



# It pays to be positive

Ahead of a highly emotional election season and amidst a global pandemic, positive context matters—to your customers and to your brand's bottom line.





# Negative online spaces are draining your brand dollars.

If social media has taught us one thing, it's that unfiltered content drives negativity.<sup>1</sup> Without intentional moderation, platforms built on connecting people have—in the end—only polarized them.<sup>2</sup>

Here's the thing: Anger and divisiveness may encourage people to scroll (and troll!<sup>3</sup>). But they don't get people to *buy*.<sup>4</sup>

Negative environments make people less likely to remember, less likely to trust and less likely to purchase from brands.<sup>5+6</sup>

Our latest research suggests showing up in a more positive environment online drives impact at every stage of the purchase funnel. On Pinterest, you can reach more than 400 million people all over the world in a more positive environment.<sup>7</sup> Whether you're building brand awareness or driving conversions, it pays to be positive. Literally.

Source: 1. The sky is falling: Evidence of a negativity bias in the social transmission of information (Bebbington, MacLeod, Ellison, & Fay, 2017); 2. Exposure to opposing views on social media can increase political polarization (Bail, Argyle, Brown, Bumpus, Chen, Fallin Hunzaker, Lee, Mann, Merhout, & Volfovsky, 2018); 3. Partisan provocation: The role of partisan news use and emotional responses in political information sharing on social media (Hasell & Weeks, 2016); 4. Store environment and consumer purchase behavior: Mediating role of consumer emotions (Sherman, Mathur, & Smith, 1997); 5. Do violent video games impair the effectiveness of in-game advertisements? The impact of gaming environment on brand recall, brand attitude, and purchase intention (Yoo & Peña, 2011); 6. Marketing a health Brand on Facebook: Effects of reaction icons and user comments on brand attitude, trust, purchase intention, and eWOM intention (Lee, Phua, & Wu, 2020); 7. Pinterest, Global analysis, May 2020

# Positivity drives impact at every stage of the purchase funnel.

Our research shows that positive online environments have a halo effect on the brands that show up there—from awareness and sentiment to trust and purchase.

## 6 in 10

agree that they're more likely to:<sup>1</sup>



“I've been trying to increase the number of positive accounts or pages that I see [online]...With positive social media, I am more likely to try out new products, experiences.”<sup>2</sup>

— Male, 20s

# People are tired of fighting.

In the wake of an intense first half, we polled consumers to find out what they want from the internet right now. And we heard loud and clear that they're craving a different kind of online experience.



60% of adults surveyed agree that some parts of the internet feel dark and scary these days, particularly where people are fighting or arguing over their beliefs—and they're scared it's going to intensify.<sup>1</sup>

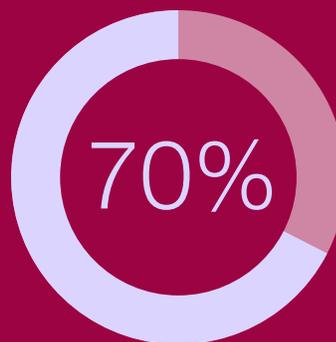


“I have no tolerance for negativity online. Before, when I wasn't so deliberate about my mental health, it didn't occur to me that I wasn't obligated to be subjected to [this negativity]. I would take it in because at the time I felt like I didn't have a choice.”<sup>2</sup>

—Female Pinner, 20s

# And they're holding brands accountable.

People want a more inspired internet. They're seeking out positivity online more than ever before—and they're holding brands to the same standards.



70% of consumers surveyed in the last six months agree: “Brands and companies that I see placing their profits before people during this crisis will lose my trust forever.”<sup>3</sup>

# Consider your ad's adjacent environment.

Gone are the days when consumers will turn a blind eye to negative neighboring content. Our research shows that in a post-COVID world, **the context in which brands appear matters.**

## 2 in 3

adults agree it's a brand's responsibility to advertise in safe, positive places and avoid negative content.<sup>1</sup>

"When I see brands in negative and unsafe places, I start to lose my confidence and trust in them that they come from a good place. As a result, I would be less likely to purchase from them."<sup>2</sup>

—Female, 20's



## The majority of more than 2,000 participants surveyed said:<sup>1</sup>



### Implied endorsement

If a brand or ad appears alongside harmful content, they assume the brand endorsed it or are aware they're adjacent to it.



### Negative perception

If a brand shows up alongside negative content, it negatively impacts their perception of the brand.



### Less trustworthy

If a brand appears next to misinformation (e.g. health or election content), it appears less trustworthy.

## Where are your ads showing up?

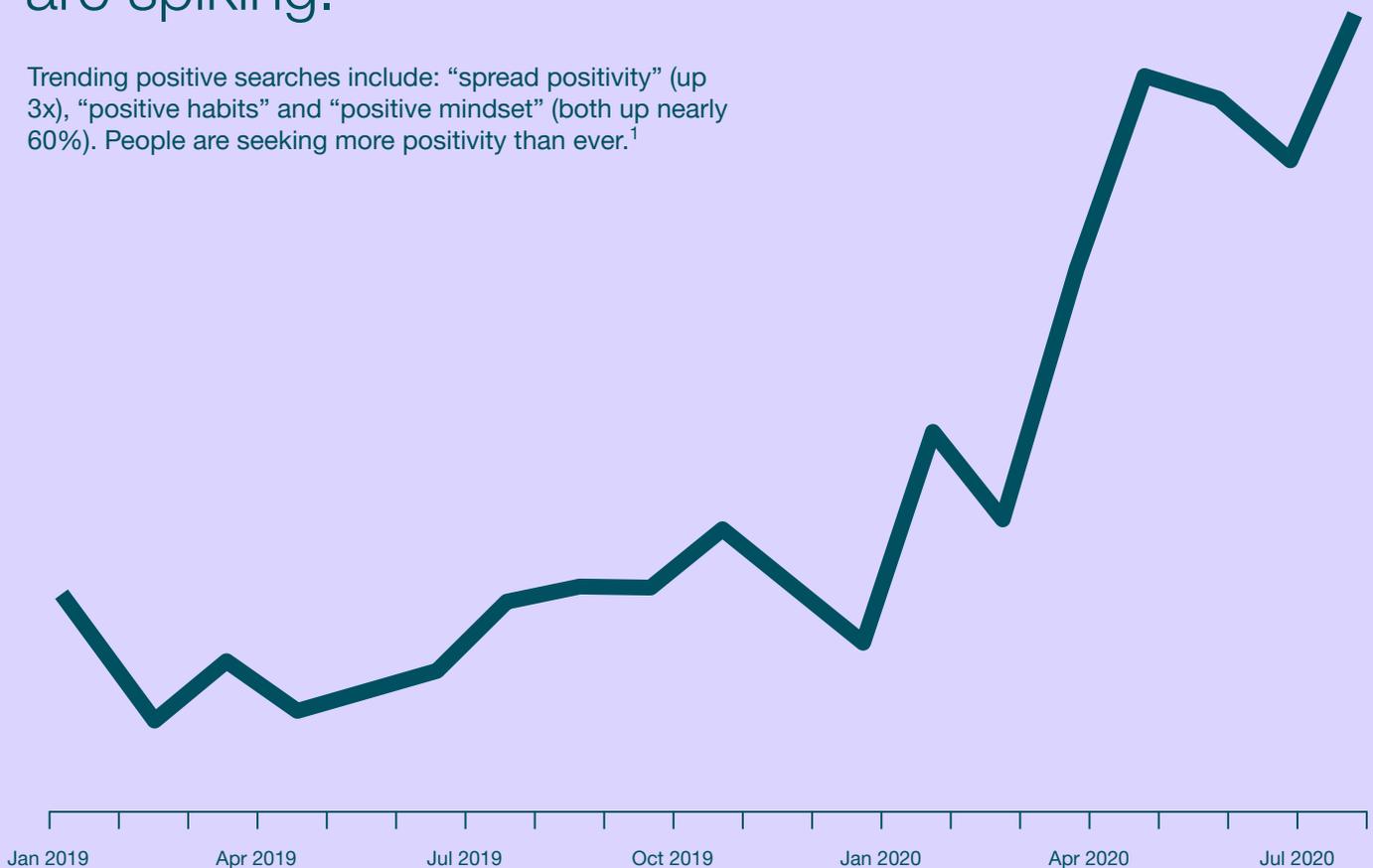
# Find positivity on Pinterest. Your audience already did.

Pinterest has always been a more positive place online. Since the pandemic began, that's only become more true. Searches and interest in "positivity" on Pinterest have jumped nearly 65% since this time last year, reaching their highest levels in the platform's history.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly  
**9 in 10**  
weekly Pinners say  
that Pinterest is an  
online oasis.<sup>2</sup>

## Searches for positivity are spiking.

Trending positive searches include: "spread positivity" (up 3x), "positive habits" and "positive mindset" (both up nearly 60%). People are seeking more positivity than ever.<sup>1</sup>



# Positivity starts with policy.

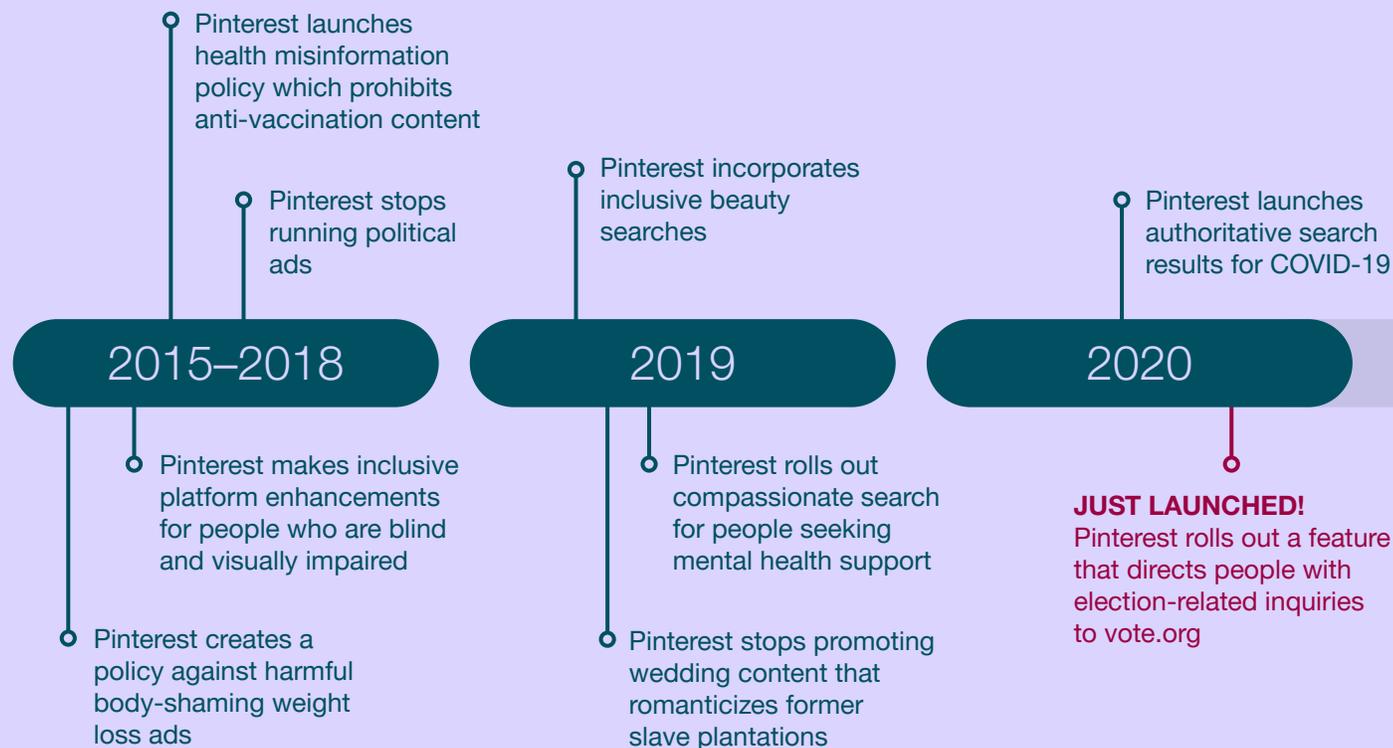
You can't have a positive platform without proactive content policies. We've always had a zero tolerance policy when it comes to harmful content and go the extra mile to ensure it has no home on our platform.

We have industry-leading positions on content safety, and we invest heavily in measures like machine learning technology to maintain it. If there's a search term that we've determined presents a risk, we'll prevent your ads from appearing alongside it.

A timely example of this: we don't monetize elections-related content. That means throughout the fall we won't show ads when you search for common election-related terms like presidential or vice-presidential candidate names, "polling place" and "vote."

## A history of our proactive policy decisions.

Here's a look back at some of our policy decisions:



# Success story: The Laughing Cow

**Creative logo placement**  
Subtle branding drives home overarching positivity message



**Prominent product focus**  
A strong product focus is made playful with partially unwrapped packaging

**Playful copy**  
Headline introduces new brand purpose with a light and fun-loving tone

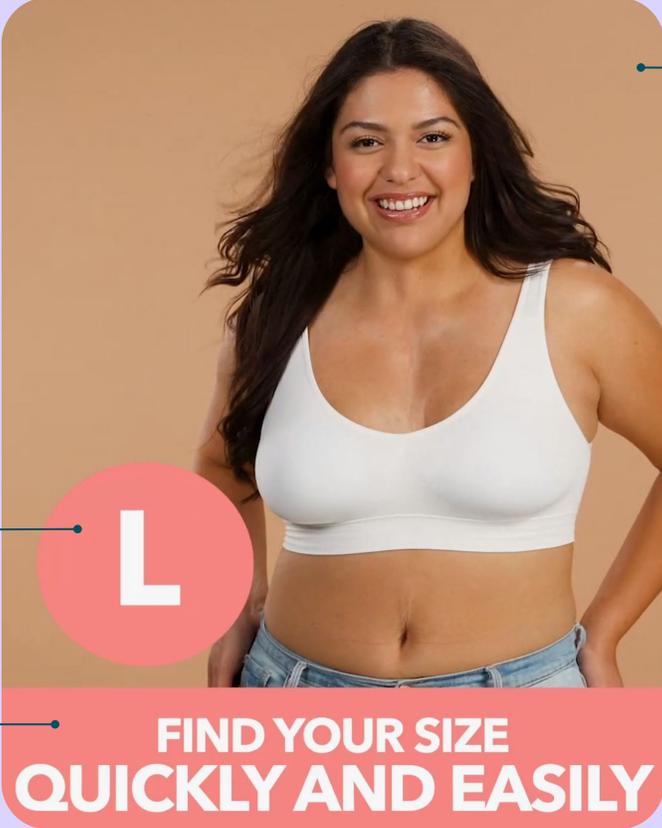
## Drive brand love with feel-good content.

To launch a new brand purpose, new packaging and a reformulated recipe, The Laughing Cow from Bel Brands USA took to Pinterest with a video campaign highlighting the light-hearted nature of the better-for-you snack. The video Pin completion rate was 47% more efficient than the food industry benchmark,<sup>1</sup> proving the power of standard video ads that align to positive content.

### **Act on the example**

There's no 20% rule here—get creative with bold typeface, playful branding and product imagery to bring your brand's ethos to life while infusing positivity throughout.

# Success story: Shapermint



**Size callout**  
Sizing cue featured directly on the Pin

**Actionable CTA**  
A clear call-to-action makes shopping simple

**Inclusive imagery**  
Model is pictured with confidence and ease

## Boost your bottom line with body positive ads.

While some brands see our ad policies as a constraint, Shapermint saw them as an opportunity to unlock even more positive creative, and as a result, more effective advertising.

Pinterest doesn't allow body-shaming content or weight-loss ads, which is why the shapewear and intimates marketplace—an active advocate for women's body positivity—viewed our platform as the perfect place to take its message to the next level. Together with Shapermint, we worked to create ads featuring women of all body types and straightforward sizing cues.

The impact? The campaign yielded 200M impressions per quarter, and as a result Shapermint increased their investment 4x from Q1 to Q2. Furthermore, approximately 90% of all Shapermint digital ads—used across all channels—follow the Pinterest standards and reinforce Shapermint's position on body positivity.<sup>1</sup>

### Act on the example

Imbue ads with positivity by depicting models in a positive light—both literally and figuratively. Shapermint chose models with positive expressions and added a bright, warm filter to the creative.

# Political campaigns on other platforms will dilute your ad spend.

This fall, popular social networks and online video platforms will run political advertising that will likely crowd auctions and make your ads more expensive.<sup>1</sup>

Digital political ad spending on competitor platforms (millions)<sup>2</sup>

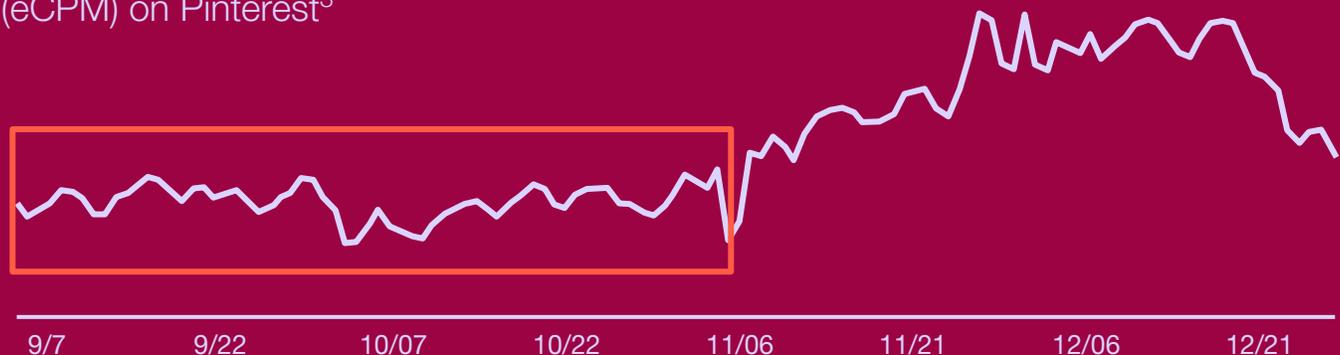


## No political ads on Pinterest means your dollar goes further.

September through October is already one of the most efficient times of year for ad campaigns on Pinterest, as illustrated by the graph below.

To take it a step further: on Pinterest there are no political ads. This means your brand doesn't have to compete with election advertising and your content doesn't have to compete with election messages.

2019 H2 Retail Ad Cost Effectiveness (eCPM) on Pinterest<sup>3</sup>





# More positive. More efficient. More purchases.

In a post-COVID world, the majority of adults agree it's a brand's responsibility to advertise in safe, positive places.<sup>1</sup>

This isn't only a moralistic argument anymore. Our research proves that when ads show up in a more positive environment online, they can drive impact at every stage of the purchase funnel. And this election season, brands will likely save money when they show up on a platform free from election ads and partisan negativity.

Whether you're building brand awareness, consumer trust or driving conversions, **it pays to be positive.**



92% of Pinterest advertisers surveyed ranked Pinterest first on overall reputation amongst 8 leading platforms—nearly 20 points above the nearest competitor.<sup>2</sup>



From a platform responsibility point of view, they are the absolute leader in being a proactive responsible platform, both in terms of protecting users of the platform and the public at large and the interest of advertisers. And they absolutely don't get enough credit for that.



—Joshua Lowcock  
May 2020 in **Forbes**

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