

# Using Group Boards and Cross-Promotion to Grow to 1.4M Pinterest Followers

When browsing for cutting edge tips on photography, countless photographers turn to Gabrielle Orcutt Photography. Gabrielle (Gabby) Orcutt highlights every type of portrait photography on her inspirational Pinterest boards, from boudoir to baby.

This Pinterest influencer **increased her follower base by 435,301 in the last six months**. This 43% growth was in part spurred on by a large growth in Repins. An additional **330,165 Repins** put Gabby's content in front of more of her target following.

For her incredible growth, we are awarding Gabby a Tailwind Takeoff Award!



As an early adopter, Gabby used Pinterest to build inspiration boards aimed at refining her photography skills and sparking ideas for upcoming photo shoots. Starting out, she never paid attention to follower count or analyzed metrics. Instead, she invested in the Pinterest community, making friends with both local and industry related Pinners.

It wasn't until a fellow Pennsylvanian Pinner and personal friend, Michael Wurm, commented about his follower stats that Gabby even thought to track her follower count.

**"I had 700,000 followers. It completely blew my mind."**



To understand exactly how mind blowing this following was for Gabby, it helps to know that Gabby lives in a log cabin in the woods of Rockton, PA, a town with less than a thousand residences and not a single stoplight.

Looking back, Gabby attributed her initial growth in part to collaborations with Michael's Pinterest account. While offering separate services, interior design and photography, they targeted a similar demographic. "We fed off of each other."

In addition to following and engaging with large accounts, Gabby emphasized the importance of Pinning what she loved as a key component of her early success.

**Today this small town girl celebrates a Pinterest following of over 1.4 million.**



*"Pinterest grounds me. I am multi-passionate. With Pinterest, I can throw ideas on a board and see if it will jive with what I have going on. I can put it in, take it out, and see."*

**-Gabby Orcutt**

## Amplifying Your Pinterest Presence

"After getting over the initial shock of having that many followers, I took notice of what I was Pinning and what people were Repinning. I tailored more content toward what they were gravitating toward, but had my own aesthetic with that."

In addition to doubling down on what her audience responded to, Gabby wanted to reach a broader audience base. To accomplish this, she started Pinning throughout the day to get "more eyeballs" on her content.

"There was one point when I was Pinning all day. A little in the morning, lunch break at work, when I was bored at work, after work, when I was eating dinner, and in the middle of the night."

Despite the effectiveness of live Pinning all day, this wasn't feasible for Gabby long term.

"That's a time suck. It got to the point that I didn't have enough time. I needed something. I was hesitant to try Tailwind at first. I wasn't fully educated on all it had to offer. I was worried about the learning curve."

Once Gabby unlocked the power of Tailwind analytics combined with the easy to use scheduling, there was no turning back. She was hooked.

"I can sit down on Sunday morning and schedule out 30-40 Pins in one sitting. And then I don't have to worry about it for the rest of the week. That was a godsend. The analytics in Tailwind, and having everything in one place, is so convenient."

Tailwind was instrumental in bringing balance back to Gabby's schedule, while still giving her Pinterest account an all-day presence.

## Focusing on the Basics

"Don't just throw up boards without a description. If you leave that blank, that is doing a disservice to yourself. You might as well not even have the board up."

Committed to utilizing the board description, Gabby diligently sat down one day to go through her 100+ boards to describe what viewers could expect on each one of them. Well, almost every board. Once hooking her account up to Tailwind, the tool analyzed her account looking for opportunities to further optimize her presence.

"I found it really handy that Tailwind automatically said in a little window (on the dashboard), 'You have a board that doesn't have a description. You should put a description in there and here's why.'"

Quality descriptions influence more than just boards.

"The same thing goes with having good descriptions in your Pins. **Board and Pin descriptions will help drive the traffic to you that you're are looking for.**"

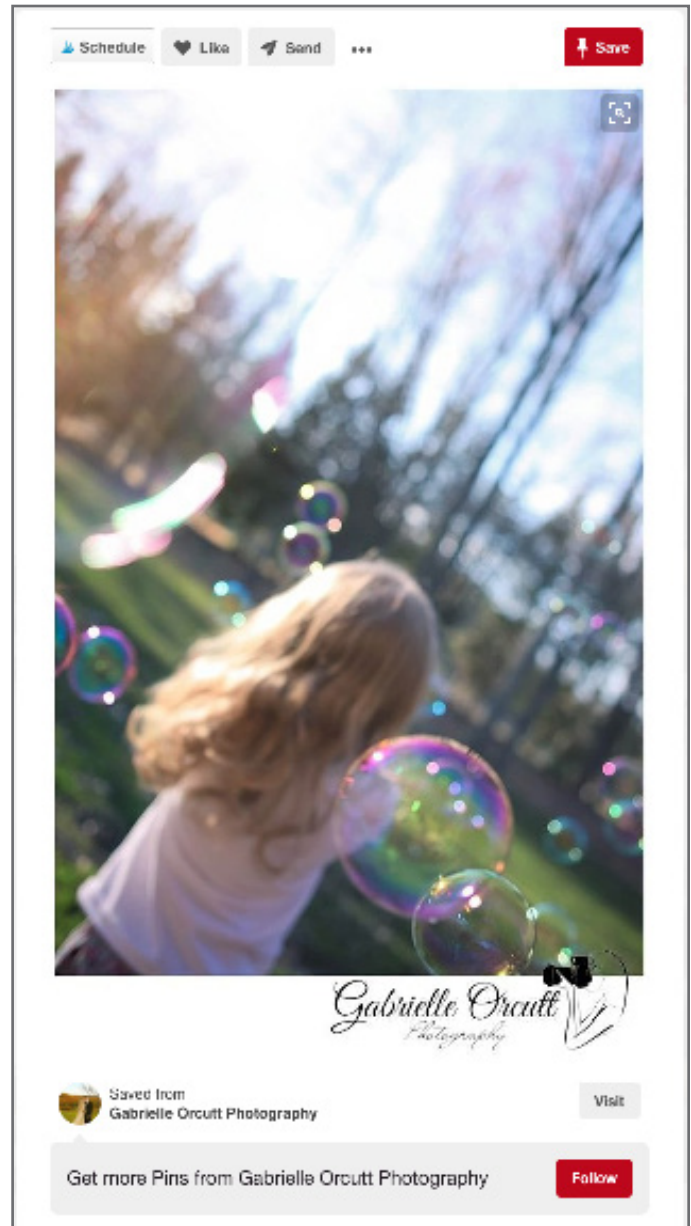
When navigating the portrait space, Gabby emphasized the importance of bringing the photo and the story behind it to life through the description.

"If you have a really good description on what you were capturing with this photo shoot, such as why it's important or the sentimental value, that really gets the pull you are looking for."

Gabby often showcased the backstories of the women she photographed when writing Pin descriptions.

"From a cancer diagnosis to a miscarriage to pregnant – at the age of 43."

This description accompanies a Pin for the captivating story outlining the struggles of a stand-up comedian as she used comedy to hide her fears about pregnancy. Gabby created a description that gave just enough information to entice you to click through to read the entire story.

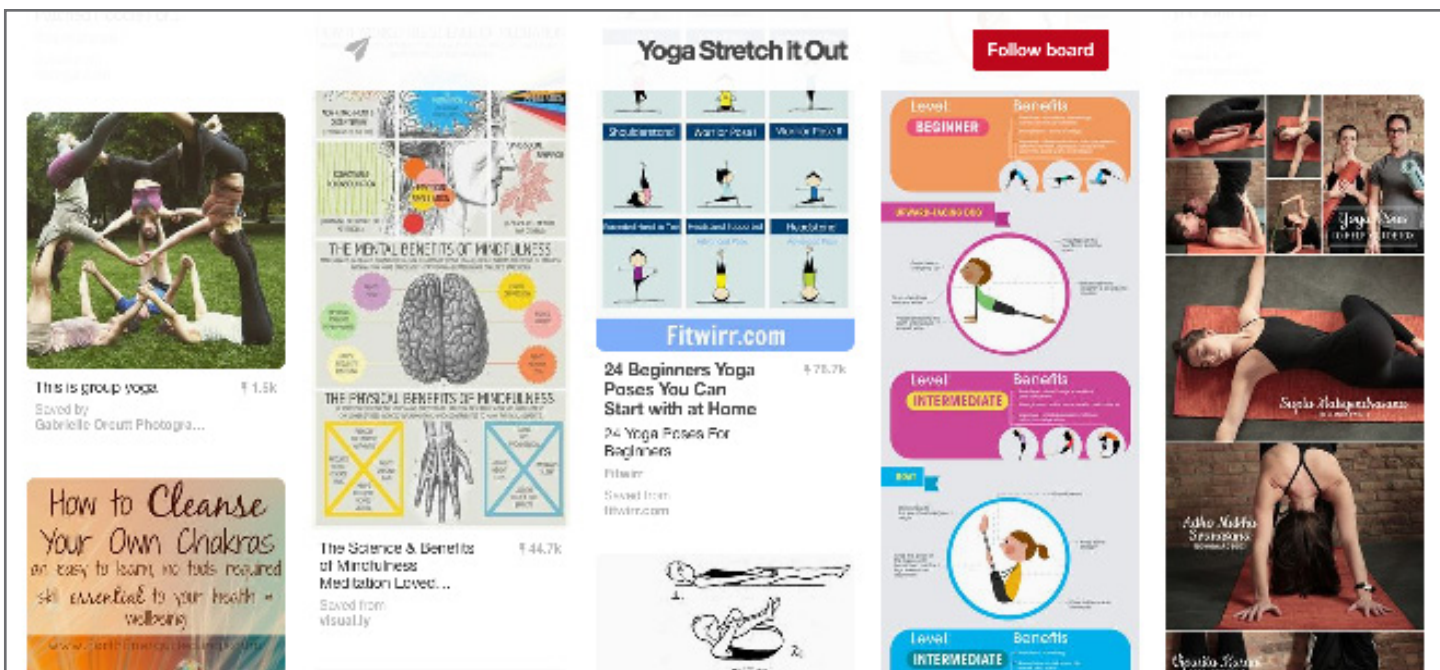


# Ramping Up for Holidays and New Seasons

Gabby worked to keep her account relevant for upcoming trends throughout the year. Whether seasonal or prior to the holidays, she started Pinning related content several weeks prior to the start of the season.

With a big focus on fitness, particularly yoga, Gabby focused each winter on engaging her health boards to capture the January fitness related traffic.

“Three to four weeks prior, start ramping up that board and filling it with content so you are ready.”



## Measuring Results

“I’m an analytic junkie.”

Partnering with Tailwind unlocked a plethora of analytics for Gabby to review. In the last six months, Gabby Pinned 1,867 Pins, which sparked 330,165 Repins. Her virality score of 79% indicated that her audience enjoyed the content she was sharing.

Unlike when she first started, today Gabby monitors her follower count as well as specific engagement metrics.

**“Followers, engagement and Repins all play hand in hand. It’s a triangle. You need to have followers. Then also you need people liking your content. Then also you need people Repinning.”**

“Obviously, followers and Repins are the heaviest, because when you have a lot of followers, you get a lot of eyeballs. But then with the Repins, you are reaching a broader audience.”

Despite the 435,301 new followers and 330,165 additional Repins in the last six months, Gabby’s main focus hinged on attracting more website traffic because she observed that more website traffic led to landing more photography clients.

**Tailwind gave her the ability to isolate website traffic.**

"I use Pinterest to drive traffic to my website, mainly for boudoir photography. I have a big board with outfits, posing ideas, and lighting. I like that I can see just my website (in Tailwind). I can go through and see what is doing well and what is not doing well."

## Managing a Unified Brand Voice Through Multiple Passions

Expanding beyond photography, Gabby grew her interests and business endeavors to include Budi yoga, desire map coaching and a general emphasis to help women enjoy a positive body image.

"Pinterest grounds me. I am multi-passionate. With Pinterest, I can throw ideas on a board and see if it will jive with what I have going on. I can put it in, take it out, and see."

Gabby spreads these interests out over 132 different boards. Yes, thanks to Tailwind every single one of those board has a good description.

Despite managing multiple interests, Gabby centered her efforts on a specific message.

"Through my images **I want to empower women to feel beautiful and sensual in their ever-changing bodies.**" Regardless of if women in their late teens found Gabby through make up tutorials or new moms discovered her while navigating regaining confidence postpartum, Gabby echoed that same empowerment message through all of her boards.

Each stage of life came with a unique twist on that message.

"With postpartum, I want women to find that same empowerment and confidence, even though their body might not be where it was prior to having babies. You can still learn to love as it is now. You were blessed with the ability to create human life, not all women are able to do that. That is a gift in and of itself." Empowerment marked the cornerstone of Gabby's brand essence. She carried that through every single Pinterest board.

## Capitalizing on Group Boards

Part of Gabby's initial growth stemmed from her involvement in group boards.

"If you can find a good group board that tailors to your niche, and you can Pin there, you are basically in a mixing pot. You are pulling followers from them. They are pulling followers from you. It's a bit of a give and take."

When evaluating a group board, Gabby believes **it's important to make sure that the board's focus meshed with your niche.** If the board doesn't cater to her audience, Gabby won't see any benefits from her involvement.

As an influencer, Gabby frequently fielded requests from other Pinners to join their group boards.

"I'm really selective what ones I join. Sometimes they are way left field and not even the right niche."

Not all group boards were created equally. Gabby often encounters group boards with dead content. Prior to joining a board, she evaluates the activity, how many followers the board has, and if the content relates to her niche.

“You want to find one that’s active. You have more eyeballs floating around the board. It won’t just be you Pinning to the group board. Everyone will be contributing equally. And that’s really the main factor in making a group board work well.”

Gabby hinted that she encountered Pinners who didn’t add value to the group, instead approaching the collaboration with the wrong mindset.

“You don’t have to be super competitive about it. Have an open mind. The right hand is here to receive and left hand is here to give. So what you give and what you receive plays hand in hand.”

**“Always know there is enough abundance for everyone.”**

Harnessing an abundance mindset didn’t mean that Gabby wasn’t intentional about increasing her traffic from the collaboration.

Rather than tearing others down or flooding the board, she worked to make her content stand out. This started by differing her core offering from the other Pinners in the group. By focusing on sharing unique and high-caliber content, she created a better chance of pulling the traffic to her Pinterest boards.

## Cross-Promotion

**“I link to Pinterest everywhere that I can.”**

From including her handle in her e-mails to creating callouts in her newsletter, Gabby focused on creating opportunities to drive users toward her Pinterest page. This included leveraging other social channels, such as Facebook groups or her Instagram description.

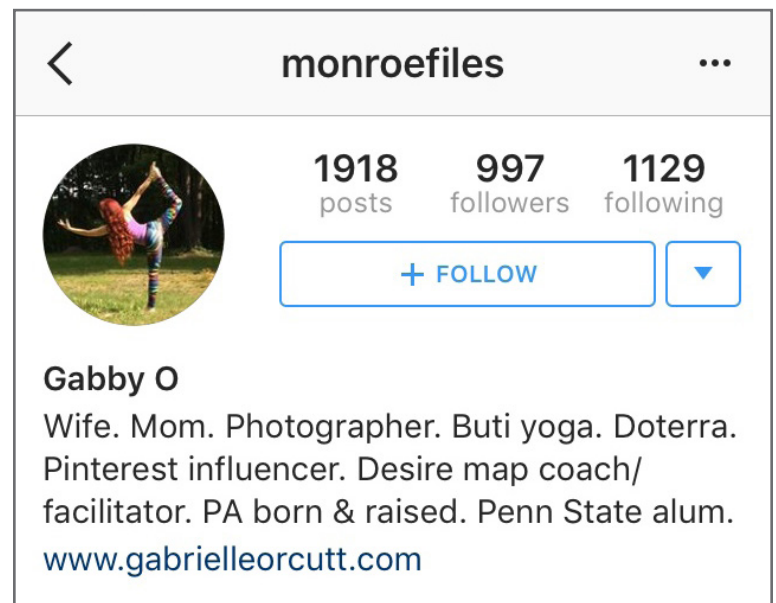
“It has to make sense to push Pinterest.”

Particularly when posting in Facebook groups, Gabby made sure to align her Pinterest plug with a unique ask from another group member.

**“You can’t be the sales person all the time. You have to give them concrete information on why it’s relevant for them.”**

For example, if a fellow group member wanted ideas for making their own cleaning supplies or needed inspiration for their wedding, Gabby would share the direct link to the related board along with a few tips.

“That’s where a lot of the growth comes from - cross-promotion. You have to make a conscious effort to make people look there.”





## Top Tip: Be Your Unique, Weird Self

Gabby's tip for new Pinners, or those looking to grow their account, was simple.

"Stay true to who you are as a person. **Be your unique, weird self. That's what makes you different from everyone else in the crowd.** Don't just Pin what you think people will like. Pin what you like and you will have a genuine following for what you do."

While building that genuine following based on "your own personal flavor," make sure to capitalize on opportunities to reach a broader audience.

"Pin at various times throughout the day because you will get different eyeballs throughout the day."

Through staying true to her unique self, even through all of her varied interests, Gabby was able to grow an incredible genuine audience of 1.4 million followers on Pinterest. For her phenomenal growth and willingness to share her insights, we are pleased to award Gabby a Tailwind Takeoff Award!

*Want to achieve award winning growth like Gabby?  
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