Making King County Archives “Pinteresting”

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What is Pinterest?

- Social photo-sharing site
  - Create theme-based image collections
    - Personal interests
    - Events attended or planning to attend
    - Hobbies
- Virtual “corkboard”
History of Pinterest

- Launched March 2010
  - Invite only
- December 2010
  - 10,000 users
- December 2011
  - Top ten largest social media platforms
  - Top social media driver for holiday gift-buying season
History of Pinterest

• January 2012
  • Nearly 12 million unique monthly visitors
    • Fastest social networking platform to reach 10 million unique monthly visitors
      • Faster than Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube

• February 2012
  • Monthly traffic grew 50%

• August 2012
  • Open to all, no invite needed
  • 25 million unique monthly visitors
History of Pinterest

- September 2012
  - Fourth largest social networking platform
  1. Facebook
  2. YouTube
  3. Twitter
  4. Pinterest
  5. Google+
  6. Tagged
  7. LinkedIn
  8. Instagram
Who uses Pinterest?

- 59% of users are female
- 58% are ages 25-44
- 20% do not overlap with other social networking platforms
  - Unique audience
- Overperforms in Northwest and Midwest
Most Popular Categories

- Hobbies
- Arts and Crafts
- Food and Drink
- Fashion
- Home decor
What Makes Pinterest Unique?

• Visual
• Organized
• Collection-driven
• Strong appeal to women
• Simple design
• Geared to reflect an overall lifestyle or “personal brand”
What is Pinterest?

“Twitter for the visually inclined”
Why Pinterest for King County?

- Archives = photos = VISUAL
- Surge in interest
  - 50th anniversary of World’s Fair
  - Sonics nostalgia
  - Waterfront streetcar
  - Harborview Hall adaptive re-use proposal
- Authentically “vintage” photos
  - Instagram before it was “cool”
Why Pinterest for King County?

- Process began in May 2012
- Researched “competitors”
  - National Archives
  - Seattle Municipal Archives
  - Smithsonian
- Created mock-up
- Prepared Social Media Action Plan
- Selected images for first “blast”
Why Pinterest for King County?

- Easy and effective
- Builds awareness and familiarity
  - Makes King County more “personable”
- Possibility of generating new revenue
  - New York City Archives
Why Pinterest for King County?

- “Fail forward” organization
  - Willing to experiment
    - Willing to tweak!
- Early adopter (at least for government!)
- Archives asked first!
  - One of most “visual” agencies in King County
Implementation

- Upload photos
  - First to Flickr, then pinned to Pinterest
- Caption each uploaded photo
  - Intern = “free” labor
- Develop rollout plan and implement
  - Facebook and Twitter
  - Website links
  - News release
News Release

King County

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Department of Executive Services
Records and Licensing Division – Archives and Records Management

News Release

Date: August 28, 2012  
Contact: Cameron Satterfield, 206-263-9758

“Pinteresting” items from King County’s history now online

Archives puts dozens of historical photos on Pinterest, more to come

King County Archives is hoping to pique interest in its vast collection of historical photos and documents through social media. The agency just launched several Pinterest boards, with dozens of historical photos now available online. Some of the photos have never been widely seen by the public before.
Discover images from local history on Pinterest
August 29, 2012
By Staff

NEW — 4 p.m. Aug. 29, 2012

Find iconic images from local history on the King County Archives’ Pinterest boards.

The agency launched several Pinterest boards containing dozens of photos to pique interest in a vast collection of documents and photos. Some photos in the collection have not been widely seen before by the public.

“Our agency has a huge number of items that document the history of our region,” acting county Archivist Janette Gomes said in a statement. “By putting these pieces of King County’s past on Pinterest, we’re opening our collection to a wider audience. We hope people will help us spread the word and share the items they find most interesting by re-pinning them.”
Resulting Coverage

KOMO 4 6:30am News
August 29, 2012
Lessons Learned

- Plan ahead for sustainment
  - Interns are useful!
- Crowdsourced
  - Followers helped provide valuable additional information
- Think about future
  - Regional Animal Services and Parks considering Pinterest
- Cross-promote using existing social media platforms
Title

- Text