

# PINTEREST LAUNCHES NEW FEATURE FOR TRAVELERS

*Pinterest*



On Wednesday 20th November, Pinterest launched a new expansion of their site's features called Place Pins. Justin Edmund, a product designer with Pinterest, is quoted as saying that this feature is "designed to combine the beautiful imagery of a travel magazine with the utility of a map online", but why take a turn towards the travel industry and what exactly are Place Pins?

There is no denying that Pinterest is a popular social media site, particularly given the data from comScore. Their recent statistics focusing on the mobile share of time spent on the given site shows Pinterest with an impressive 88.1% - putting the site marginally behind Twitter, which has 88.4%, and Instagram (96.6%), and ahead of Facebook with its 64.6% - and the site is looking towards the travel industry as a means of protecting this status and advancing the brand.

**These new types of pins are meant to help board creators design their own, beautiful guides to their towns so people can share places and ideas and plan trips.** Thanks to partnerships with top developers and organizations such as Yelp and TripAdvisor, these alternative, travel-related pin boards are designed to not only be more attractive than the average map but also informative. When placing pins on locations to advertise a great restaurant, hotel or club, members can provide more details and contact information - a feature that will be a great tool for users but could potentially also be a great source of extra revenue for Pinterest.

When discussing this new venture during the launch, Pinterest's spokespeople were keen to highlight the link between the new Pin Places idea and the growth in visits from mobile users. There is a sense that they are taking advantage of this new breed of web user and they claim to be simultaneously encouraging people to use the site and become active in exploring their towns and the outside world. **There has been shaky progress in the rise in desktop visits between July 2012 and September 2013 yet the number of mobile users grew pretty steadily from below 10,000 to over 25,000.**

It is also worth noting that the site's users were apparently already creating 1.5 million travel-related pins per day prior to the creation of these pins, at least that is what the CEO, Ben Silbermann, claims. With such a high rise in mobile users and a high interest in the travel sector, it is no surprise that Pinterest is trying to explore the potential of both avenues.

There are different ways to look at this new scheme and the purpose of Pin Places; some may see it as an obvious expansion of a site that was naturally turning toward mobile use and travel-related content, others will see it simply as a means of creating revenue to justify their popularity and current \$3.8 billion valuation. Whether or not the concept will catch on remains to be seen but, with the product launching on the Web, Android and iOS, all avid Pinterest users will find it easy enough to start making their first map.

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