AI and Creativity Are Powering Pinterest’s Consumer Revolution

Consumer engagement has entered a new era where inspiration meets action, and platforms like Pinterest are leading the charge. As a leading visual discovery tool, Pinterest combines creativity, personalization, and commerce to redefine how brands connect with users.

In this episode of The Speed of Culture podcast, host Matt Britton is joined by Martha Welsh, Pinterest’s chief strategy officer, to explore how the company uses AI, trend prediction, and strategic partnerships to build an authentic, shoppable experience for users while delivering value to advertisers.

With Gen Z shaping the platform’s largest growth segment, brands have unprecedented opportunities to tap into emerging trends and insights.

“Pinterest is a place where you get to be authentic,” she says on the podcast. “You’re not trying to be on display for others. It’s really a platform for you, and I think that’s resonating with users now more than ever.”

With over 15 years of experience in finance, tech, and strategy roles, Martha has been instrumental in evolving Pinterest into a full-funnel platform for brands and consumers alike. Previously, Martha held strategic roles at Goldman Sachs and Google, where she honed her expertise in innovation, partnerships, and transformational change.

Her ability to navigate ambiguity and drive impactful outcomes positions her as a leading voice in consumer engagement and digital transformation.

Tune in to The Speed of Culture Podcast to hear how Pinterest is redefining inspiration, creativity, and commerce through innovation, AI, and authentic user experiences.

Key takeaways:

[00:01:24] From Window Shopping to Actionable Inspiration – Pinterest has redefined the digital shopping experience by evolving from a passive "window shopping" platform into an actionable marketplace. Martha explains how Pinterest bridges the gap between inspiration and purchase, turning the joy of discovery into seamless action. For brands, this means unparalleled opportunities to connect with consumers when inspiration strikes.

[00:02:39] Gen Z's Positive Playground – Pinterest's focus on positivity, authenticity, and self-expression has struck a chord with Gen Z, who make up over 40% of Pinterest's user base. Unlike some other social platforms, Pinterest provides a judgment-free zone where users can explore their creativity and curate ideas for themselves. This shift highlights Pinterest's enduring relevance and its ability to meet the evolving needs of a younger, highly engaged audience.

[00:09:15] Pinterest Predicts: The Trends Before the Trends – With an 80% accuracy rate, Pinterest Predicts offers unparalleled insights into emerging trends before they hit the mainstream. Martha highlights standout 2025 trends like "Peak Travel," a cultural shift toward escapism in mountain destinations, and "Cherry Coated," a bold embrace of red across fashion, food, and decor. Unlike fleeting fads, these trends endure and cut across multiple verticals, providing valuable insights for brands looking to build impactful campaigns. For example, a beverage brand could align its

marketing with the “Cherry Coated” trend by introducing a limited-edition red-themed product, seamlessly connecting with consumers’ evolving tastes.

[00:07:27] AI-Powered Advertising: Performance Plus — Pinterest’s integration of AI through its Performance Plus suite is revolutionizing advertising on the platform. Martha explains how these tools automate creative optimization, ensure ads feel native to users, and drive relevance, resulting in better performance for advertisers and a more engaging experience for users. By doubling ad clicks year-over-year, Pinterest has proven its ability to deliver both upper- and lower-funnel results. For brands, the takeaway is clear: Investing in AI-powered, visually native ads on Pinterest can amplify engagement and conversions, while aligning with consumer intent at every stage of the buying journey.

[00:17:30] Strategy Meets Execution: Driving Transformational Change — Martha’s role at Pinterest highlights how crucial it is to align strategy with execution to create real impact. She oversees areas like enterprise strategy, global partnerships, user support, and in-house incubation teams, making sure every initiative runs smoothly. One standout example is the “collages” feature, which allows users to create personalized, shoppable boards. This innovation, developed by Pinterest’s incubation team, has boosted both creativity and user engagement. It’s a clear example of how focusing on strategic alignment and constant innovation helps Pinterest stay ahead in today’s fast-changing digital world.

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