TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories

Main Street Online

A Comprehensive Approach to
Promoting your Main Street Online

Where we are going …

- **Websites**
  - SEO
- **Social Media**
  - Content
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Instagram
  - Pinterest
  - Google +
- **YOUR online presence and your downtown brand**
- **Other Online Tips**

Goals of Promoting Your Main Street Online

- Build Brand Awareness
- Increase Website Traffic
- Increase Visitors to your downtown
- Communication and interaction with key audiences

Audience

- Who is your audience?
- Where does that audience look for information?
- How do you reach your target audience?

Main Street Websites

Why care about a website?

- 1 in 5 searches done online contain local intent*
- 97 % of internet users look for local goods and services online
- 41% of people that made a purchase in a physical store actually researched online before they went into that store.*
- 55% of small business do not have a website. Small businesses make up more than 50% of national GDP in the US.
- BECOME the resource for your downtown

*Source: google: GYBO trainings

Why have your own website?

- You can control your own content
- Build SEO = More search results
- Recruit Volunteers
- Build partnerships
- Although you may have a CVB/Tourism office – this site is JUST for your downtown
- Updates to third party software and policies will not make you change your direction

I don't have thousands of $$$ for a website. Now what?

You do NOT need a custom built website. Use a template. Research which web platform is best for you.

Beginner Level -DIY

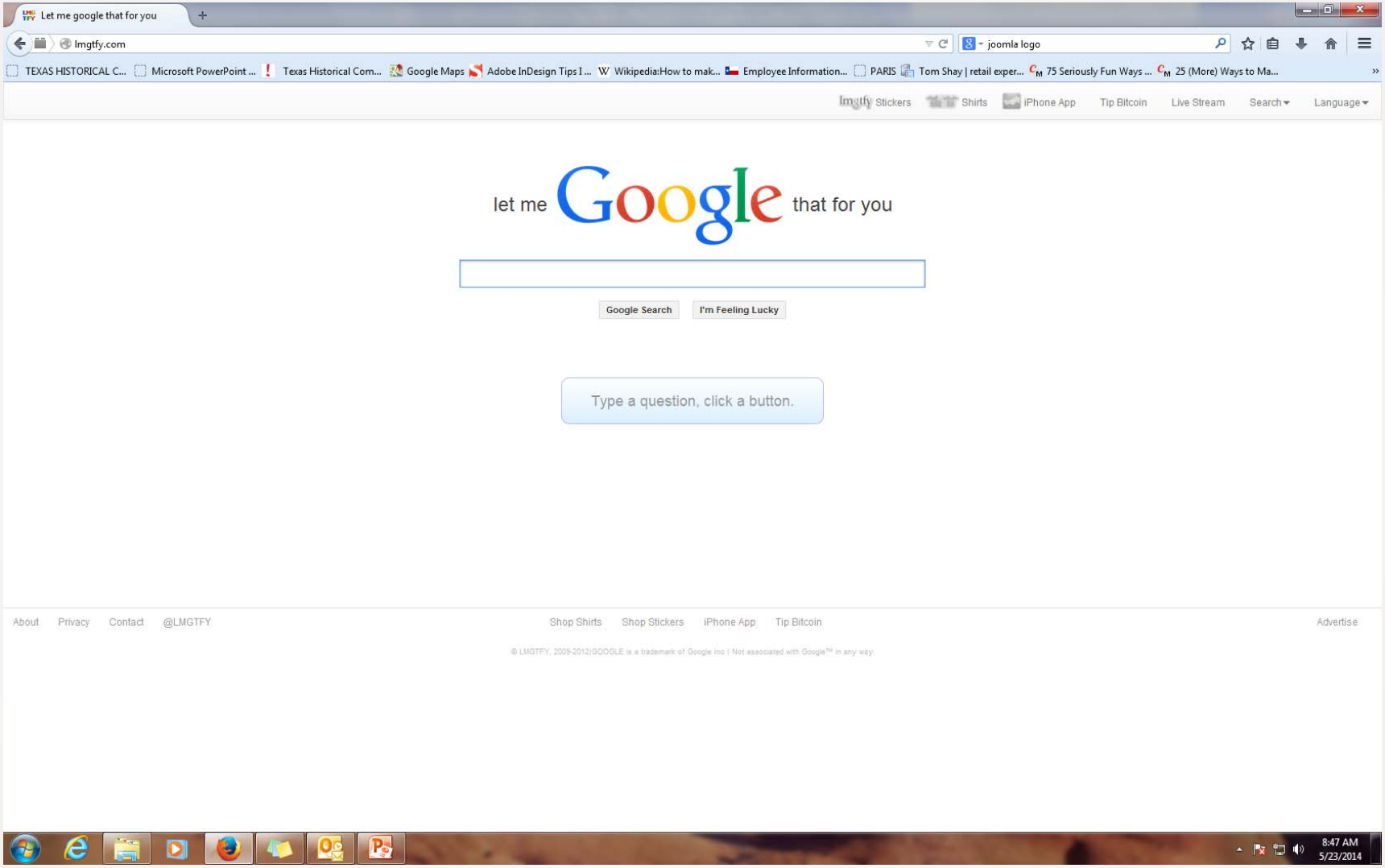
- Wordpress
- Squarespace
- StartLogic

Intermediate +

- Joomla
- Drupal
- Custom Website

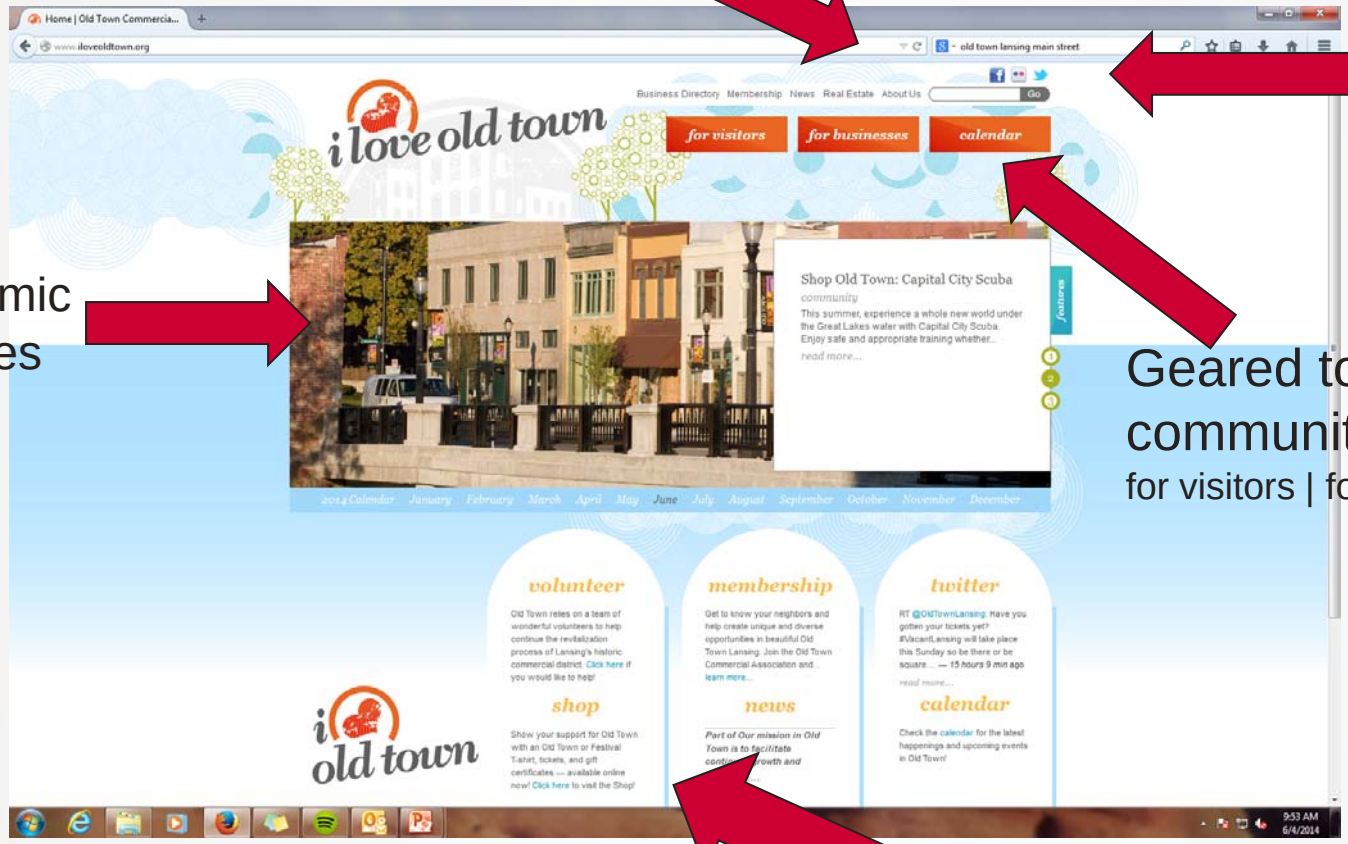
Google – Get Your Business Online Info: http://www.gybo.com/texas/gybo-week#1

Running into problems? LMGTFY.com



Main Street Websites: Best Practices

Highlights the Program
About Us



Connects social media
ALWAYS place top right

Dynamic Images

Geared towards the community
for visitors | for business | calendar

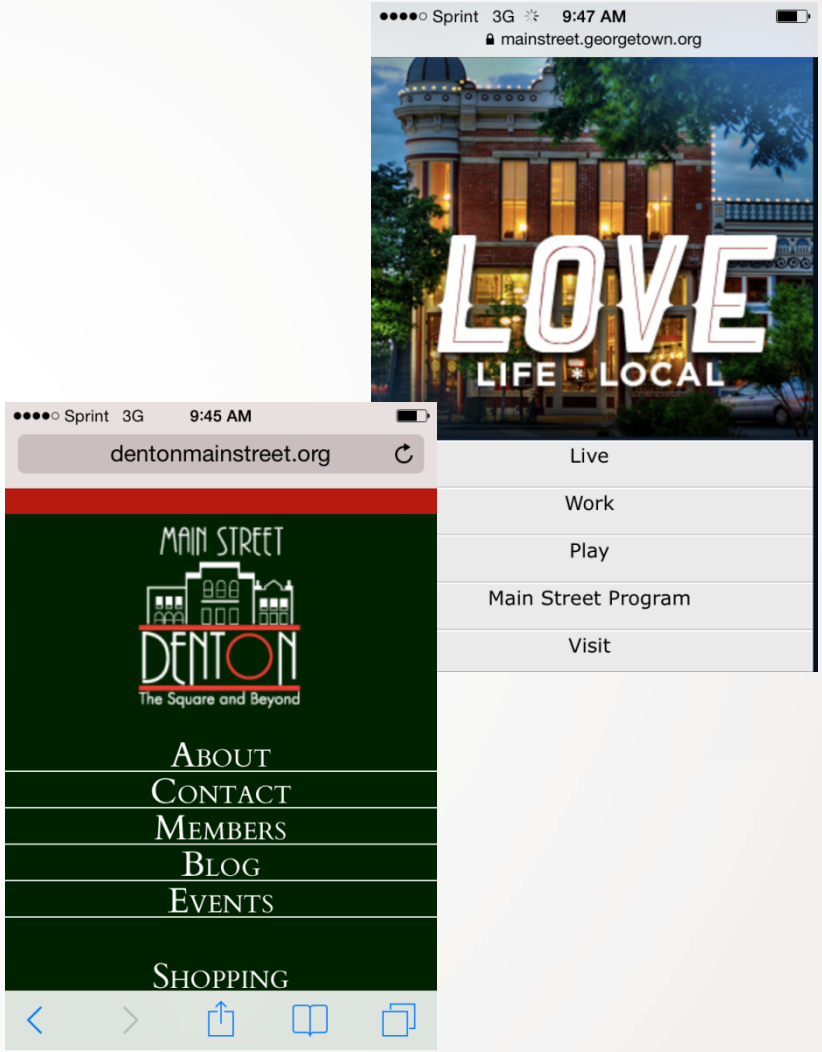
General content for the community

Easy to find info:
Volunteer, Shop, News, Membership

Make Your Website Mobile Friendly

What are mobile sites? A compressed – thumb friendly version of your current website, designed specifically for mobile devices.
Why are they important?

•**74%** of people say they're more likely to return to mobile-friendly sites in the future
•**48%** of users say they feel frustrated and annoyed when they get to a site that's not mobile-friendly
•**52%** of users said that a bad mobile experience made them less likely to engage with a company



Steps to Developing a Website

- Develop a plan
- Write your content
- Gather images
- Research Platforms
- Develop your website
- If using a web developer – understand their role
- Market your website
- Update your content consistently (SEO)

Content Writing & SEO

SEO = Search Engine Optimization

Search engines use an algorithm for finding information

SEO Rankings*

1. g+ button/page
2. Facebook Shares
3. Back Links to your website
4. Facebook Total (likes, shares, and comments)
5. Facebook Likes
6. Pinterest
7. Twitter

12. Length of URL

*Search Metrics 2014 Study

Keywords

What is a keyword?

A word or phrase that can trigger a search result.

What is a "**good keyword**"?

– Specific to the product or service you sell

– Close match to the searcher's query

General keywords = Lower search rank = Less Visits

What are keywords that you could use to describe your downtown?

How do you use keywords?

You have chosen the keywords that you will use, now what?

- Write content that contains those keywords – use the keywords in headings, urls, meta-description, and images
- Use a plugin such as Yoast (wordpress) or Search Metrics to help you with ranking
- Google your keywords to see results (before and after)
- Take time once a month to google yourself to make sure you are staying in top ranks

Every good website has engaging images.

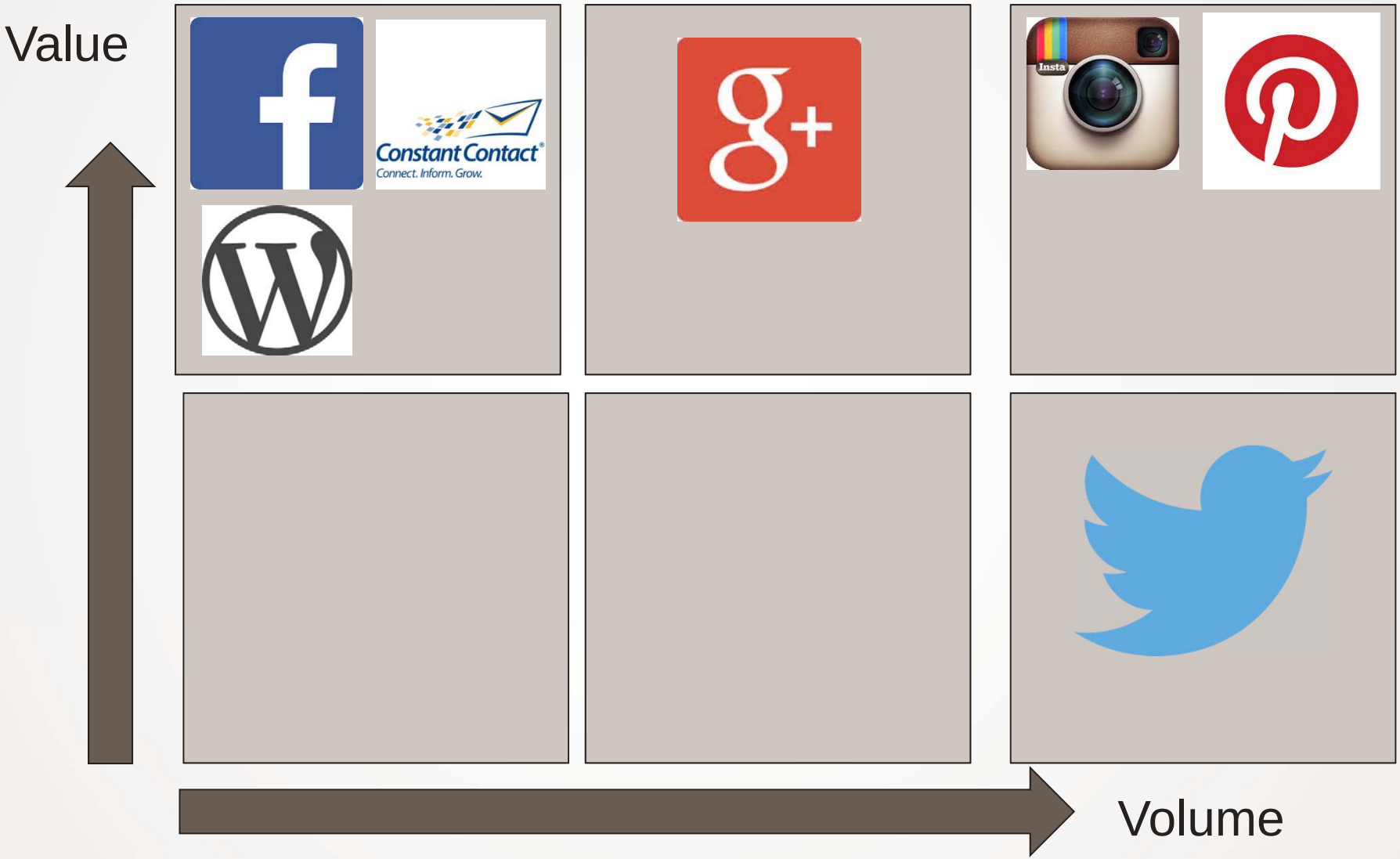
Ways to get good images:

- Work with a local photographer (paid or volunteer)
- Hold a photo contest on social media
- Ask your board/committees for help
- Partner with local high school/college/trade schools
- Develop criteria for images

Social Media for Main Street

Social Media Platforms

Types of Social Media



What type of content to share

What type of content?

50% of the content you post should be geared at getting likes, shares, and comments (entertain, invite conversation, ask questions, images, and video)

30% of your content should be useful & informative (industry info, hints & tips, & curated content)

20% of your content should be about your business/Main Street Program (Calls to action, not "Buy Now")

Types of Content: Text Updates

- Fill in the blank: My favorite shop in downtown *City Name* is _____?
- Ask a Question
- Share a Fun Fact (Trivia, Did you know…, etc.)
- Involve fans: ask them to tag your page

Types of Content: Visual

- Photos –behind the scenes, people, buildings, businesses, products, etc.
- Videos - short and provide a clear description
- Link to Digital Content (your website/blog/news story/etc.).

Content

What to Post:

- Links to news articles
- District Business updates
- Events (before, during, and after)
- Emergency notifications*
- Awards
- Important Updates

* Always stay positive and informative

Online Messaging

People don't buy what you do. They buy *why* you do it.

- Simon Sinek

facebook

Is facebook right for you?

- You need time and resources to monitor facebook on a daily basis – it is a real time medium.
- Facebook is high volume/high value
- Average facebook user has 245 friends
- Types of facebook pages –
  - Friend Page vs. Fan Page

Main Street Friend Page

Main Street Fan Page

Friend Page vs. Fan Page

Personal Timelines, which we sometimes refer to as profiles, are for individual, non-commercial use. You friend a personal page. They represent individual people and must be held under an individual name. You can follow Timelines to see public updates of people you're interested in but aren't friends with.

Facebook Fan Pages look similar to personal Timelines, but they offer unique tools for connecting people to a topic they care about, like a business, brand, organization or celebrity. Pages are managed by people who have personal Timelines. Pages are not separate Facebook accounts and do not have separate login information from your Timeline. You can like a Page to see updates in News Feed.

How to convert your personal timeline to a fan page:
https://www.facebook.com/help/www/116067818477568

Facebook Administration Roles

	Manager	Content Creator	Moderator	Advertiser	Insights Analyst
Manage Admin Roles	X				
Edit the Page	X	X			
Create Posts	X	X			
Respond and Delete Comments	X	X	X		
Send Messages	X	X	X		
Create Ads	X	X	X	X	
View Insights	X	X	X	X	X

Facebook Tips and Tricks

- Post frequently and consistently 3-10 times per week
- Keep it short: between 80 and 250 characters
- Use Large Photos rather than the auto generated photos in the article box
- Link to videos
- Update your cover photo
- Use @ to give shout outs
- Use # to market campaigns and have your content found
- Do not use more than two hashtags

People are most likely to engage with branded content on social media that contains pictures (44%).
Source: Performics

Facebook Tips and Tricks

Click your name to return to your page

Click the facebook icon return to your newsfeed

Follow your businesses from your Main Street page. This allows you to easily share their status updates and allows all admin to follow along.

Keyboard shortcut = alt+ tab for switching between documents (photos, text, social media, etc.) Easier to Copy and Paste.

Ctrl C = copy

Ctrl V = paste

Facebook Updates Public View

Changes:

Your page **cover image** is now different, the thumbnail for your profile picture box on the left is now higher up on the page, which covers up your cover image more.

text to the right of that profile picture of your Page Name and Website… you can't hide that text.

'Like' 'Follow' and 'Message' buttons hovering overtop of the cover image on the right-hand side.

Left column that you can re-arrange! Yes, the timeline is now a SINGLE COLUMN Timeline, like personal profile walls. This means you can move page 'Apps' to the top, or have recent comments to your page by page fans at the top. Page tabs now called apps.

Facebook Updates Admin View

Tabs have been replaced with text

Promote your Page is more prominent

Changes: Important Stats are shown on admin view on the right column (not on public view)

New Cover Dimensions

Have fun! Facebook Tips and Tricks

- Share testimonials on Facebook.
- Participate in fun themed posts (#tbt, #TriviaTuesday)
- Share exclusive content for Facebook fans.
- Share fan-created content.
- Photo captions.
- Create a custom URL for your facebook page
- Create a closed group page for your business owners

Facebook Ideas from "The Downtown Geek" a Main Street Manager in Rochester, MI

Business Recruitment: Ask people what new businesses they would like to see open in your downtown. It shows that you are interested in their input, plus it allows you do to a little bit of amateur market research. With so many people interested in starting a small business in their own community, you might be surprised by the response you receive.

Business Retention: Many of your businesses are on Facebook, so why not help to get the word out? Feature a daily link to a downtown business Facebook page. Encourage your businesses to do the same by featuring their fellow merchants. Ask them to post downtown events and make sure they tag your downtown page in their posts.

Fundraising: The goal of any successful fundraising campaign is to raise maximum funds with minimal overhead costs. Facebook is a great platform for this effort because it raises awareness of your fundraising goals to a targeted audience beyond what traditional media outlets can provide. And did I mention it's free?

In Case of Emergency: Ever have an event sponsor drop out at the last minute? What about a new project that needs more volunteers than you originally anticipated? Last year we lost a presenting sponsor two weeks before an event. We posted our plight on Facebook and landed a new sponsor within 24 hours. Does that happen all the time? Maybe not, but it is an easy and efficient way to put out a call to action.

Make The Ordinary Extraordinary: Some things that happen downtown may be just routine to you, but not to your fans. Try posting photos of those everyday activities. Photos of spring flowers being planted, tents going up for an event or a new business under construction are all ideal ways to show that there is always something new happening in your downtown.

twitter

Is Twitter right for you?

- Fast paced network
- 500 million users
- More than 400 million tweets are posted daily

Is twitter right for you?

- You need time and resources to monitor twitter on a daily basis – it is a real time medium.
- Twitter is a high volume/low value medium
- You need to have a solid website to reinforce your brand
- You need to curate content for twitter. Share others content –they are more likely to engage with you.

Twitter

- Twitter handle (15 characters)
- Minimum post 5 tweets a day
- No maximum number of tweets per day
- Space tweets throughout the day
- Quantity is key
- Tag others appropriately
- Use hashtags but no more than 2 per post

Twitter Content

- Text Tweets
- Post with a link (blog post/other resources)
- Fact, tip, quote
- Photos and videos
- Share graphics

Twitter Content

- Create content or curate content (balance the two types)
- Make sure to tag all curated content
- Retweet = sharing others tweets
- # = word or phrase used to tie topics together, allows you to search other posts with that hashtag

Instagram

Why Use Instagram

- Over 200 million ACTIVE monthly users on Instagram – can reach locals, tourists, bloggers, media
- 34% of US teens and millennial's (14-34) report to use Instagram
- Online adult female users in US = 20%
- Online adult male users in US = 15%
- 70% of users log in at least once a day
- Most popular filter = no filter
- Most common used hashtag = #love
- Increase of likes if the dominant color is blue

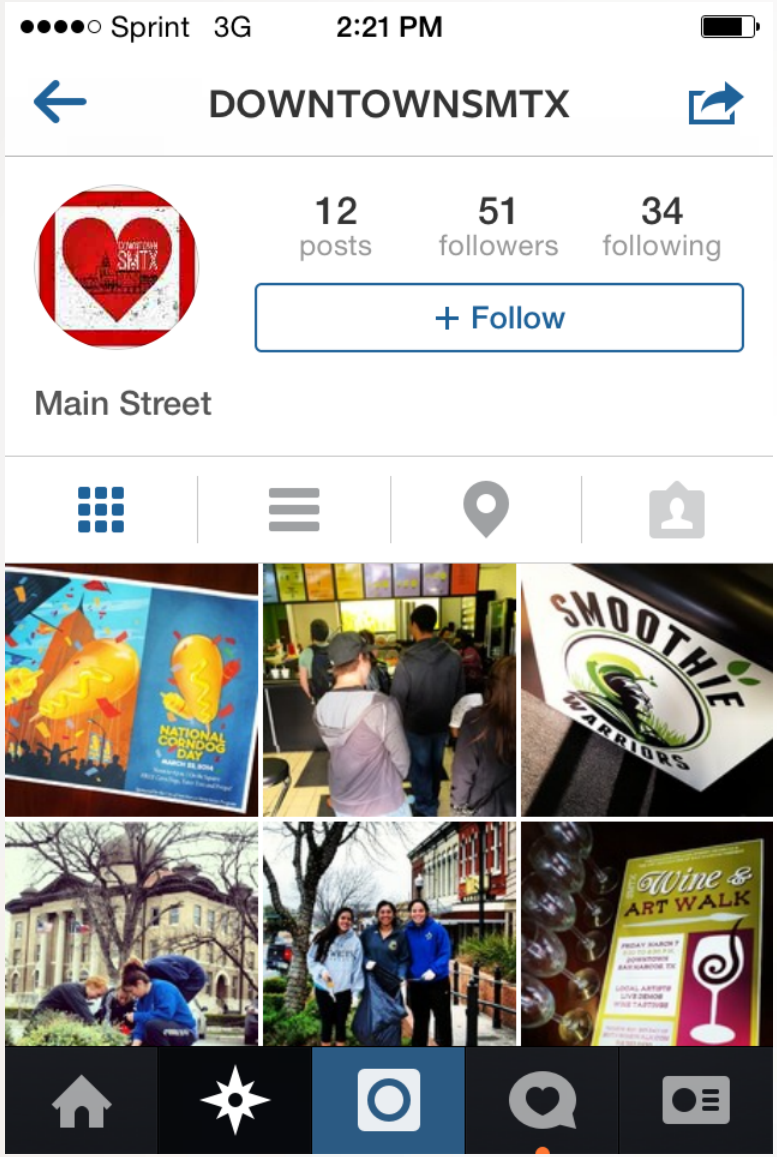
Source: http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/important-instagram-stats/#.U4i3Uii2120

How to Use Instagram

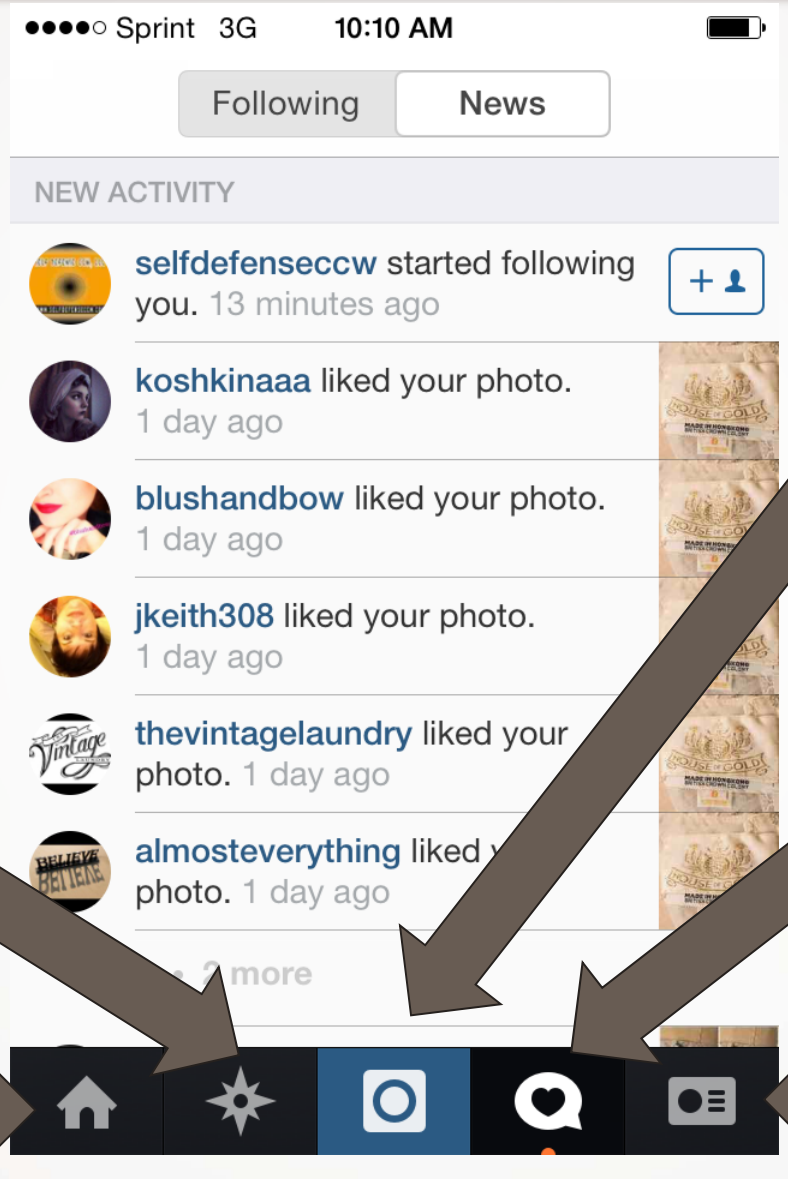
- Share compelling content
- Tell your story
- Post consistently (3-5 times per week)
- Engage with the Community
- Use Instagram to report live during events

Instagram Example for Main Street

Instagram Example for Main Street



Instagram for Main Street



Search

Allows you to find users or hashtags

Home

Takes you to your news feed

Camera

Allows you to take photos or chose from photos in your camera roll. Trick – you can email yourself photos and save to your camera roll!

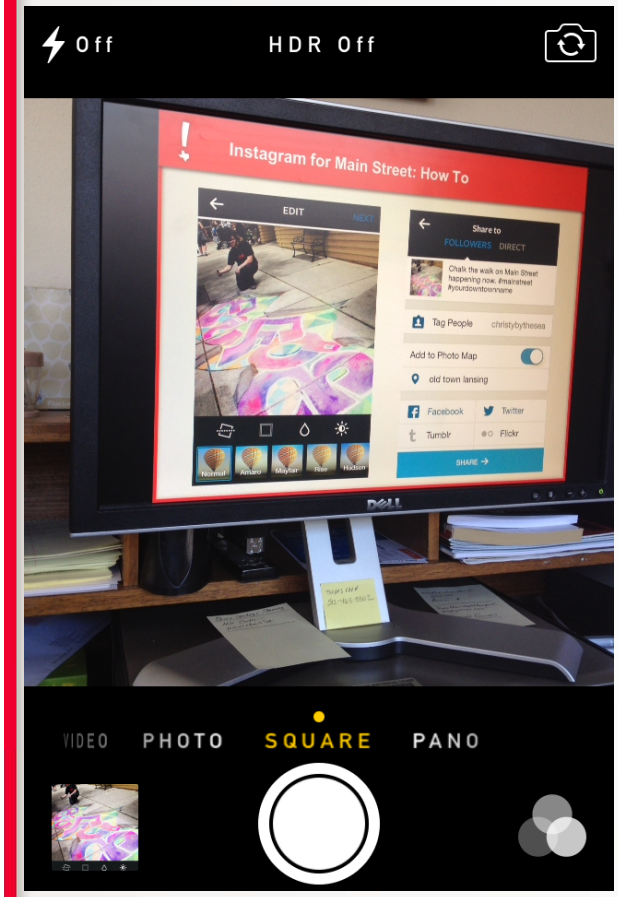
Heart

Shows you who likes & comments on your photos and what your followers are commenting and loving.

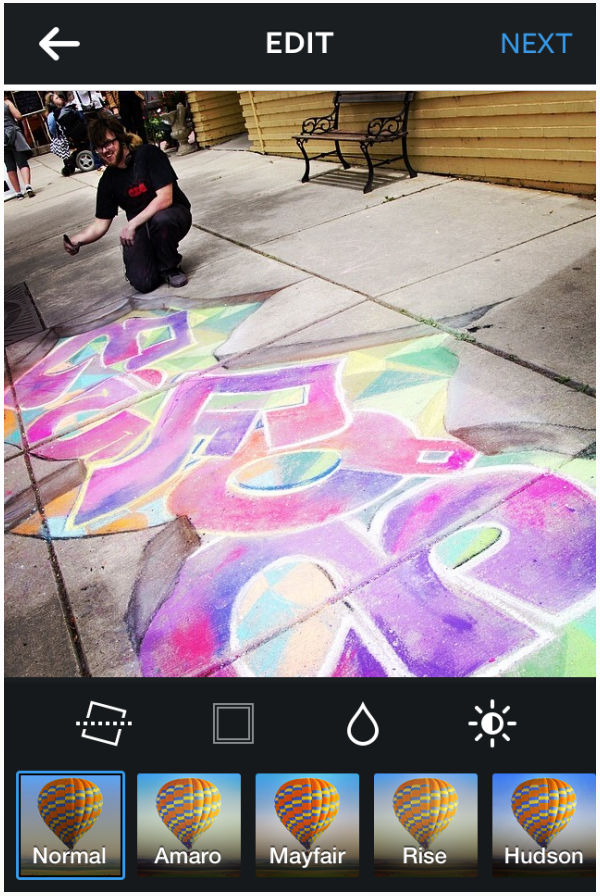
Your Feed

Takes you to your own profile

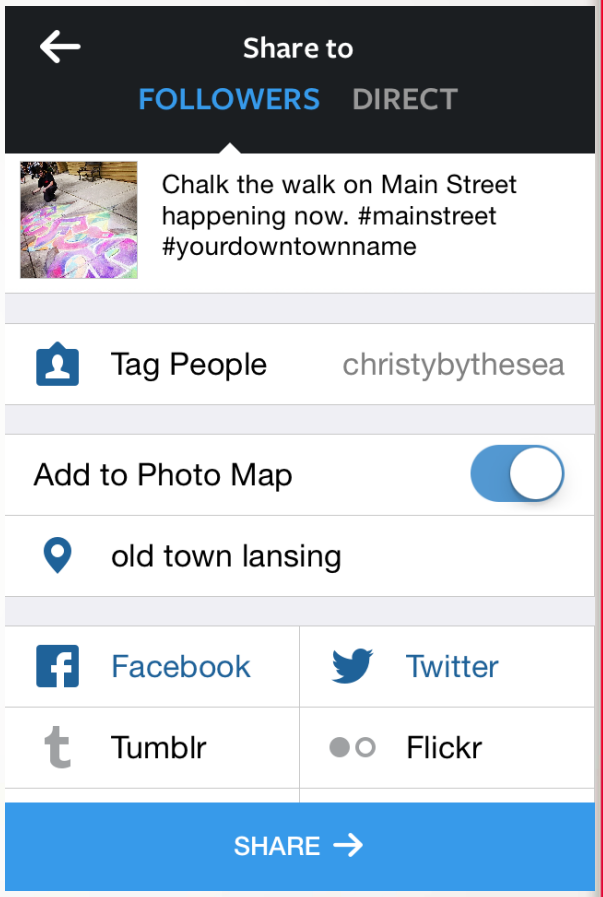
Instagram for Main Street: How To



Take or upload a photo

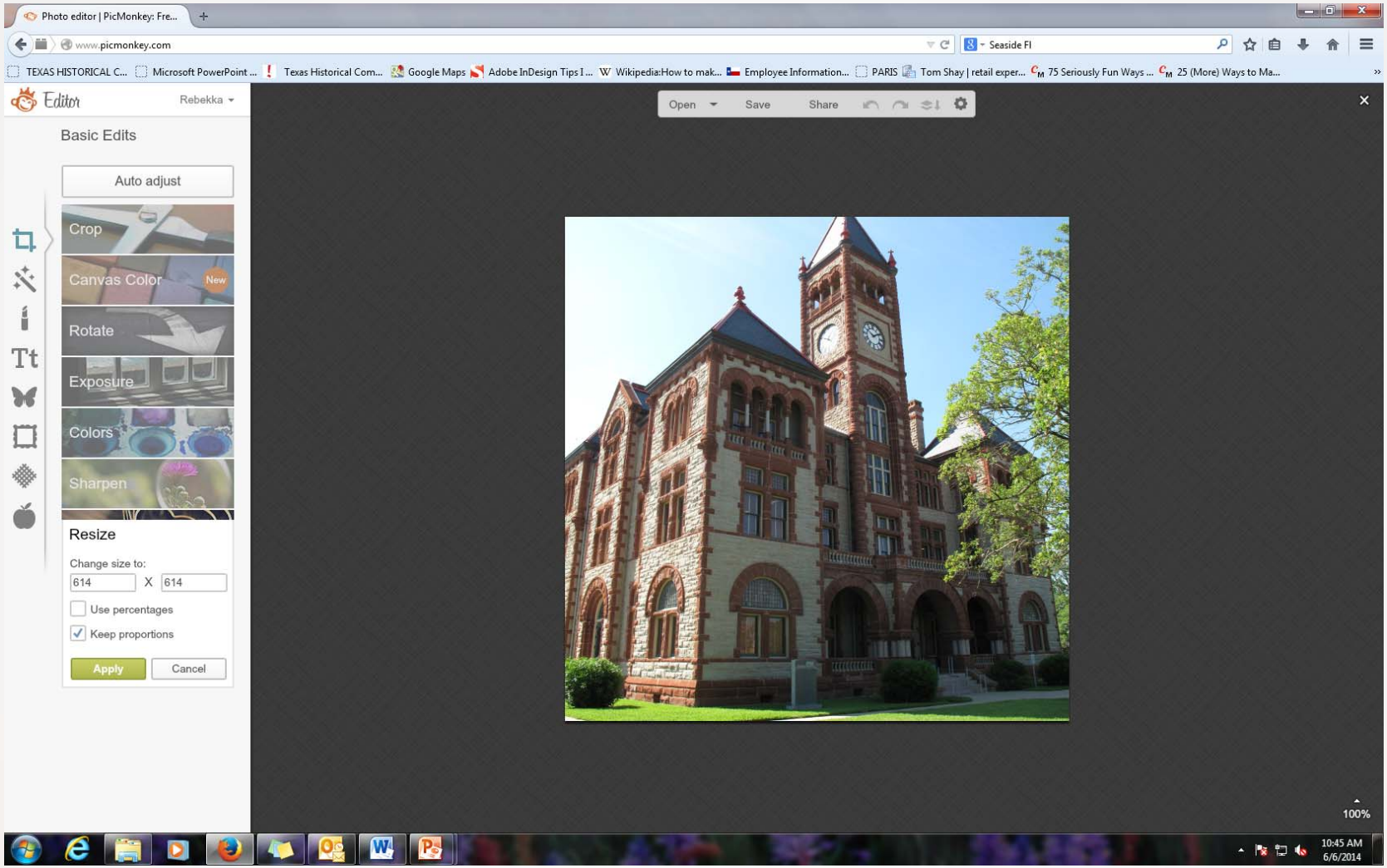


Edit photo – filters, crop, light, etc.



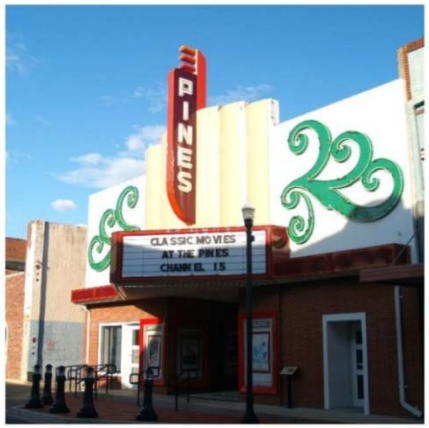
Write caption, tag, and share

Use Software such as PicMonkey with IG



Free Software that allows you to add text, crop, color correct, “photoshop”, etc.

Instagram Tips and Tricks: PicMonkey



Instagram Dimensions = 614x614

Pinterest

Why use Pinterest?

- 3rd largest social network in the US
- 15% of all American internet users are on Pinterest
- Drives more website traffic than google plus, youtube, and linked in COMBINED.

Why Pinterest?

- Over 70 million users on Pinterest
- 80% of users are female
- Average time spent on Pinterest per visit = 14.2 minutes (98 minutes per month)
- 9 million users have their pinterest accounts linked to their facebook accounts
- Less than 20% of pins contain faces
- Most pinned topics = food, crafts, places
- 75% of pinterest traffic is coming through mobile apps

Source: http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/pinterest-stats/3/#.U4i7Sii2120

Is Pinterest right for you?

- Do you have products to sell? – retail
- Great visuals – photos or videos
- Build awareness of your brand

- Pin 5-10 times per day
- Only use quality images

- Photos are liked 2x as much as text

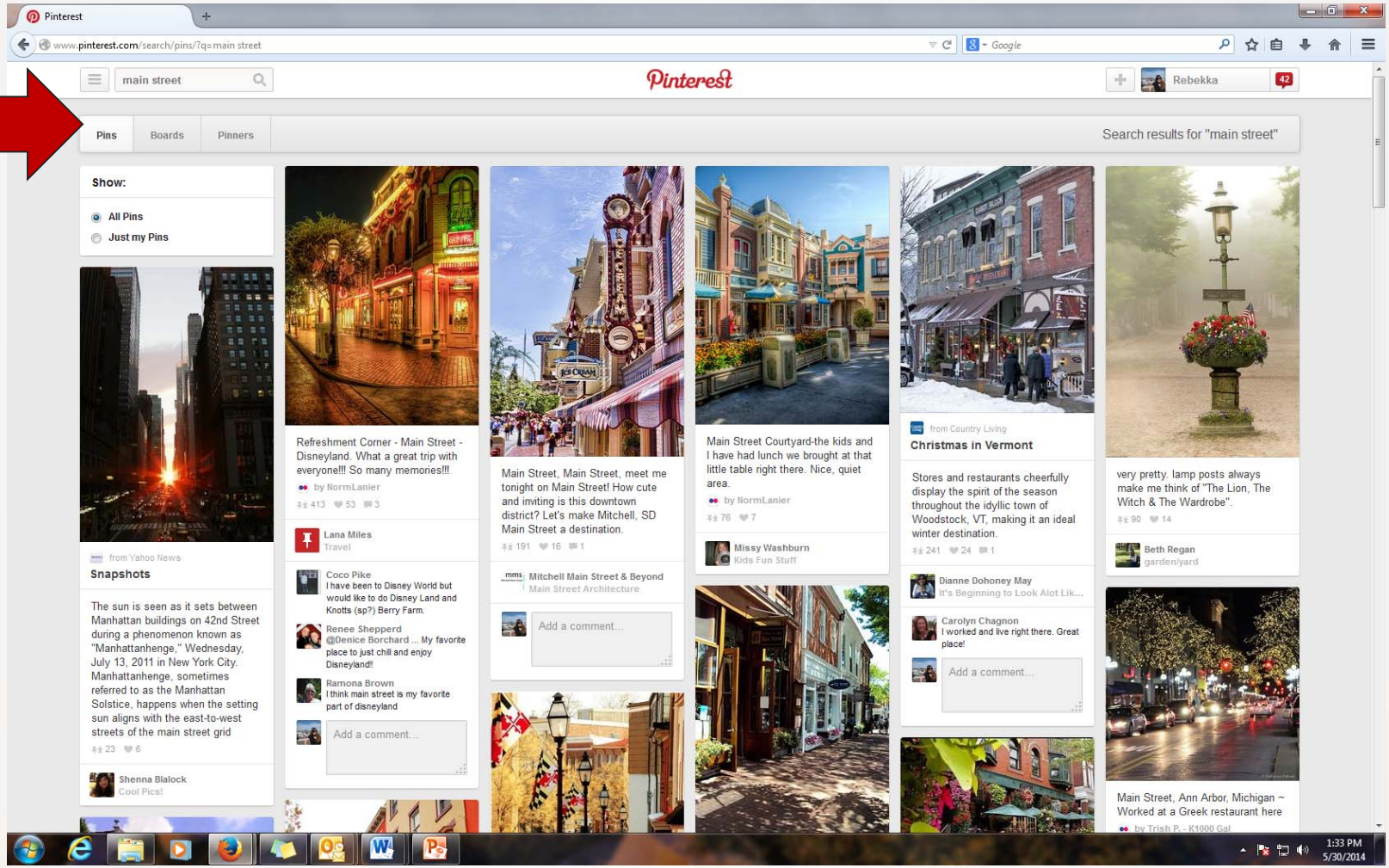
Types of Content to Share for Main Street

All are visual – photos or videos

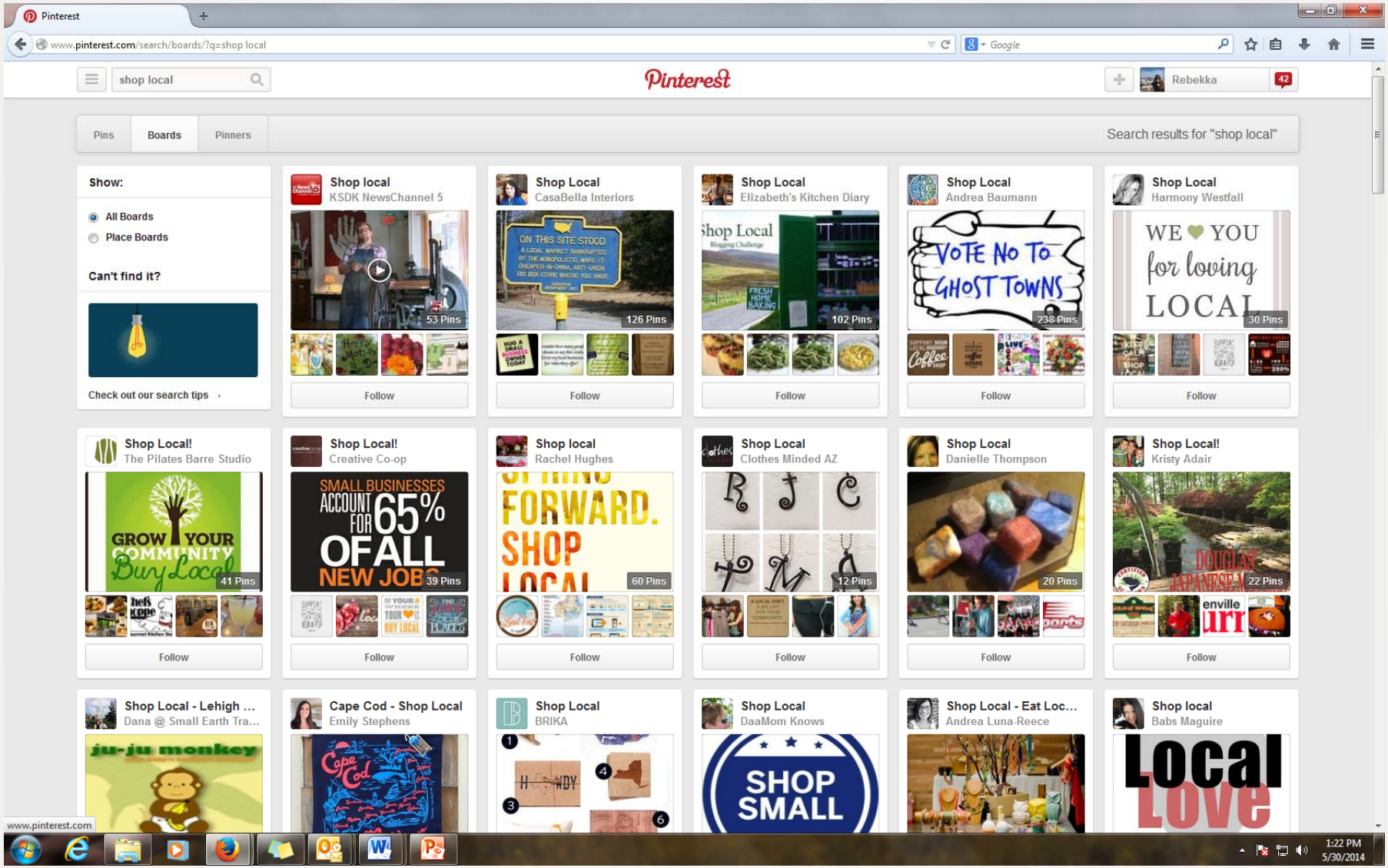
- Products – from your retailers, photos of food from restaurants, photos of service businesses in action
- Inspiration – historic photos and ideas for your downtown
- Staff, customers, behind the scenes
- Useful, interesting, or helpful content – infographics, links to blog posts, quotes, tips, or fast facts/statistics

Ideas for Pinterest Boards

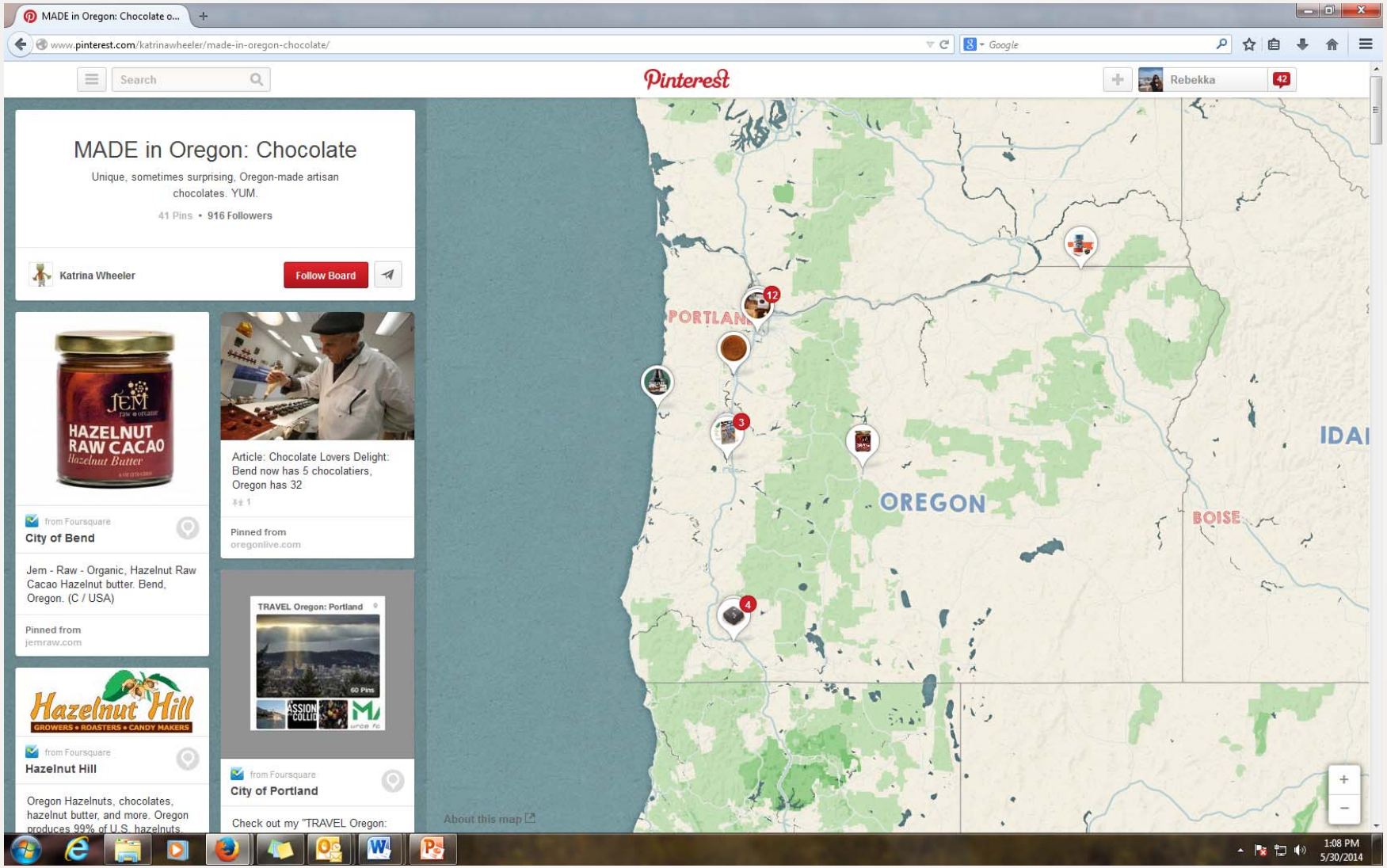
Research – Pins, Board, and Pinners



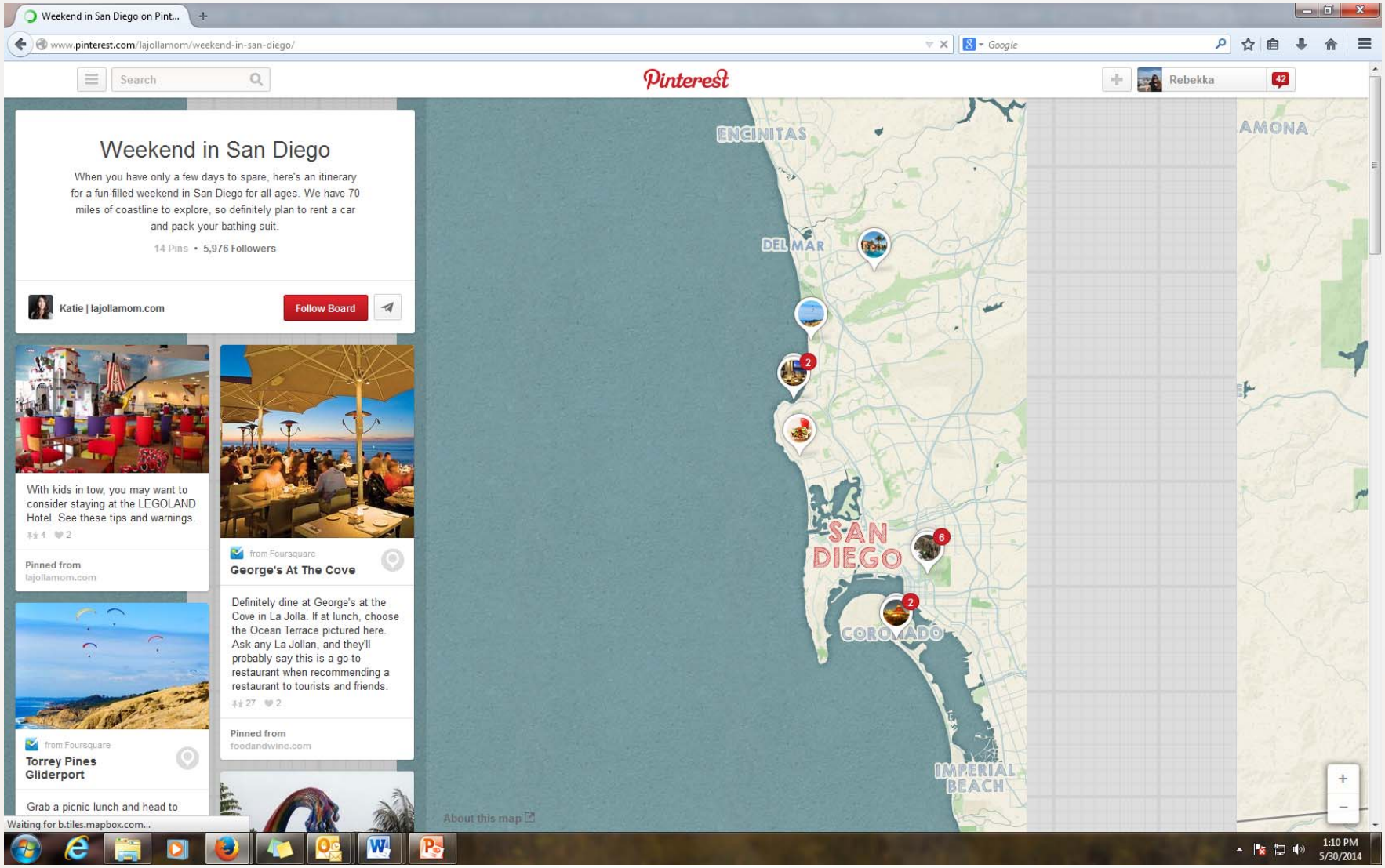
Shop Local Campaigns



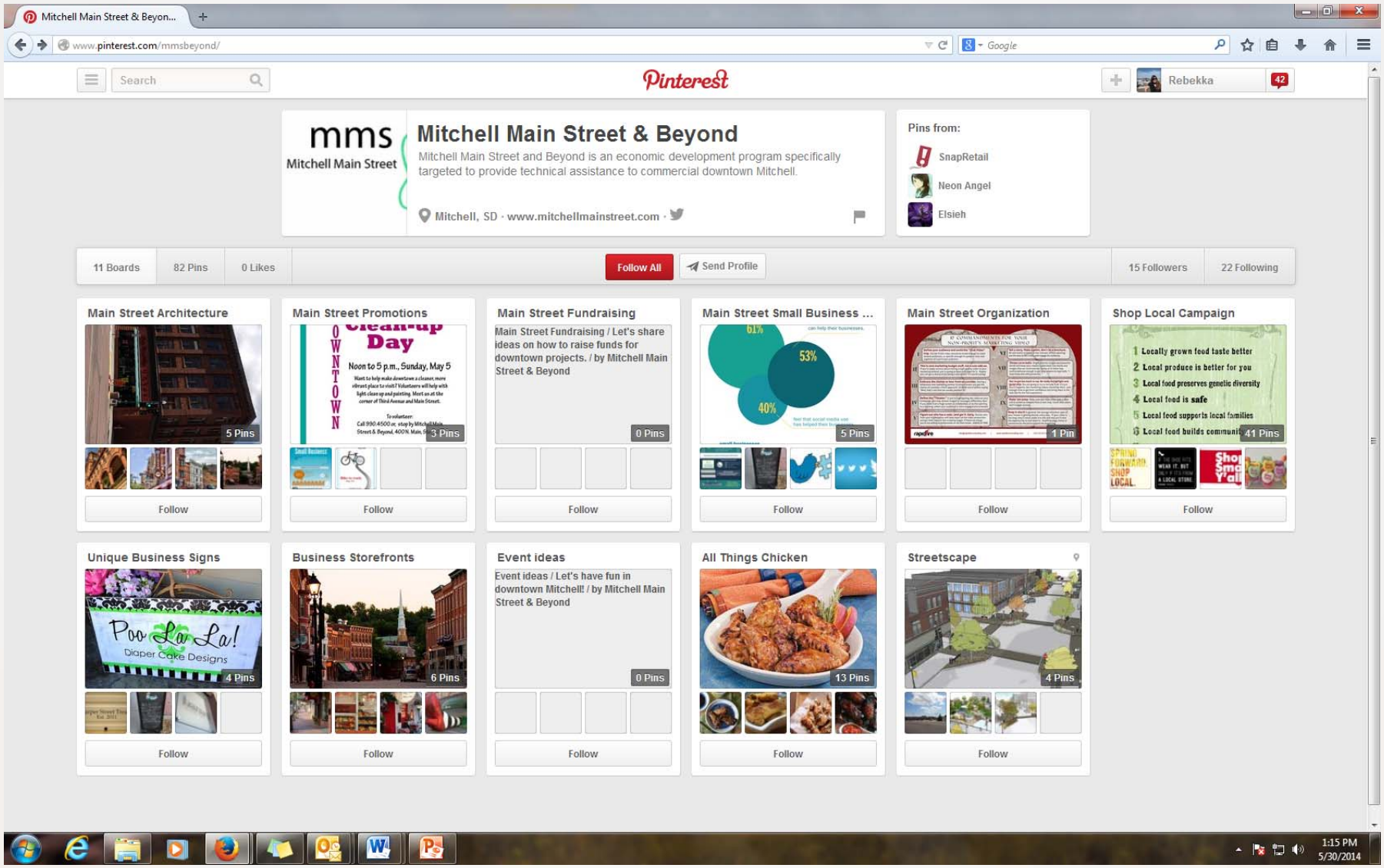
Add Your Local Businesses to a map



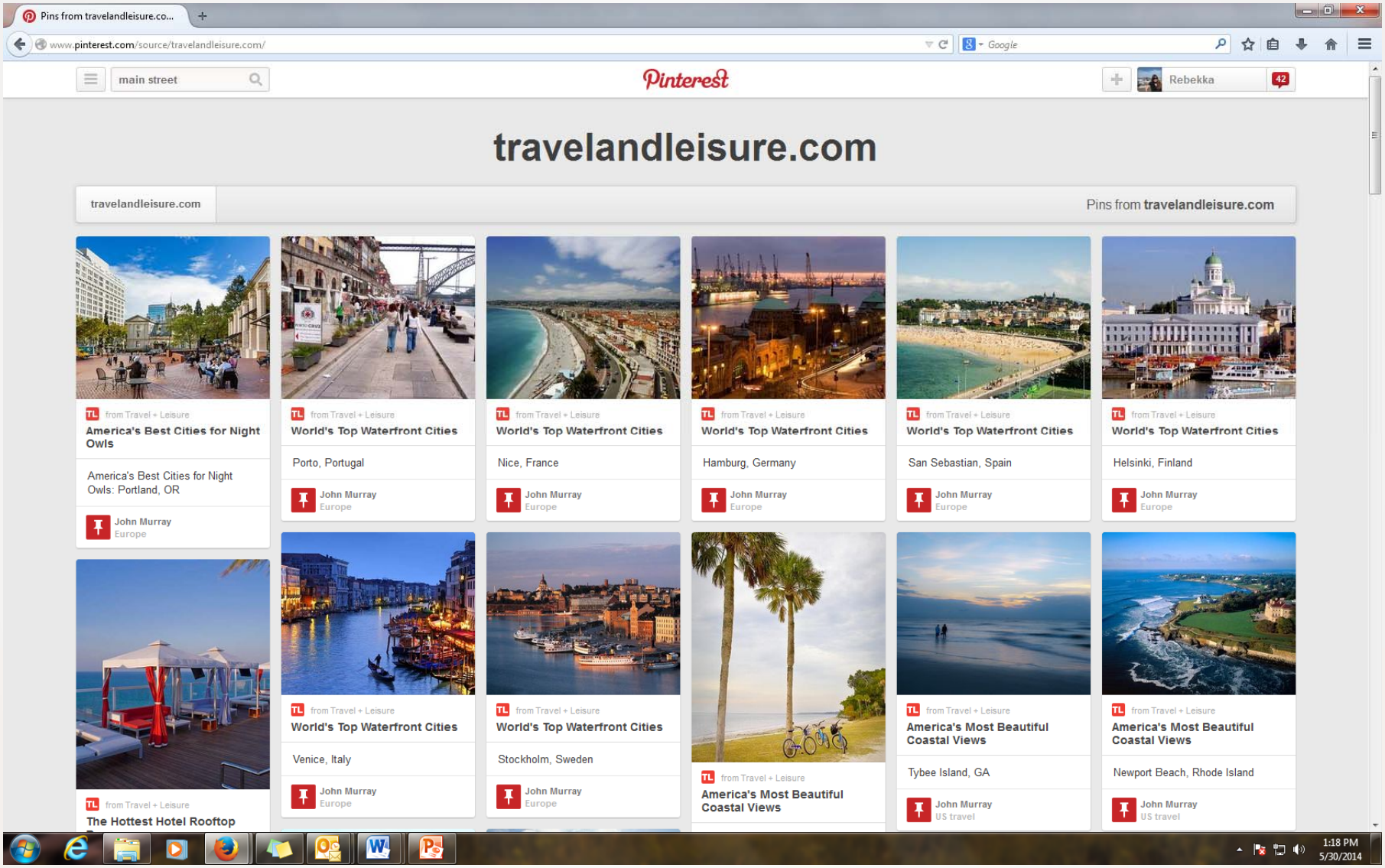
Promote Tourism in your Town



Education and Idea Sharing



Travel Boards



Google +

Pros and Cons of Google Plus

343 million monthly active users

Pros:

SEO

Showcase in Google Local

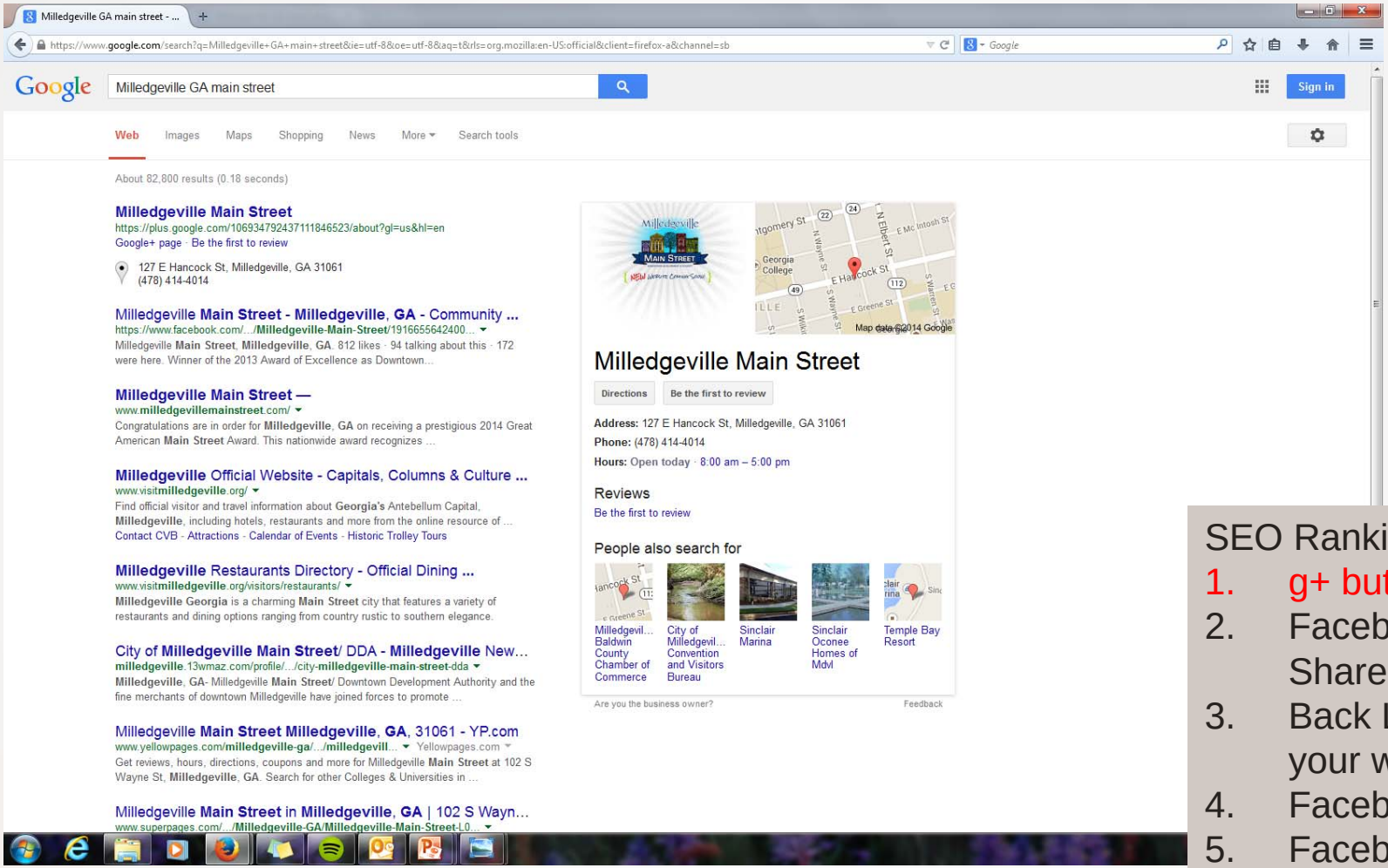
Easy to add same content from other channels such as facebook, instagram, etc.

Cons:

Low Reach

Poor Social Media Track Record

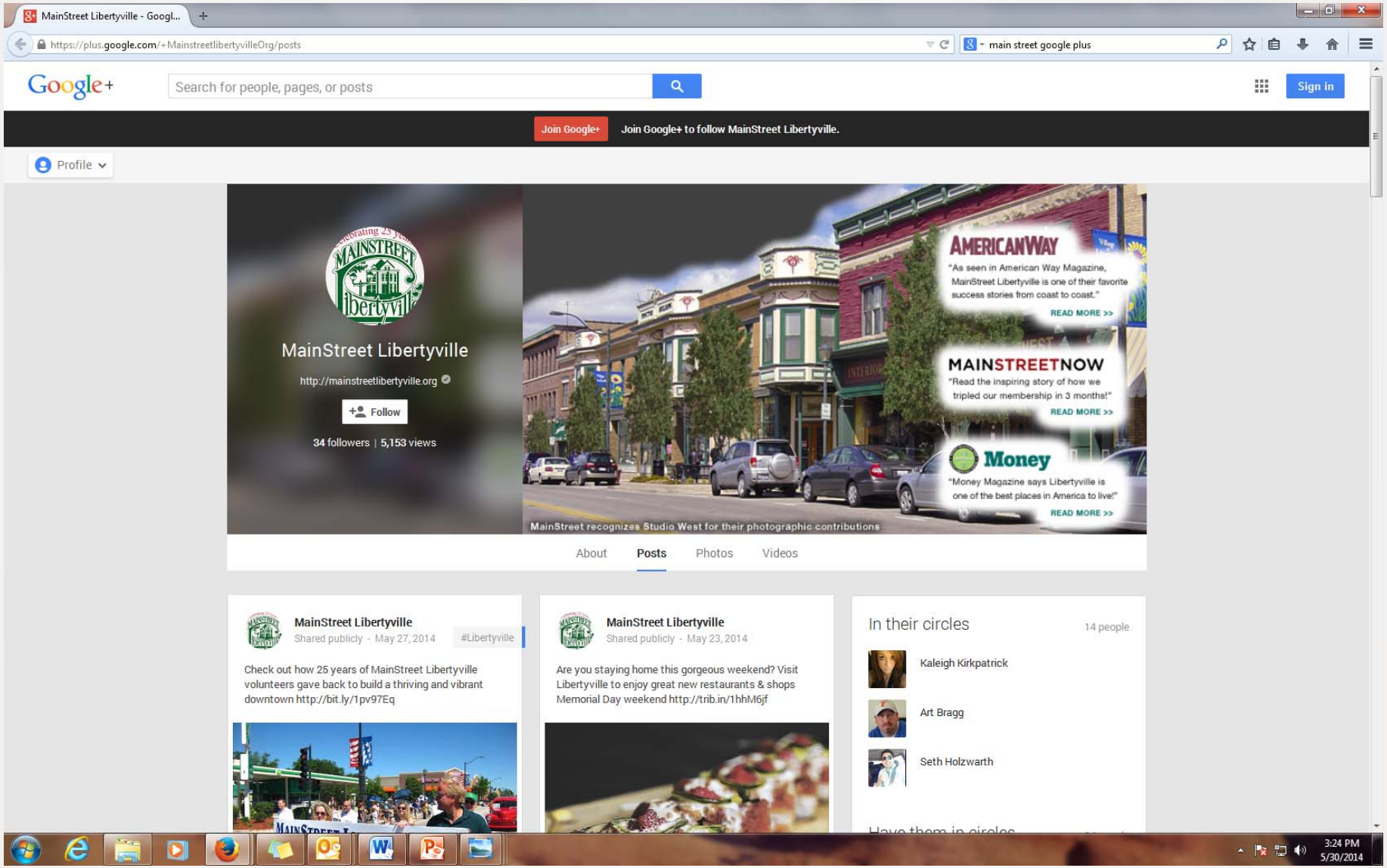
Search Results for Main Street Program with G+



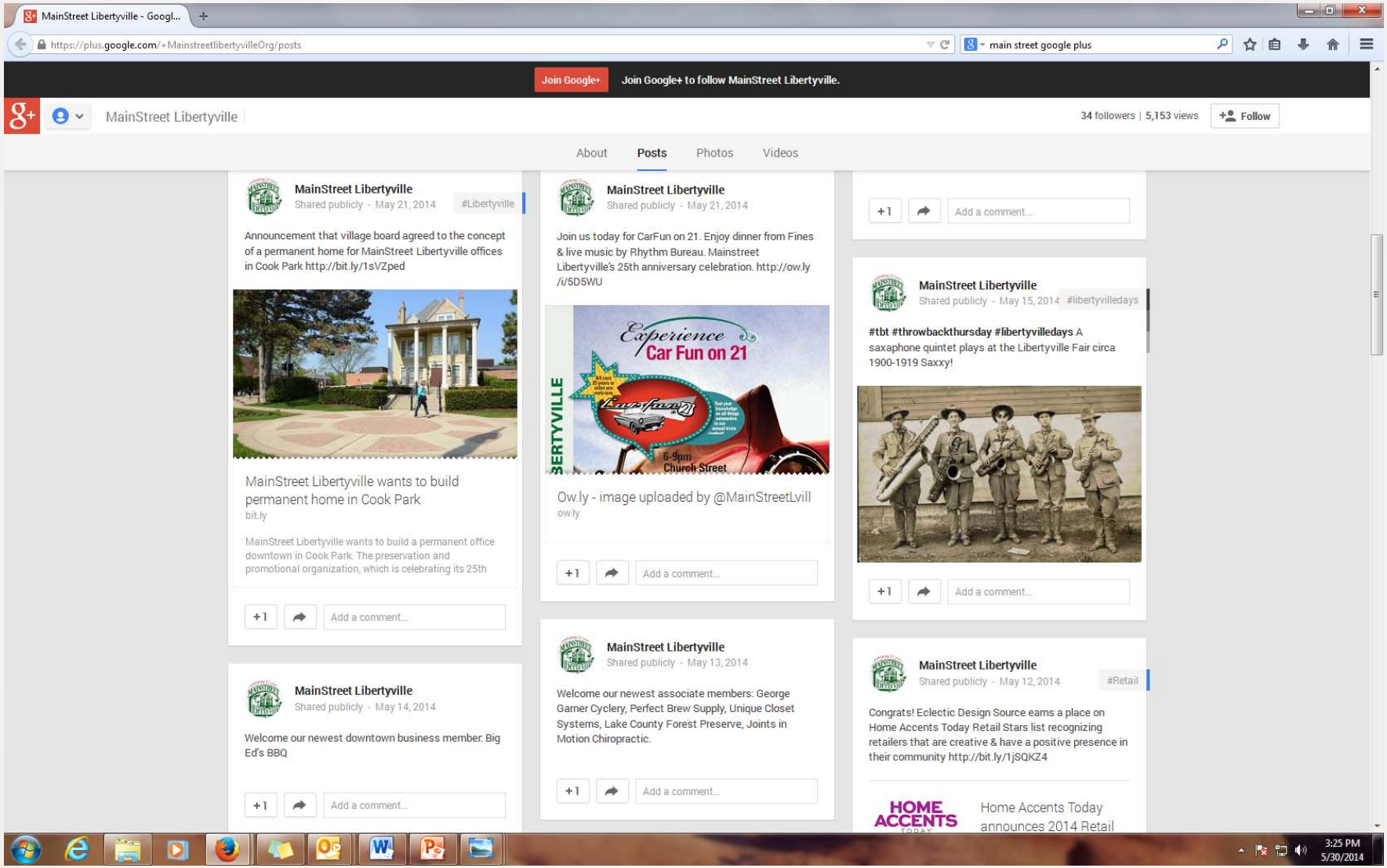
SEO Rankings*

1. g+ button/page
2. Facebook Shares
3. Back Links to your website
4. Facebook Total
5. Facebook Likes
6. Pinterest
7. Twitter
12. Length of URL

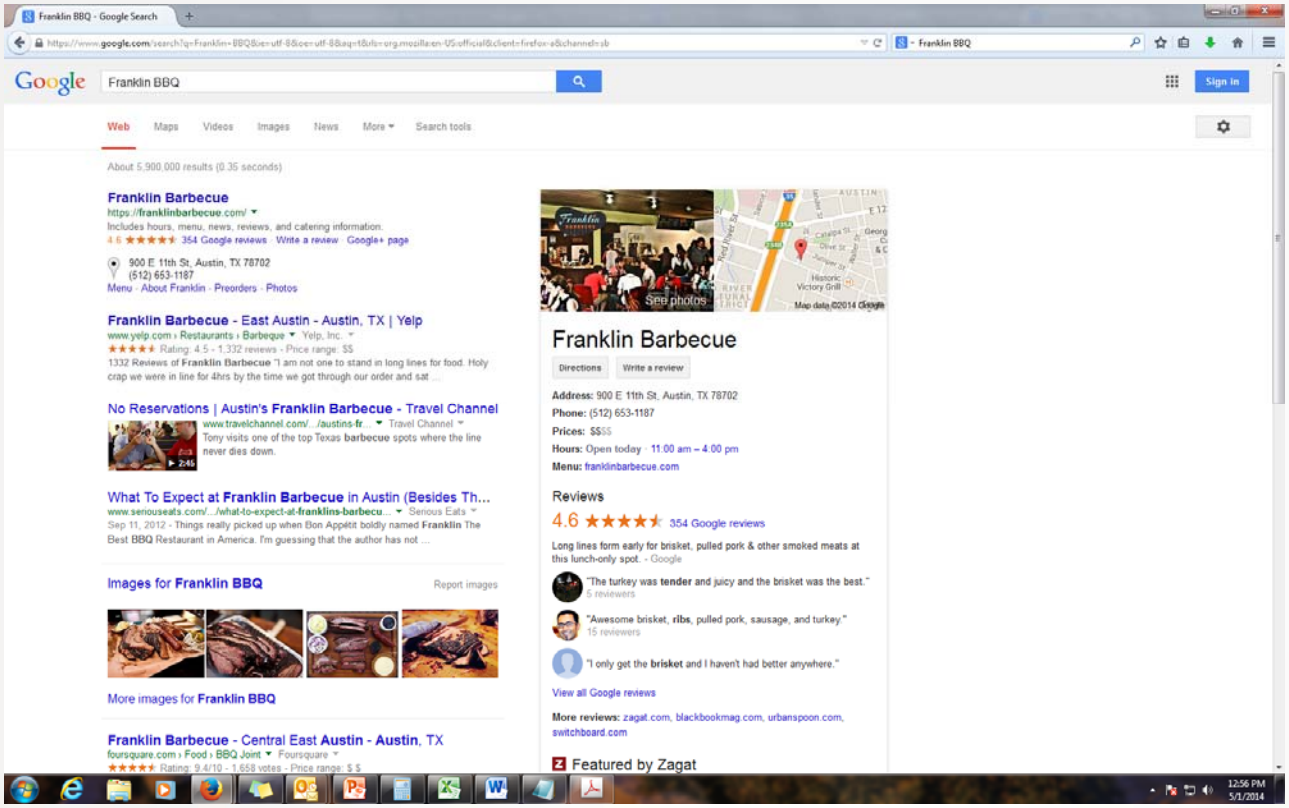
Main Street G+ Example



G+ Content Examples



Work with Your Local Businesses to Claim their Google Local Pages



For businesses: When you display content on your g+ page, it also gets shown on google search and google maps

Google Places
https://www.google.com/business/placesforbusiness/

Your Main Street Brand

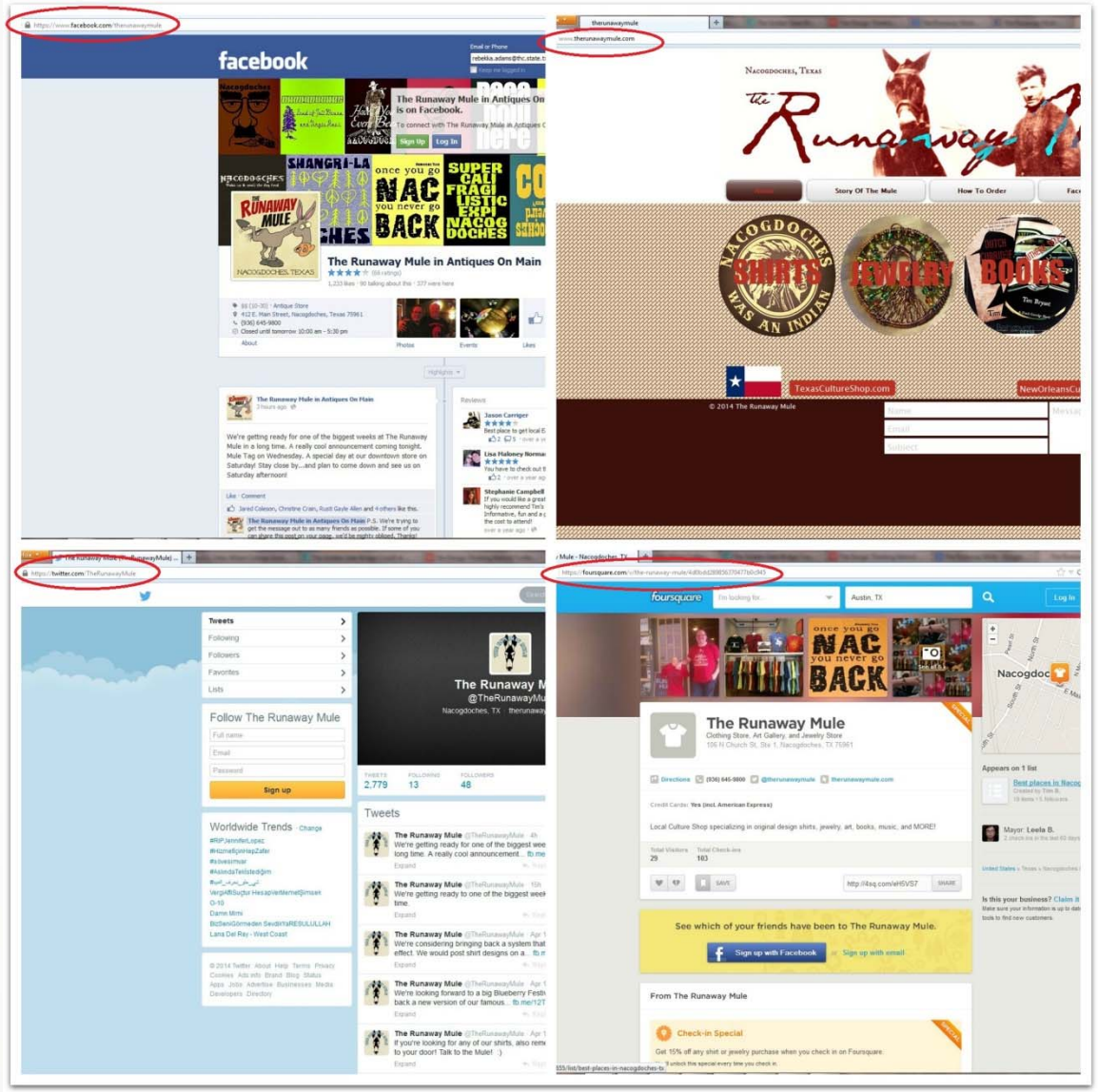
&

Social Media

Keep Your Brand CONSISTENT

Consistency is KEY.

ALL of your social media handles and URL should be consistent



Integrate Your Channels

- Integrate your facebook/twitter into your website (top right third of your home page –not on your contact page)
- Make sure your correct website is on your social media channels
- Check all links (in multiple browsers)
- Cross promote your channels

I understand social media. Now what?

- Create a Game Plan & Stick to It
- Treat each channel as an individual entity – follow up with conversations on all channels
- Embrace mishaps
- Track & Talk!

If you build it, they will come…right?

Market your website and social media channels.

How to engage fans IRL?

- Logos and links on all emails/e-newsletter, and website
- Cards in bags at local merchants
- Signs in stores/clings on storefront windows

Editorial Calendar

- Plan weekly
- Take time on Friday to think about next week
- Be Flexible
- Leave 1-2 posts open for something that comes up
- Keep a list of posts that can happen anytime

Overwhelmed? Social Media Time-Saving Tips

- Curate content.
- Find tools to manage and schedule updates.
- Go mobile.
- Keep it SIMPLE
- Pick one network and do it well.
- Share your story

Ways for Main Street to help your local businesses:

- Have businesses sign up for a social media audit. It is often best to have a new set of eyes looking at something you do every day. Have your Main Street Promotions committee get involved. Have them each assess a few businesses in your community and then deliver suggestions on how they can improve their social media.

- Create a closed facebook group for businesses to discuss happenings on Main Street.

- Make sure to share and repost information from your businesses to your Main Street social media sites.

- Develop a social media mentoring program that pairs experienced social media businesses with inexperienced businesses.

- Hold a Main Street facebook contest for the business owners. Have them share their neighbor's statuses. The business that shares more content in the month wins a prize. This encourages shoppers to head to the district for more than one business.

Questions?

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