

# How (& Where) Consumers Discover Products on Social Media [DFY]



Launch the perfect social media campaign with the right content on the right platforms to get your brand noticed.



A free marketing resource from

# Inbound 281

[inbound281.com](http://inbound281.com)

**Inbound 281**  
MARKET YOUR WAY UP

# Why You Need a Strategic Social Media Approach

More and more companies are joining social media. Why? Because social media is where consumers are spending increasing amounts of time. Knowing how and where to approach these consumers will help guide your marketing strategy towards success.

People use a variety of social media platforms for a variety of different purposes. Whether that may be for product discovery, company research, entertainment, and more your consumers are on social media, and you should be too.

To create a successful social media marketing plan you need to strategize how and where you are going to market. To help you with your plan's creation process, we have compiled our research on the ins and outs of today's top social media attributes you need to know.

We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions, feel free to reach me at 800-834-4910 or at [inbound281.com](http://inbound281.com).

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**Marketing is all about meeting people where they are — and more often than not, they're on social media. For this reason, it's the perfect vehicle for product discovery.**

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Of course, not all social media platforms are created equal, especially when it comes to product discovery. So, if you're looking to pinpoint the platforms consumers use the most for product research, you've come to the right place.

Here, we'll dive into:

- The top social media channels consumers use for product discovery
- What types of content consumers watch and engage with
- Social media research habits
- Which platforms you should market your products on

Let's dive in.

## Identifying the Right Platforms for Product Marketing

While running ads and product promotions on any social platform can help drive conversion, it's a good idea to focus on platforms with audiences that already align well with your brand.

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For example, broader audiences are actively looking for products or researching brands on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest while Reddit and Twitter users tend to be more trend-focused. Similarly, if you're marketing a B2B company, you might see a better ROI from ads on a professional network—like LinkedIn—than ads on a more consumer-friendly platform like Instagram.

Use the information provided above, and start leveraging social media for lead conversion and product marketing.



# What Is Shopper Research?

Shopper research examines how, when, and where customers interact with brands to give companies a better understanding of the consumer journey from discovery to conversion.

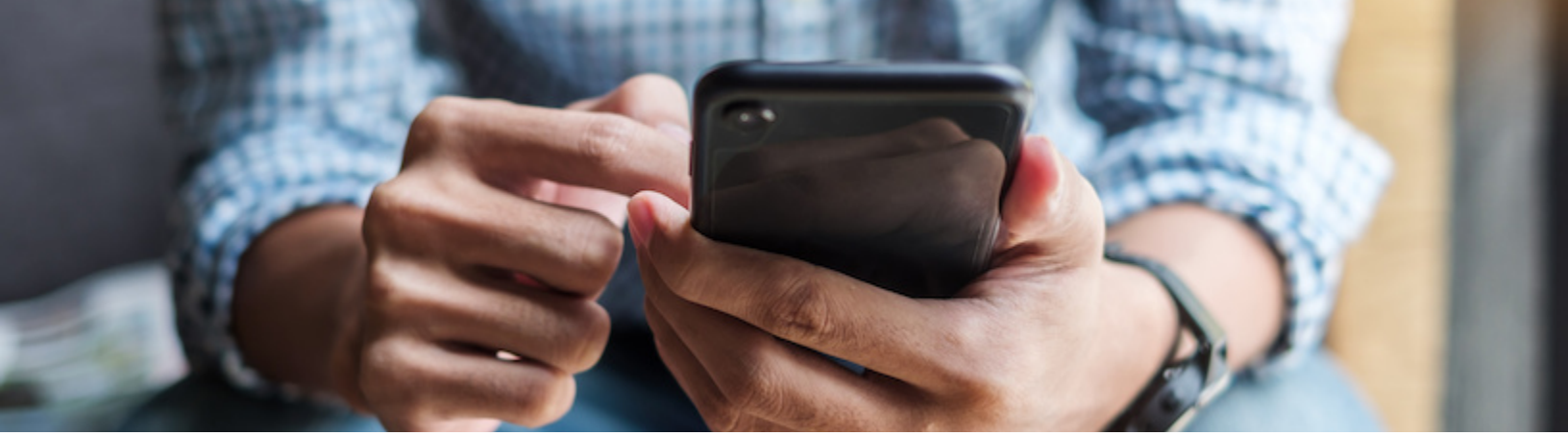
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Shopper research is critical for a better understanding of the customer journey from initial searches to website visits and eventual purchases. Plus, the advent of digital- and mobile-first interactions has made this research even more important as the customer journey now includes multiple paths and touchpoints from start to finish.

For example, prospective buyers might hear about your brand from a friend, do their research on social media, and then interact with your ecommerce store through their mobile device.

Understanding all touchpoints along this journey can help companies create more seamless and streamlined experiences for consumers and increase overall ROI.



## The Top Social Media Channels Consumers Use For Product Discovery

22% of consumers prefer to discover new products via social media, according to the [2022 State of Consumer Trends Report](#). Let's take a closer look at the channels they leverage for product discovery:

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### Gen Z

Almost half (49%) of Gen Z consumers prefer to discover new products via Instagram Stories. This isn't too surprising when you consider [90% of people](#) follow a business on Instagram. On top of that, Gen Z ranks Instagram as their favorite social media app.

In second place, 41% want to discover new products through a short-form video – such as a TikTok or Instagram Reel. Since these platforms pull a younger audience, this adds up.

*41% of Gen Z consumers want to discover new products through a short-form video*

HubSpot Blog Data, 2022

## Millennials

Millennials prefer to discover new products via feed or story posts. This could be anything from an **Instagram Story** to a Facebook post. Facebook, in particular, is the social app Millennials visit the most, followed closely by YouTube.

On top of that, Millennials also like to discover new products through short-form videos (36%).

## Gen X

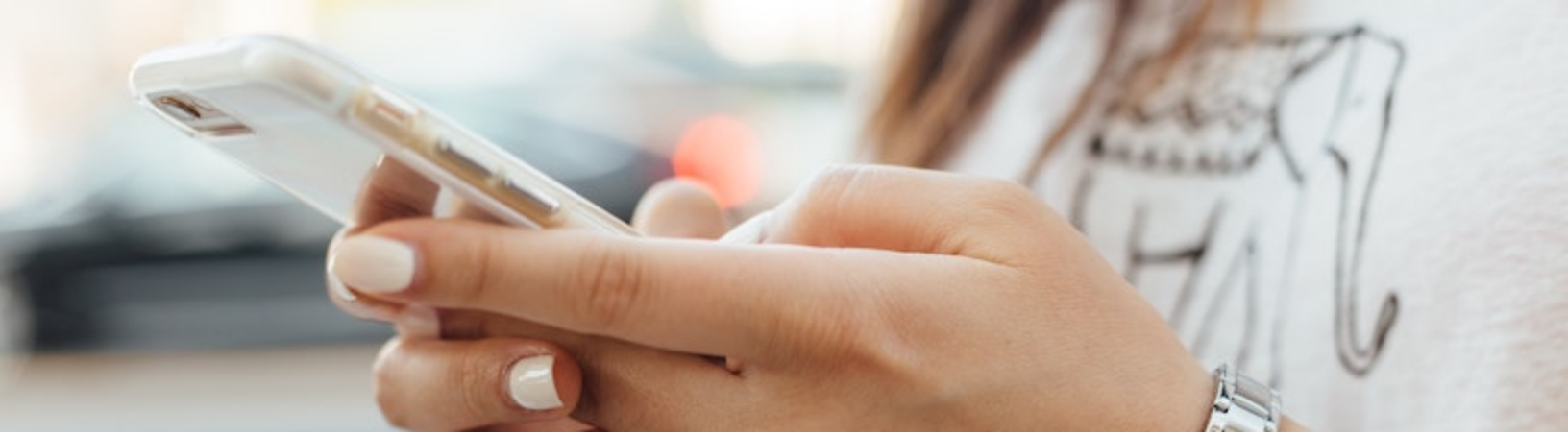
Gen X discovers new products on social media more frequently than any other channel, even though it isn't preferred. Like Millennials, they're most likely to find new products via feed or story posts.

Interestingly, this age group likes to discover new products through short-form videos (41%) in equal measure to Gen Z. It's clear that short, snackable content is appealing to this demographic. In fact, **36% of TikTok users in 2021 were between 35 and 54 years old**, a 10% increase from the year before.

## Baby Boomers

Social media falls flat for boomers — a slim 17% have discovered a product on social media in the past three months, and only 4% have purchased a product on a social app in that time.

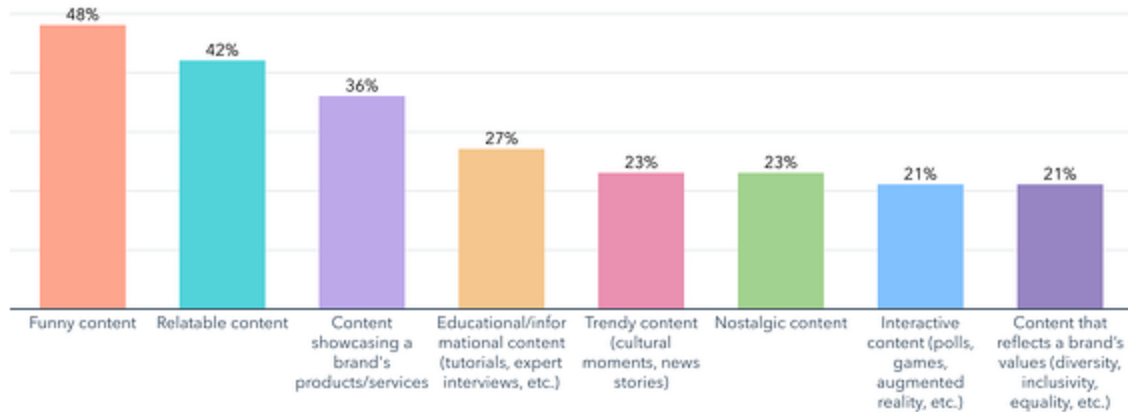
That said, of those who use social media, 42% prefer to discover new products via feed posts. The platforms they visit the most are Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest.



## What Types of Product Content Do Consumers Watch or Engage With?

If you're looking to leverage social media, it's a good idea to know what types of branded content consumers enjoy.

What kind of branded social media content is most memorable (top 8)?



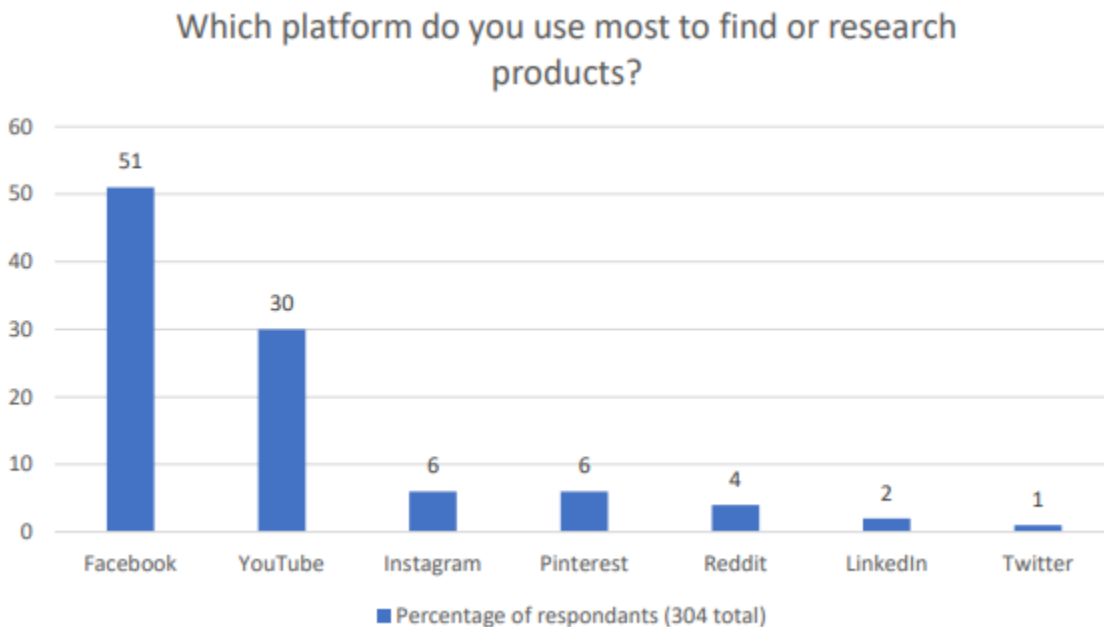
Nearly half of consumers (48%) find funny content the most memorable, followed by relatable content. Additionally, making content that showcases your product or service – such as a demo, review, or tutorial – is also highly memorable to 36% of consumers.





## Social Media Research Habits

To learn more about the social networks people prefer to surf for product research, a poll of 304 people was conducted using Lucid Software.



Source: Lucid Software

At first glance, the survey data seems simple: Facebook is far and away the market leader when it comes to product research and eventual purchasing, followed by YouTube.

But that's not the whole story. Part of the reason Facebook and YouTube rank so highly is because of their massive user base – for example, Facebook has **three times the user base** of Instagram, despite being owned by the same company.

It's also worth noting that while Facebook marketing appeals to a broader audience, volume alone doesn't guarantee conversion. Users on Pinterest, TikTok, and Reddit tend to be much more engaged with their social community – meaning that if your brand can capture their attention you can create substantive consumer loyalty.

LinkedIn, meanwhile, relies on authenticity and authority to inspire confidence, while Twitter is all about what's trending *right now*.

# Which Social Media Platform Should You Market Products On?





# 1. Facebook

Facebook has a whopping **2.7 billion active daily users** and has been around since the early 2000s. Its audience **includes multiple age groups and spans the globe**, making it a solid place for most brands to market themselves.

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Most importantly, **78% of US consumers** discover new products on Facebook, more than any other platform.

When it comes to marketing your product, you have many free and paid options on Facebook. Here are a few examples of each.

## Free Promotion

By now, you probably know that any company can create a **Facebook Business Page**. Once you create a business page, you can share posts about your products and offerings. If you have happy customers, you can even ask them to review your business on Facebook so prospects researching you can see how you've pleased your customers in the past.

Aside from creating a page to highlight your brand, you can also post your products in **Facebook's Marketplace**. Marketplace listings can include product shots, pricing, product specifications, and purchasing information.

Although individual users often use the Marketplace to sell items they no longer want to other people, **Facebook Business pages are also eligible** to use this feature.

You should also consider talking about your products or offerings on **Facebook Stories**. This might take a little extra effort because it will require you to film or create content in the Story format, but it can help you better connect with prospective buyers who want a better sense of what your brand is about.

## **Paid Promotion**

Because **Facebook's feed algorithmically favors posts** from individual accounts over businesses, you might decide that you want to put money into Facebook Ads.

Facebook Ads has a solid track record. It's estimated that **10 million businesses** were advertising on the platform in 2021.

With **Facebook Ads**, you can create advertisements with a certain goal in mind, such as conversions or in-store foot traffic. The detailed ads software also allows you to target specific audience demographics.

As a **Facebook advertiser**, you can either promote a post you've already created to ensure that it shows up on feeds of users in your demographic, or you can create native ads that might show up in feeds or on Facebook's sidebars. While promoted posts look like an average post with a simple tag stating they're promoted, the native ads look more like traditional ads to make it clear to users that the content they're seeing is paid for.

If you want to launch video-based ads, Facebook also allows you to promote video content or buy **in-stream ad placements** that appear in Facebook Live videos or longer videos that other users have uploaded.



## 2. YouTube

If how-tos or video tutorials are part of your content marketing strategy. YouTube will be a natural fit for your brand. This is because YouTube users are **three times more likely** to prefer watching a YouTube tutorial video compared to reading the product's instructions.

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YouTube is also popular across multiple age groups. In the last three months, **83% of Millennials** have visited YouTube, followed by **81% of Gen Z**, and **79% of Gen X**. For Baby Boomers, YouTube is **their second favorite** social media app, just behind Facebook.

With a branded YouTube channel, you can publish video content such as demos, tutorials, or customer testimonial videos that give insightful details about why your product is valuable. By filming your own videos, you can insure that you're highlighting all the great aspects of your product that make it stand out from its competitors.

Alternatively, if you don't have time to create your own videos, sponsoring an **influencer's content, tutorial, or review related to your product** allows you to tap into that content creator's audience as they tell their followers more about your offerings.

Aside from creating your own account or hiring an influencer to give a review or tutorial, you could also consider paid advertisements. YouTube offers a few ad styles including **TrueView, Preroll, and Bumpers**.

These ads allow you to submit a short video ad to YouTube which is then placed at the beginning or in the middle of videos with metrics and demographics that match your brand's target. To learn the ins and outs of setting up an ad and determining which style is right for you, [check out this guide](#).

The image shows a YouTube video player interface. The main video is titled "Central Penn College Provides Constant Support" by Central Penn College. A smaller version of this ad is overlaid on the bottom left of the video. A red box highlights a "Skip Ads" button in the bottom right corner of the video player. Below the video player, the text "#Don" and "How to Fall Asleep FAST When You CAN'T Sleep! 12 Sleep Life Hacks!" is visible. To the right of the video player, there is a sidebar with a "Central Penn College" ad, an "Up next" section featuring a video titled "How to Fall Asleep FAST When You CAN'T Sleep! 10 Sleep Lif..." by Natalies Outlet, and an "OnBase Automation Solutions" ad for KeyMark.



### 3. Instagram

Although Instagram ranked in third place in the poll above, you shouldn't disregard it—especially if you're targeting Gen-Z or Millennials **who make up the platform's primary audience.**

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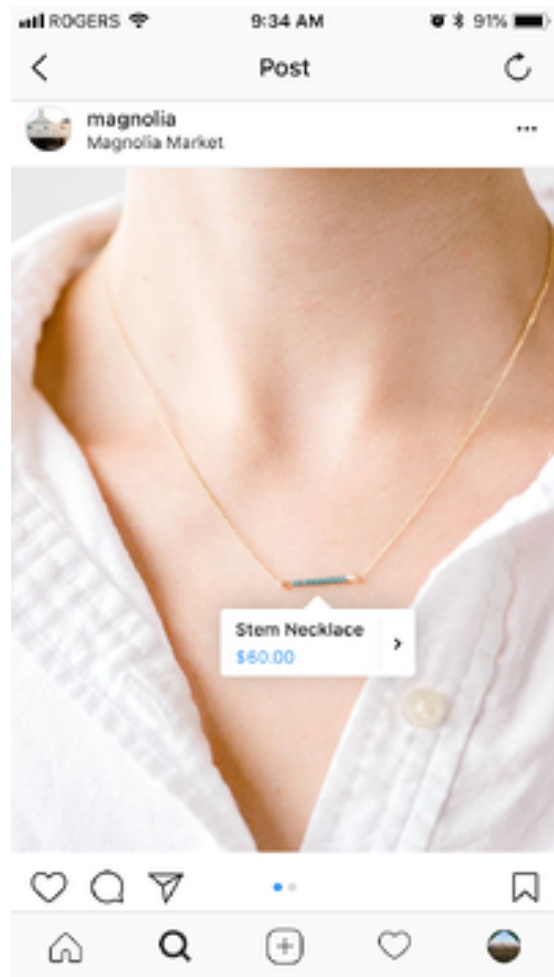
For years, Instagram's visual layout has made it a hot spot for **influencer marketing**. Influencers regularly post sponsored photos and videos about their experiences with products. Like YouTube, these influencers also regularly publish video posts or Stories that present tutorials, reviews, and unboxings related to a product.

Aside from influencer marketing, many brands also promote their products on **Instagram Stories**, **Instagram Live**, and through standard video or photo posts on Instagram Feed.





Here's an example where Kylie Jenner, the CEO and Founder of Kylie Cosmetics, films a Story-based product tutorial for her company's Instagram account



Along with free strategies, Instagram now offers **Shoppable** posts. With Shoppable posts, you can promote a product in an Instagram post that **links to your Facebook Catalog**. Here's an example of what a Shoppable Post looks like:

To be eligible for Shoppable posts, you must have an Instagram Business page that's linked to a **Facebook Catalog**. This feature is also only for businesses selling physical goods.

**Here's a blog post** that goes into detail about how to use and optimize Shoppable posts.



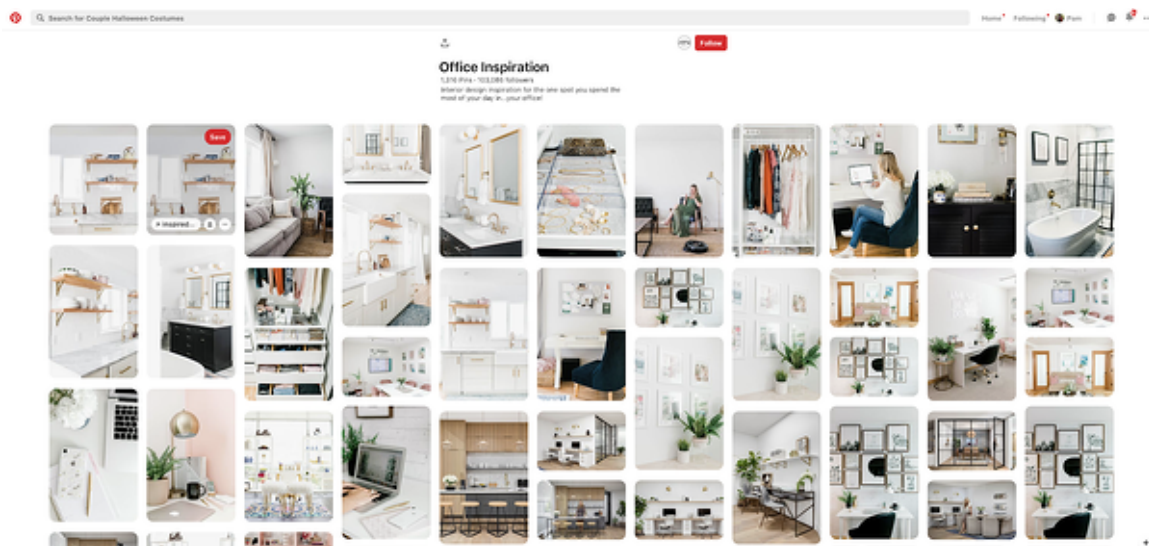
## 4. Pinterest

Pinterest encourages people to pin image-based posts that inspire them to digital boards, mimicking the process of creating a physical inspiration board.

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Because people come to this platform to be inspired to do something, such as travel or home decorating, they might find themselves pinning all sorts of product-oriented images to a themed board. For example, someone who wants to redecorate their office might create an "Office Inspiration" board and pin photos of furniture or decorative items that they'd like to buy.

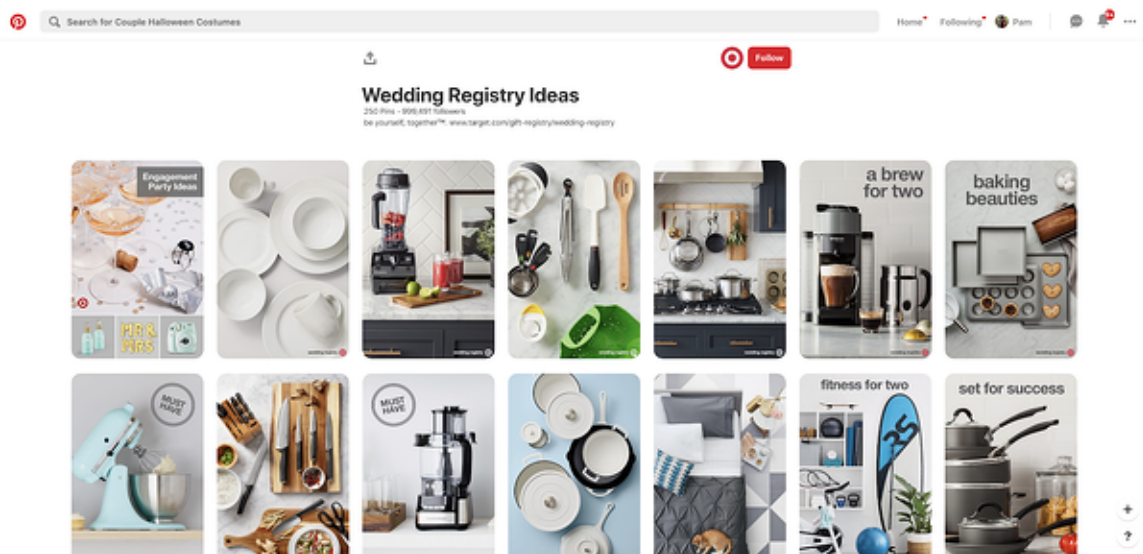
Here's an example of what these boards look like:



To make it easier for people to find your products, you could consider starting a Pinterest account and making a few boards to highlight your products. For example, if you're marketing a travel company, you could make a board for each country that you offer packages to. On each board, you could place images of trip activities that link to your website.

Then, if someone is trying to plan a trip to a country you sell a package for, they might come across one of your posts and pin it to their own "Travel Inspiration" board.

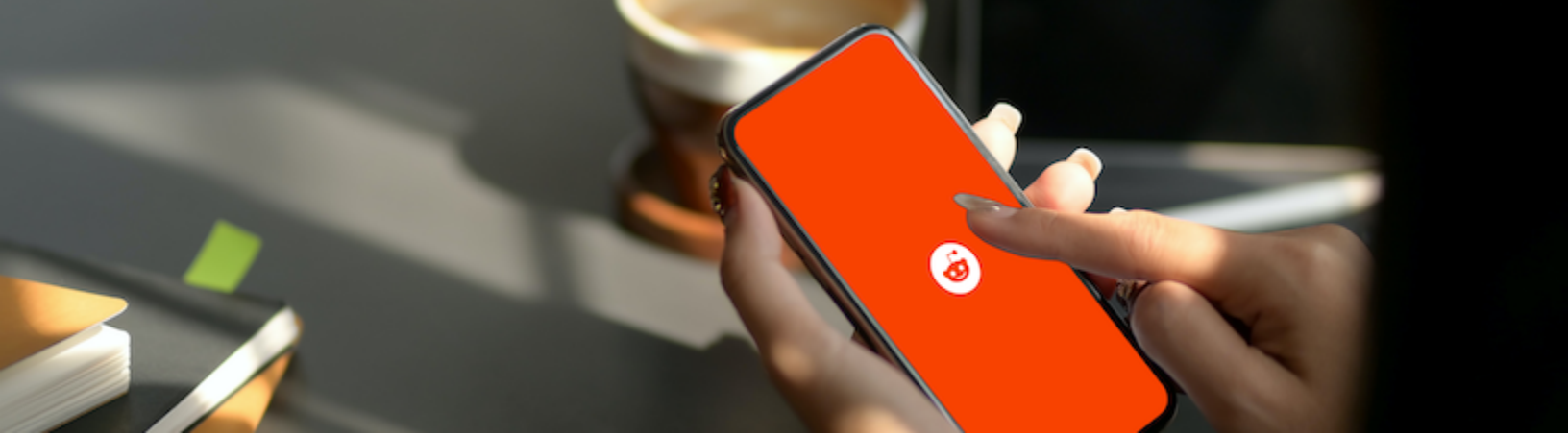
To give you a real-world example of how brands use Pinterest, below is a Wedding Registry board created by Target which features images of products that a bride and groom might want to add to their gift registry.



Each of Target's pinned images links to the company website so users can share the pin on their own Pinterest board, or click straight through the post to buy or register the product.

If you have an advertising budget, you can also consider launching **pay-per-click ads on Pinterest**. Pinterest Ads enables your posts to be seen by people in a specific demographic that matches your own. The platform also allows you to A/B test photos and target ads to Pinterest users on your contact lists.

Want to learn more about Pinterest Ads and effective experiments to run? Check out [this blog post](#) from a PPC and Pinterest expert.



## 5. Reddit

Reddit encourages users to create discussion threads in themed online communities, called subreddits. As the platform has evolved, many users have created both threads and subreddits devoted to talking about products, like fast-food restaurants or video games.

Below is an example of a subreddit, or online community, that Reddit users created to talk about all things related to Xbox One.

A screenshot of the r/xboxone subreddit page on Reddit. The page has a dark green header with the subreddit logo and name 'xboxone'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Posts', 'Wiki', 'Developer AMAs', 'Social', 'Podcast', and 'Weekly Posts'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column shows a post titled 'Show-off Sunday! - Post pictures of your setups, custom mods, achievements... Whatever!' by u/AutoModerator, posted 9 hours ago. The post text says 'Hello Xbox One Fans! It's your friendly AutoModerator here, inviting you to post pictures and videos of your newest creations and victories. Post pictures of paint jobs, custom controllers, battlestations, Achievements, Gamerscore, Pins - It's all fair game today! For a list of my Scheduled Posts - Check out the wiki!'. Below the post are 5 comments, share, and save icons. The right column shows the 'COMMUNITY DETAILS' for r/xboxone, including the subreddit logo, name, 1.6m Gamers, and 5.3k Not Gaming members. It also includes a 'JOIN' button and a 'CREATE POST' button. At the bottom right, there is an advertisement for KEYTRUDA (pembrolizumab) for non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).

However, because comments with promotional language in them **often get downvoted** or buried in feeds by more engaging Reddit threads, you'll need to be creative if you want to engage with audiences on this platform.

While you might want to keep an eye on Reddit or experiment with it, don't put all of your time and resources into it—at least right now. As it evolves, the platform may become an easier platform to market your brand on, but at the moment, Reddit marketing strategies still require more brainstorming and time than tactics on other social platforms.

Although this platform has been called one of the "trickiest" for marketers to crack, some bigger brands have figured out how to reach the platform's discussion-oriented users.

For example, some brands will **create subreddits related to their product**, while others will interact by commenting on threads related to their industry.

Aside from creating content for free on Reddit, you can alternatively pay into sponsored posts or ads, similarly to Facebook or Twitter. These ads will appear in a user's feed or as a promoted comment in a thread or subreddit.

To learn more about the ins and outs of Reddit marketing, **[click here for tips and examples](#)** of how other brands have cultivated the platform.



## 6. LinkedIn

LinkedIn's platform, which emphasizes networking and career-related chatter, might be well-suited for **product marketing in B2B, academic, or professional industries**. People who do product research on this platform might be looking for a service, tool, or software that can either escalate their careers or make their workdays easier.

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If you're marketing products like software, online courses, business-related publications, or anything that can help a professional or student do their job better, LinkedIn will be a great fit for you. However, if you sell more general, consumer-facing products like makeup or home decorations, you might want to put more marketing effort into other platforms on this list—like Facebook or Instagram.

While the professional nature of LinkedIn and its audience might not be suited for all brands, the platform still offers a variety of opportunities for brands to leverage it. For example, research shows that **80% of B2B leads come straight from LinkedIn**.

The screenshot displays the LinkedIn Learning platform interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the LinkedIn Learning logo, a search bar, and various utility icons. Below this, a secondary navigation bar lists solutions for Business, Higher Education, and Government. The main content area is split into three sections:

- Left Sidebar (Table of Contents):** A dark sidebar with a 'Contents' header and a close button. It includes a 'BACK TO LEARNING PATH' link, the course title 'Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for All', and a list of video chapters with their durations. The current video, 'Welcome', is highlighted.
- Center Video Player:** A large video player showing a woman with curly hair, wearing a red top and a black cardigan, speaking. The LinkedIn logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the video.
- Right Panel (Course Overview):** A white panel with a 'Overview' tab selected. It features the instructor's profile for Stacey Gordon, founder and CEO of Rework Work. Below this, there are sections for 'RELATED TO THIS COURSE' (Learning Groups, Exercise Files, Certificates, Continuing Education Units, Exam) and 'Related courses' (The Six Biases of Decision-Making).

LinkedIn is very similar to Facebook in that you can post about your product or service for free, or purchase ads or post promotion to get information about your business front and center on feeds. To see a few great ad examples, [check out this post](#).



## 7. Twitter

Twitter has approximately **200 million daily users** from a variety of backgrounds, geographic locations, and industries. Its broad demographic might provide solid marketing opportunities to many different types of businesses. Because of its broad user base, you might want to create an account on Twitter and post regularly for brand awareness.

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If you're interested in video marketing, you can also experiment with **Twitter's live video feature** and use it to film a tutorial or Q&A related to your product.

Aside from posting about your product for free, you can also **pay into targeted ads or promoted tweets**. Twitter claims that its advertising ROI is **40% higher than some other social channels**.

While the ROI of Twitter advertising and its user base sounds promising, you might be wondering why it ranked so low on the poll shown above.

Ultimately, what might make Twitter rank last is its trend-oriented nature. The platform encourages people to connect with each other and post tweets or comments about current events, trending hashtags, or their thoughts on other specific topics.



Brands and product discussion are both prevalent on the platform, but users might go to Twitter to learn more about what's going on in the world, rather than new products. When people are asked to pick which platform they do the most product research on, it's not surprising that Facebook or YouTube might seem like a more obvious choice than Twitter.

While you should be on Twitter due to its sheer user base and advertising ROI, you'll want to keep its audience's need to stay trendy and informed in mind as you're creating posts and advertisements for the platform. This might help you make social content that both engages these audiences while still weaving in information about how valuable your product is.

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for HubSpot (@HubSpot). The profile picture is a red circle with a white HubSpot logo. The bio reads: "It's not enough for businesses to grow. They need to #GrowBetter. Use @HubSpotSupport for Twitter support." The location is Cambridge, MA, and the website is hubspot.com. The profile was joined in April 2008. There is a "Tweet to HubSpot" button and a section for "8 Followers you know" with profile pictures of several users. The statistics bar shows: Tweets 83.1K, Following 45.7K, Followers 800K, Likes 37.2K, Lists 20, and Moments 26. The "Lists" tab is selected. Below the statistics, there are two tabs: "Subscribed to" and "Member of". The "Member of" tab is active, showing four lists: "Leadership Experts" (4 Members), "Top Marketing Experts" (108 Members), "Top Business Podcasters" (25 Members), and "Top Sales Experts" (42 Members). The "Top Sales Experts" list has a description: "Follow this list for some of our favorite smartest minds and sharpest Tweets in the sales world." Below this, there is another list: "Top Tier Journalists" (36 Members). Each list item has a red circular icon with the HubSpot logo.

# About Inbound 281



## A Growth Agency

Inbound 281 is a full-service, growth-focused digital marketing agency. We help businesses grow by improving their marketing to increase sales, revenue and profits.

We help owners, marketers and sales managers who are looking for new ideas to help sales hit their targets. Often times they are frustrated that, after all the time, efforts and money they have invested, they're still not getting the results they were expecting.

Our sights are set on lead acquisition, lead conversion, and conversion rate optimization.

We specialize in multi-channel digital marketing, including content marketing, web design and development, SEO, pay per click, and social media.

## *Ready for a Conversation?*

What's your dream result? Let's get the digital marketing conversation started!

Looking for new customer acquisition, lead generation, client engagement or a competitive advantage? We're ready to learn more about your goals so we can help you build a Marketing Road Map to help you achieve your goals.

[Schedule a Conversation](#)

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