an invitation to join your group group to your contact. You can also send an email announcement to all your connections about the new group.

Social Network Interaction

Sharing and interaction between different social networks is also becoming a common way of increasing your social network presence. In both the two social networks discussed above there are ways in which the two networks actually interact; for example, until recently it was possible to automatically post all your Twitter feeds to be displayed on LinkedIn. While this is no longer the case, LinkedIn

users can still create status updates and initiate conversations on LinkedIn and choose to share those posts on Twitter. There are many other instances of interaction and updating that can take place between different social networks. This is a topic that important as it not only saves time but allows one to share and communicate with a much wider range of contacts and followers. This aspect will be discussed in the eBook on advanced methods and techniques in social networking that will be published by Imagnet soon.

Facebook



Facebook probably needs no introduction to most people – however, this is a short primer for those who may be venturing into the often turbulent ocean of social networking for the first time.

The Basics

Essentially Facebook, like the other sites discussed, is a network of people. The aim and object of joining Facebook is to connect and interact with friends in the network. This is facilitated by sending a request to be a friend on Facebook, which is confirmed or rejected and vice versa. There are also many other activities that you can involve yourself in which expand your presence and interaction with others. For example, you can upload your latest holiday photos for your friends to see, post interesting links or update your current status or feelings about life.

First Steps

After signing up the first step is to locate your friends who may be on Facebook. This process is easy and intuitive and Facebook provides you with steps to find friends

via your email account and by other methods.


Step 1
Find your friends

Step 2
Profile Information

Step 3
Profile Picture


Are your friends already on Facebook?


Many of your friends may already be here. Searching your email account is the fastest way to find your friends on Facebook. See how it works.


 **Gmail**

Your Email:

[Find Friends](#)

 **Windows Live Hotmail** [Find Friends](#)

 **Yahoo!** [Find Friends](#)

 **Other Email Service** [Find Friends](#)

[Skip this step](#)

Once you have chosen and added your friends, Facebook takes you through the all-important process of completing your profile. As we have emphasized throughout the eBook, the profile is an essential aspect of networking and connecting with others. Facebook also provides you with a tour of the way that you can enhance your connections and invite your friends to communicate with you.

When you log in to your Facebook account the first thing you see is the newsfeed. This is essentially a stream of all the messages, updates and other activities from your friends on Facebook. The more recent activities and postings will be shown at the top of the newsfeed.

What's Next?

Next, the process of communication and interaction begins. You can begin by typing into the status update box. You can also add to and adjust your profile by clicking on the update button near the top of the profile page.



There are many other exciting and interesting aspects to Facebook; for example you can browse and join various networks, such as colleges and workplace networks. You can also send private or public messages to others on Facebook; as well as upload and organize your photos or visit a friend's page and post a message or "like" something. There is seemingly no end to the possibilities for interaction.

Facebook is however being challenged by newer social networks. One of these is Google Plus, which is similar in many ways to Facebook. A separate guide on Facebook which will go into more detail about the possibilities for communication that this social network offers will be published soon.

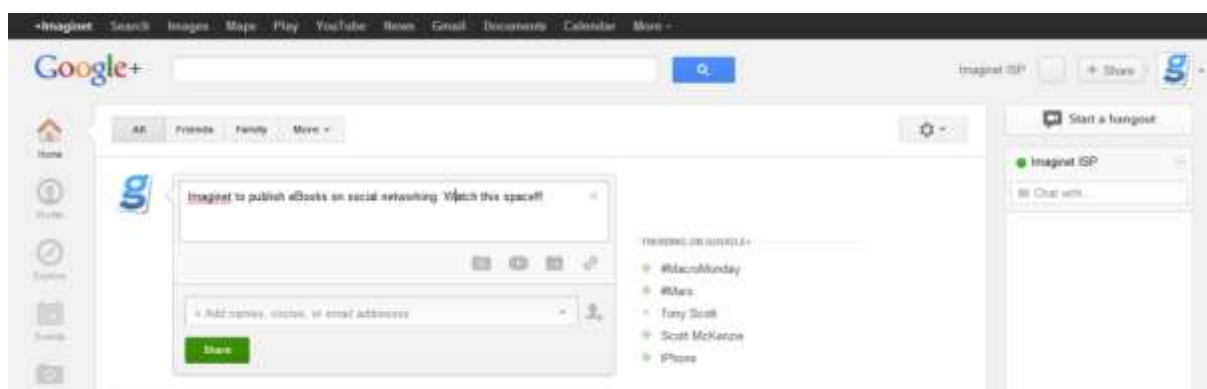
For more information on Facebook, the following sites offer some useful introductory tips.

Step-by-step Facebook Tutorial <http://andreavahl.com/grandmas-corner/facebook-tutorial>

Facebook 101 <http://www.gcfilearnfree.org/facebook101>

Have the freedom to go wild without paying wild prices! Unlimited downloads for a super low fixed monthly price. From R149 per month at Imagnet.
http://www.imagnet.co.za/ADSL/#uncapped_products

Google Plus



What exactly is Google Plus?

If you are familiar with Facebook and Twitter, then you will recognize the networking processes of Google Plus and becoming an expert on this social network will be a short learning curve. However, there are some very important differences between Google Plus and similar sites like Facebook that you need to know about.

This network is touted as being a combination of the best attributes of the Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Digg and other forms of social media. The origins of this network go back to before the advent of Facebook. One can refer the beginnings of Google Plus

to a social networking site launched by Google in 2004 known as Orkut, but which never really became very well known internationally.

For more on the history of this network go to this link on the history of Google Plus. <http://www.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/networks/google-plus.htm>

Google Plus continues the central themes of social networking that we have emphasized throughout this eBook, and provides some very useful methods of communication as well as ways of interacting with others.

Starting Up with Google Plus

Once again, your profile is the most basic but most important element in starting your social network experience. Your Google Plus account is based on your Google profile and will have to register for a Google account if you do not already have one. Just go to www.google.com and register.

As with all the other networks, your profile is important. While your Google profile was designed to help you search, with Google Plus it becomes an important part of your networking identity. Importantly, Google allows you to reveal or hide as much of your profile as you like. However, before we get onto a discussion of your profile it is firstly important to understand one of the central components of this social network, the Circles.

Essential Knowledge

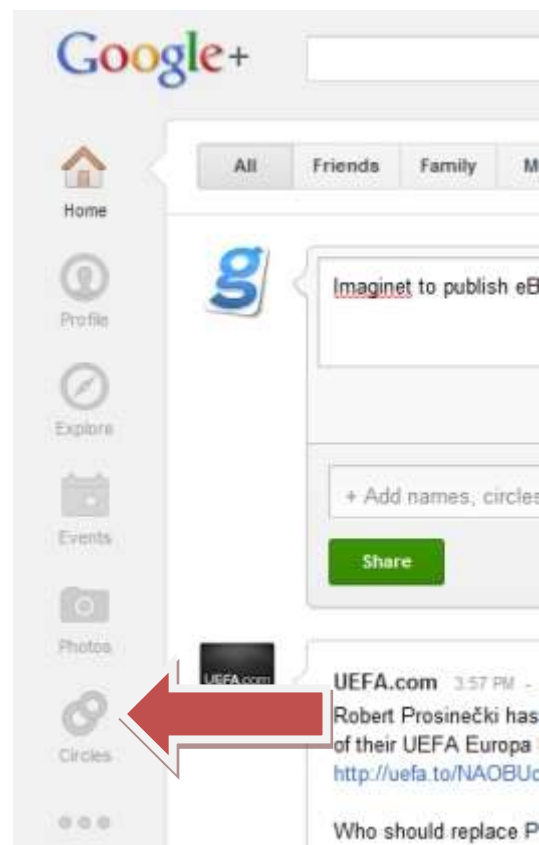
One of the most important and useful aspects of Google Plus when it comes networking is Circles. Circles are simply specified groups of people who you would like to connect with. The network provides three predefined circles. These are, friends, family and acquaintances. However, you can define or create your own customized circles – for example, business contacts. The central idea behind circles is that you can send updates or messages to all, a few or just one circle. The usefulness of circles is emphasized by the fact that you can have one contact in numerous circles. This means that you can send a work related update to your business contact's circle and a reminder about someone's birthday to your friends and family circles.

With the above understanding of circles we can return to the subject of profiles. Your Google profile is the About page on Google Plus. You can also limit the amount of information that you would like to be made publically available for privacy reasons. This is also linked to the concept of Circles. For example, you can customize your profile to only allow your friends circle to have access to certain profile information, such as your telephone number.

So how do you Begin?

Now that you understand some of the basic concepts that make this site so network friendly, here are a few pointers as to how to actually begin working on Google Plus.

Firstly, create your own Circles if you feel that you need more than are provided for you in the application. In other words, decide on what groups of people you would like to divide your contacts into, e.g. family, friends, business partners, associates, etc. Now you have to add actual contacts to these groups or circles. Google Plus makes this process very slick and easy. Click on the circles tab on the side bar of the site.



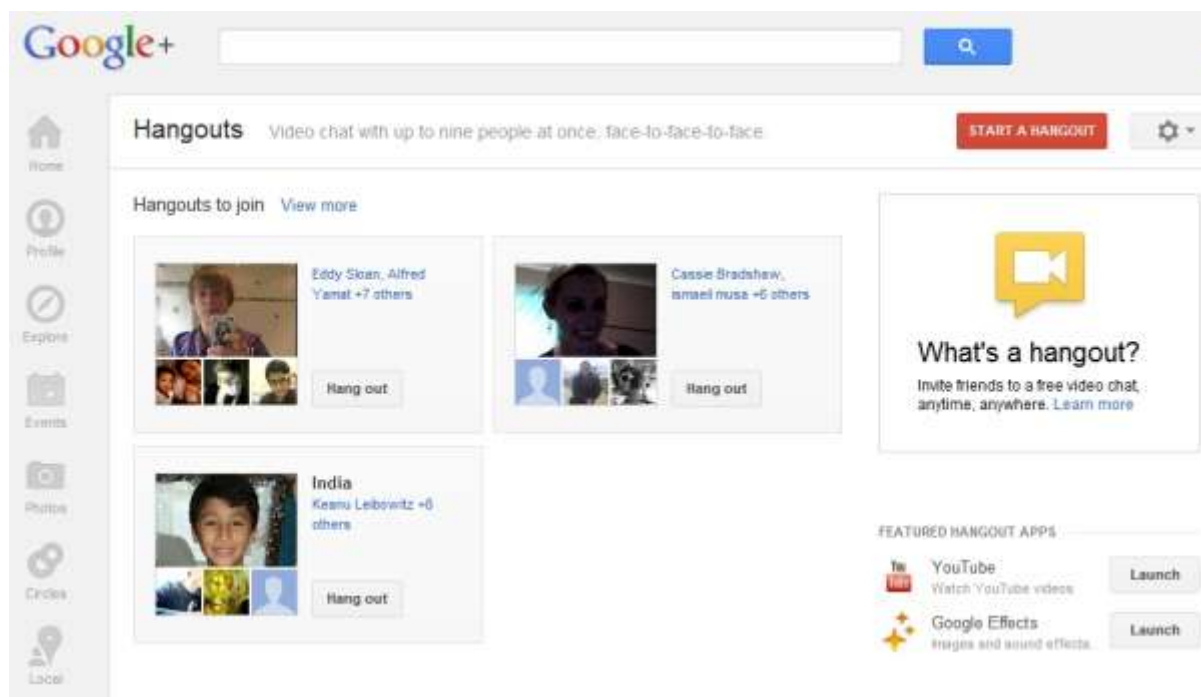
This will open up an interface that allows you to see all your contacts in Gmail. All you now have to do is drag a contact on this list to a circle. For example, if you decide to select a friend as contact, drag that person to the Friend's Circle. Note that Contacts can be added to multiple circles.



There is also a "follow" Circle you can use this to follow people who you do not know, as one does on Twitter.

It is interesting to see the results of the additions to your circles. Return to the Home page. The stream will now be populated by input from the circles of contacts you have created. The **stream** is a lot like the wall or newsfeed on Facebook -- it's where you'll see status updates from the people you've chosen to follow in your circles. You can share your own status updates with specific circles or even individual users.

In other words, you now see the messages and postings from those people who you have added to your circles. A very innovative and useful aspect of this is that you can stream all your connections at once, as you would do in Facebook, or you can view the stream in relation to a particular circle.



Other Important Features

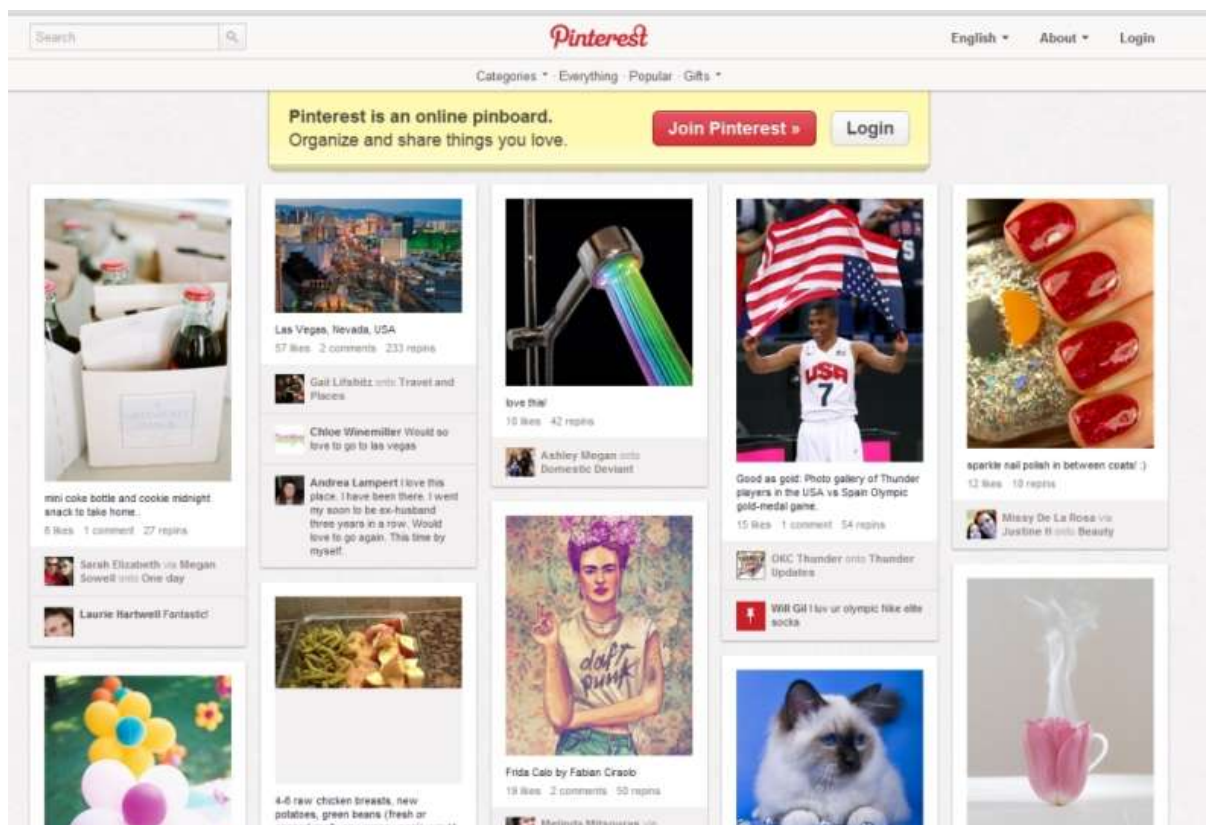
There are many other features to this very useful network. We will look at these very briefly. Google chat is a part of Google Plus and you can choose the circles that you want to chat with. Another way of contacting others is through creating a hangout. In brief, a hangout is a video chat session. You will of course need a webcam as well as a microphone to make use of this facility. There are a number of ways that you can create your hangout – you can elect to have an open public chat session, or you can limit your hangout to certain Circles or even restrict it to a number of your contacts. There is however a limit of ten users, including yourself.

There is of course much more to this very user-friendly and useful sight – which will be explored in much more detail in forthcoming Imaginet eBooks.

Check out Imaginet ADSL business solutions. No Contracts.

<http://www.imaginet.co.za/html/pages/common/pdfs/BusinessandBusinessUncappedBrochure>

And Finally, Pinterest...



At first glance Pinterest appears to be little more than a scrapbooking site where you can attach or "pin" your favorite images to share with others. It is described as a social network that allows users to share any images that they find of interest and to create themes to organize these images. For example one can create "boards" or themed pages of your favorite art, cars or cakes. In essence, the site allows users to share their tastes, interests and obsessions with like-minded people.

However, Pinterest is no minor site. It is one of the fastest growing social networks in Internet history and outshines even Facebook in its rapid growth. Pinterest is the third-largest social network behind only Facebook and Twitter and has grown over 4,000% in the last 6 months. (<http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/02/02/7-ways-to-use-pinterest-to-promote-your-business>)

What is very distinctive and possibly the central attraction of this social network is that it is extremely visual in its focus on images. When the author of this eBook undertook an impromptu survey to find out why this social network was so popular, he found that two aspects seemed to strike users: the first was the visual aspect of the site and the second was the economic ease of use to quickly access images on web sites for inclusion on one's boards. As one commentator noted; image centric social networks are rapidly gaining market share due to their high engagement levels. "Everyone apparently loves an enticing photo".

(<http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/02/02/7-ways-to-use-pinterest-to-promote-your-business/>)

Part of the attraction of this site is succinctly described as follows:

Who doesn't love to see what their friends like? Who doesn't want a peek into someone else's dreams for a moment? Want to see what recipes your friends are collecting? Want to see crafts all your mom friends are planning for the upcoming holidays? Want to see what new cars the family down the street are considering? All of that can be seen on Pinterest. It's a way to get a peek into someone else's life.

(<http://www.squidoo.com/what-is-pinterest-and-why-do-people-love-it>)

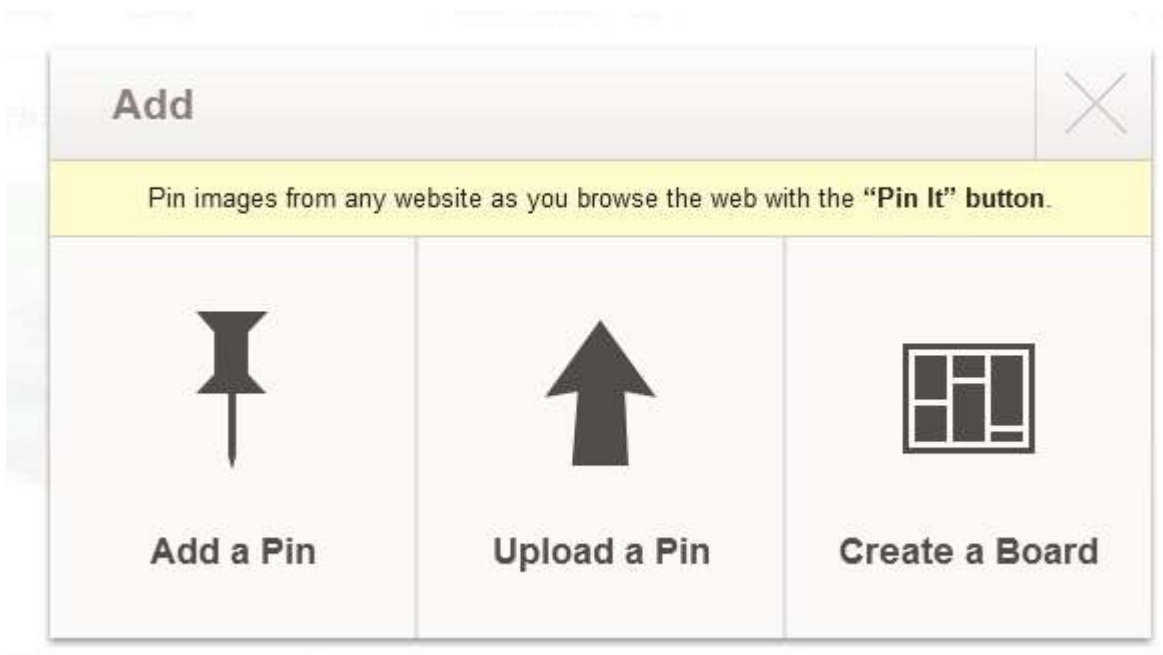
Getting into Pinterest

Simply register at www.pinterest.com and begin creating your 'boards' of images.

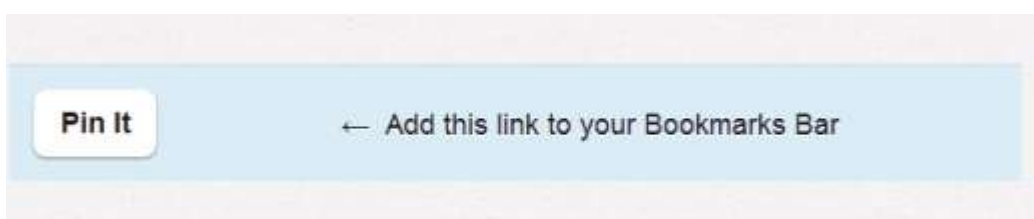
The beauty of this site lies in its simplicity. To add a board all one has to do is click on the Add button on the topbar.



This opens a very intuitive and easy-to-use add section.



Pinterest provides a number of ways in which you can add images to your boards. It offers a very useful "PIN IT" button that allows you to pin images from any website to your themes or categorized Pinterest boards.

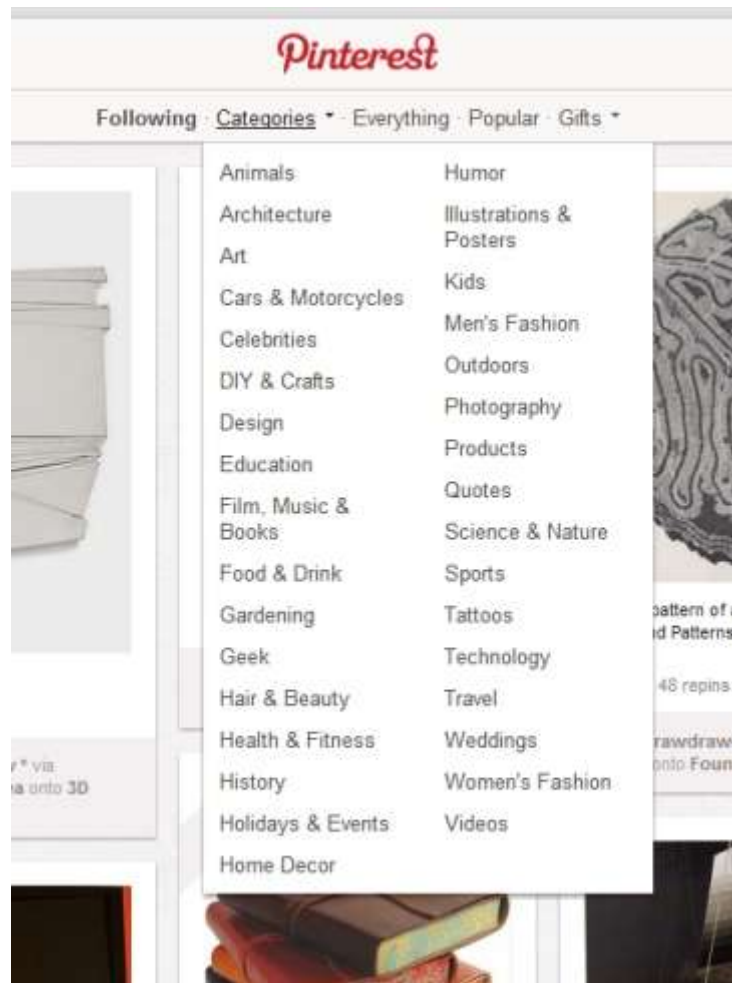


Once installed in your browser, the "Pin It" button lets you select an image from any website and add it to one of your pinboards. This "pin" or image also contains the source link of the site.

A very useful option – via the Add button referred to above- is the ability to add pins or images to your Pinterest site from your computer. By clicking on the Upload a Pin (see above) one can choose a file from your computer to upload to Pinterest. But the real fun or (Pin)interest is simply grabbing images as you explore the Internet.

When you find a site that has images that you would like to use or pin then all you need to do is click on the "Pin It" button and you will be given the option to pin any of the images embedded on the webpage you're currently visiting. You'll also have the opportunity to choose which board you're pinning to and to describe your new pin. All images pinned to Pinterest automatically retain the url of their original sources!

The interesting part of Pinterest is browsing through the various boards and themes. These can be accessed from the main page and from the category tab on the topbar.



The idea is to interact with the images and boards on the site. There are a number of options: you can *like* the pin, follow that person, follow a particular board and comment on the pin. One also has the option to repin the pin you like onto one of your themed boards.

Pinterest is very well designed, the entire process is intuitive and accessible and once you begin the process becomes natural and easy to follow. While many might think that this social network is just for fun and has no serious or business application – think again. The power of this set to drive referrals is shown by the fact that in January 2012, Pinterest drove more traffic to websites than LinkedIn, Google

Plus, Reddit, and Youtube combined. Imaginet will be bringing out an eBook devoted only to Pinterest and the role that it can play in marketing and business.

We hope that you have enjoyed and benefited from this brief overview of social networking. Watch our site for announcements about new eBooks to be published soon.

Cheers from Imaginet!



imaginet team