



MARKETING TOOLBOX

Clinton Power

When I first came across Pinterest.com, I thought it was a website to share pictures and information about weddings, recipes and home decor. I admit it, I was pretty closed to the idea of joining yet another social media network, as I was already struggling to keep up with my Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+ accounts. After my initial reaction, I've recently circled back to Pinterest to spend a little more time on the site and really investigate the possibilities it might offer the therapy or coach professional who wants to add another channel to their marketing efforts.

WHAT IS PINTEREST AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Pinterest is a relatively new social media network that allows you to create virtual pinboards where you can pin images and videos. It's social because people can follow your virtual boards, and you can follow other people's boards. You can also 'like' a pin (similar to a Facebook 'like') as well as 'repin' an image you like from someone else's board to one of your boards.

Sound simple right? Well it is.

So this is where I got hooked. After spending about 20 minutes on the site, I found that it's very intuitive and simple to use. And because everything you're viewing, liking and repining is visual, it has an engaging quality that makes it different from the other social media networks.

A REAL-LIFE THERAPIST SUCCESS STORY ON PINTEREST

As I explored Pinterest, I came across St. Louis play therapist Pam Dyson, MA, LPC, who is a prolific 'pinner'. It was in talking to Pam that I realised there is enormous potential for using Pinterest in marketing your private practice.

As a play therapist, Pam works creatively and has used Pinterest to share lots of images of sand trays, information about play therapy and videos of her speaking about her work and upcoming workshops. You can see what she's doing on Pinterest [here](#).

Another way that Pam uses Pinterest is that she creates specific boards related to the issues some of her clients have, and then creates lots of resources related to that topic. For example, of her 44 boards she has topics on parenting,

CAN PINTEREST HELP YOU GROW YOUR THERAPY BUSINESS?

ADHD, adoption, autism and Asperger's and many other topics related to child mental health and parenting. These boards then become a great resource library where she can send her clients to get more information or ask them to follow her to stay updated on a particular topic. I was curious to know what benefits Pam had seen for her own therapy practice, and there were several. These included:

- A significant increase in the amount of website visitors to her website, which had been helpful in local people finding her services.
- Attracting therapists to her play therapy workshops where in some cases, therapists have travelled for many hours to come to one of her workshops, based on the connection they had developed with her through her Pinterest profile.
- Overwhelmingly positive feedback from her clients that they could access lots of information on their issues, or the issues their child was struggling with.

You can see the full 25-minute video I recorded with Pam where she shares lots of tips about how to use Pinterest [here](#).

HOW CAN YOU USE PINTEREST EFFECTIVELY FOR YOUR THERAPY OR COACHING BUSINESS?

Pinterest is similar to Twitter or Facebook in that you ideally want to be a curator of quality content and you post this content onto your pinboards. The main point of difference is you are posting images or videos contained in the article or post, not just the URL of the content.



If you're not on Pinterest but come across content that you find interesting and you want to post, the easiest way is to install a simple plugin in your browser that allows you to directly share to Pinterest from your browser. When you click on the Pinterest button in your browser, it will automatically grab all the images and videos from that page and give you a choice as to which one you want to share on Pinterest. You can then choose the board you want to pin it to, or you can create a new board. You can also give it a title or add a comment that others will be able to read.

There are a few simple tips to follow to get your Pinterest profile working for you. Here's what to consider if you're interested in starting:

1. Open a Pinterest account at www.pinterest.com
2. Install the Pinterest plugin for the browser you most frequently use
3. Create specific boards for separate topics- the more specific the better
4. Share your own images and videos in your blog posts and articles to your related boards
5. Follow other boards and pinners and start to like and repin their content to your own boards
6. As you browse the web, get into the habit of sharing interesting and engaging content to your boards
7. Rinse and repeat

So after spending the last few weeks on Pinterest, I'm convinced that it offers a number of benefits for your therapy or coaching business, which include:

- Driving more traffic to your website to increase your rankings and build your email list.
- Raising your profile as an authority in your niche through sharing your expertise.
- Providing an online resource library for your clients to easily find information about their particular issues and problems.
- Connecting with other therapists or coaches that may be looking for consultations, supervision or your workshops and products.

Aside from the business benefits, it's a really fun social media network that engages you through the power of images. I encourage you to experiment with it and see if it can assist you in marketing your therapy or coaching business.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Clinton Power](#) is a passionate marketing coach and consultant who provides online marketing and business development ideas for healthcare professionals.

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DeeAnna Nagel

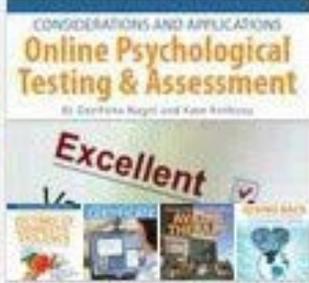
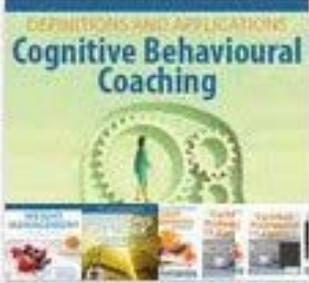
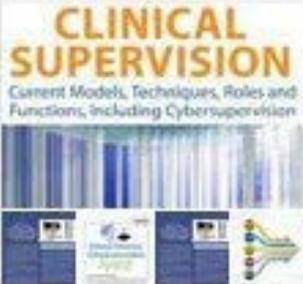
I am a psychotherapist, educator, coach and consultant. I co-founded the Online Therapy Institute and the Online Coach Institute. Oh, and I live on the Jersey Shore so life is sweet!



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