Pinterest in Sweden
A Qualitative Study on Swedes’ Pinterest Usage

Master’s Thesis within Business Administration
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Abstract

Problem: For businesses, in order to stay in contact with customers and to overall increase brand awareness, social media platforms have become more and more important. Pinterest is a relatively new platform in Europe, which has become extremely popular in the United States for being an inspirational micro blog. As its performance on the American market has shown, Pinterest is especially valuable for businesses with regards to the generation of sales and raising brand awareness. Within Europe, Pinterest might have the best chances to gain popularity in Sweden, since Swedes are more likely to use social media than many other European countries and Swedes are seen as trendsetters in fashion and interior design, which are the main categories on Pinterest. Therefore, even though the audience is still relatively small, being on Pinterest could be very beneficial for Swedish and other European companies.

Purpose: Before companies should become active on a new social media platform it is crucial for them to understand its characteristics and further how people are interacting with each other and the platform. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to provide an insight on why and how Swedes are using Pinterest, what impact the technology itself has on the usage and lastly, how Swedish users perceive brands on Pinterest.

Methodology: In order to receive a deep understanding of the way Pinterest is used by Swedes, a qualitative research approach and more specifically in-depth interviews were chosen as the appropriate method. The questions of the interviews were selected with regards to the following theories and concepts: need fulfillment, Theory of Reasoned Action, Technology Acceptance Model and the awareness of brand activity.

Conclusion: The findings from the in-depths interviews show that Pinterest’s main purpose, compared to other social media platforms, is not in being social. For Swedish users, it is rather a platform for personal inspiration, which is also reflected in the overall irregular usage of Pinterest. So far, brands are not attracting much attention among Swedish users, whose general attitude towards brand activity on the platform is positive, as long as businesses follow specific behavioral rules. This basically means to keep being interesting and not bothersome for the user.
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**Abbreviations**

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I Introduction

A general introduction to the topic will be given in this section. This establishes a foundational knowledge of the research topic. Following the background information, the problem definition of this research will be further explained. Next, the research purpose and research questions, delimitations of the study and important definitions of this research will be discussed.

1.1 Background

Today’s constantly increasing usage of social media has resulted in a broad variety of different social media categories, such as social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), micro blogs (e.g. Twitter and Pinterest) and content communities (e.g. YouTube) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Mangold & Fauld, 2009). For marketers worldwide it has, to some extent, become a standard to make use of these social media, as platforms to advertise, create brand awareness and to attain contact with consumers. The Social Media Marketing Industry Report (Stelzner, 2014), for example, found out that 97 percent of surveyed marketers are active on social media and 92 percent stated that social media is important for their business. However, one specific social media channel that has been on the rise in the US has not yet made its way to the bigger part of consumers and businesses in Europe – Pinterest.

Pinterest is a micro blog, where users are able to pin mostly pictures to their virtual pin boards. It is mainly used for inspiration, which is why fashion, interior design, do-it-yourself projects, recipes and traveling are among the most popular categories on Pinterest (Zeckmann, 2014). The platform can be reached through its website or through a free mobile application (Bennett, 2014a; Perez, 2014). Currently, Pinterest has more than 70 Million active members, of who around 80 percent are women (Smith, 2015). The majority of its users are based in the United States, followed by India (Akhtar, 2014).

Not many European companies are active on Pinterest since this social media platform is not yet as popular in Europe as it is in other parts of the world. The main reasons for that are based on legal and logistical issues as well as on cultural differences (Akhtar, 2014). First of all, there has been an ongoing issue about who owns the rights for the trademark ‘Pinterest’ within Europe, with a court recently ruling in favor for a UK-based start-up company called Premium Interest, which now can sell its rights to Pinterest (Smith, 2014). Secondly, many of the international versions of Pinterest have yet to be developed or have only recently been launched. For example Pinterest versions for the Scandinavian countries Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland as well as its French and British versions were launched only in 2013 (Wagner, 2013; Smith, 2014; Akhtar, 2014). Last, Europeans in general, are much more private than US-Americans and have an “aversion against over-sharing and posting aspirational items in public” (Akhtar, 2014).

However, especially in Scandinavian countries, Pinterest might have the best chances to soon become more popular among a broader part of the population, as it for example happened to Instagram in Sweden, where growth rates almost doubled from 15 percent usage in 2013 to 28 percent in 2014 (Davidsson, 2014).

Scandinavians in general and Swedes in particular are known to be very Internet and social media affine compared to many other European countries such as Germany, France or Italy for example (Office for National Statistics, 2013, eMarketer, 2013). This can also be seen in Sweden’s 3rd rank among European countries, with an Internet penetration rate of 94
percent and 57 percent of its population using social media (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Not only are Swedes very active on social media, they are also highly interested in interior design and are very fashion-conscious, which are two of the main categories on Pinterest (Santos, Ganassali, Casarin, Laaksonen & Kaufmann, 2013).

So far in Sweden, Pinterest is ranks only 3,724th (status: April 28th, 2014) of the most popular websites, but creates already more than 67 million visits each month (URLMetrics, 2014). However, most of Pinterest’s traffic derives from its mobile application (Novet, 2015).

What makes Pinterest a very interesting and lucrative platform for companies is that it generates more sales than any other social media site (Patel, 2014). In 2012, every pin led on average to $0.78 in sales and a recent research by QuickSprout found out that Pinterest generates 4 times more sales than Twitter and 27 percent more than Facebook (Retail Customer Experience, 2013; Patel, 2014). Also, each pin leads to an average of 10 reps, whereas only 1.4 percent of all tweets will be re-tweeted, making Pinterest’s pins “100 times more viral than tweets” (Retail Customer Experience, 2013).

It is becoming obvious that Pinterest’s potential impact on businesses is large and will increase even more with a growing audience in Europe. Therefore, many companies might have to rethink their previous strategies regarding social media marketing and broaden their view, to not only focus on the well-known social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, but also on the very promising marketing tool Pinterest.

### 1.2 Problem Definition

Not only is social media marketing increasing, according to Sheehan (2010), online marketing is also more effective and efficient than offline marketing. This is due to the fact that consumers usually request distinct information online. In a time where new trends are coming and going quickly, it is extremely important for marketers to keep up to date with which social media platforms are relevant to their businesses. Facebook for example has recently lost popularity among young people whilst new social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat are on the rise (Olson, 2013; Bryant, 2014).

As it has been said before, Pinterest still has fairly low levels of usage as a marketing platform in Europe and Sweden, but in general holds great potential both for users and companies. Therefore, for companies to become active on Pinterest could either be a waste of resources or help increase brand awareness and purchase intention, depending on the type of business and target group. However, since sales pitches are the last things Pinterest users want to see, companies need to use this platform in a creative manner (Schlereth, 2012).

Consequently, understanding exactly how people are using Pinterest is the key to successfully market one’s business on this platform. What are users actually doing with the pins of food recipes and apparel inspiration and how are they interacting with each other? Questions such as these are crucial for marketers to know when approaching new social media terrain. Further, it is necessary to explore how the technical aspects and the usability of Pinterest might affect its adoption as a new social media platform. It is equally important to understand how businesses can attract more followers on Pinterest and how algorithms are used to determine which pins are shown to whom. A ‘how-to’ instruction, especially helpful to smaller businesses with fewer resources, is therefore essential.
Moreover, there has been a lack of research on the use of Pinterest in Europe in general and even more regarding specific countries, such as Sweden. Searching on Google Scholar for example, with the key words ‘Pinterest’, ‘usage’ and ‘Sweden’ will result in 736 results, none of them examining how people are interacting with this social media platform (Google Scholar, 2015).

1.3 Purpose

Derived from the problem definition, the purpose of the thesis is to explore how Swedes are using Pinterest. As Swedes are trendsetters regarding fashion, interior design and even food, within Europe, Sweden might be the country with the biggest growth potential for Pinterest (Kauppalehti, 2013). Exploring the usage behavior of Swedes at an early stage, might therefore unveil useful information and insights that can immediately be used by companies to adapt to the platform, instead of chasing the market once Pinterest’s popularity is increasing. A qualitative study, as part of this thesis will therefore concentrate on Swedish Pinterest users and their interaction with the relatively new social media platform Pinterest. Through in-depth interviews it will be possible to gain deeper insight into feelings and intentions behind the usage of Pinterest. With the knowledge obtained from the qualitative study, implications for companies, particular in Sweden and Europe will be given. These implications will address issues regarding which companies should implement Pinterest in their overall social media marketing strategy and how these companies then should use Pinterest in order to attract more customers and raise brand awareness. Further, implications for Pinterest itself will be given, on how to improve the platform and make it more accessible, especially for new users and brands.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to achieve the stated purpose the following research questions (RQ’s) will be addressed in this thesis:

**RQ1:** How do Swedes use Pinterest and what underlying motivations do Swedes have for using Pinterest?

**RQ2:** How do Pinterest’s usefulness and its technological features impact Swedes’ attitudes towards the social media platform?

**RQ3:** How do Swedes perceive brand activity on Pinterest?

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This thesis will primarily focus on Pinterest activities and users based in Sweden. A broader view on this topic covering Scandinavia or Europe is not possible within the framework of this study. Since this study will further use a qualitative approach focusing on individuals to explore Swedish Pinterest usage, new insights on Pinterest’s user demographics in Sweden will not be part of this research. This research will also not be able to result in specific sales
numbers, generated by pins, but it will allow companies to understand how Pinterest users interact with the platform.

1.6 Key Terms

**Social network**: “A dedicated website or other application that enables users to communicate with each other by posting information, comments, messages, images, etc.” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015a).

**Mobile Application**: A mobile application (short mobile app) is a computer program specifically developed for the usage on mobile devices, such as a smartphone or tablets (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015b).

**Facebook**: Facebook is a popular social networking website launched in 2004. “It enables its users to present themselves in an online profile, accumulate “friends” who can post comments on each other’s pages, and view each other’s profiles. Facebook members can also join virtual groups based on common interests, see what classes they have in common, and learn each others’ hobbies, interests, musical tastes, and romantic relationship status through the profiles.” (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007).

**Instagram**: Instagram is a mobile application, which enables its users to edit their snapshots into visually appealing images and share them with others (Salomon, 2013).

**Twitter**: Twitter is a micro blogging service where its users “tweet” or post about any topic within the limit of 140-character and follow others to receive their tweets (Kwak, Lee, Park, & Moon, 2010).

**YouTube**: YouTube is a popular video platform where people can either view or share videos. It also allows users to create a personal YouTube page or a “channel page”, which enables adding friends (Lange, 2007).

**Micro blog**: Micro blogs are one category of social media. They are a form of Internet posting, which is shorter than long blog posts (Duffy, 2013). Twitter and Pinterest are for example considered to be micro blogs.

**Likes**: Various social media platforms have a “Like” button, which enables users to show their appreciation of another user’s post, in this case image they have posted online.

**Pin**: “Pins are visual bookmarks” (Pinterest, 2015a). Pins on Pinterest lead the user back to the website, where the content originally came from, thus users are for example able be linked directly to the page where a product can be ordered.

**Repin**: Posting other users pins on own Pinterest boards.

**Google**: Google is the world’s leading search engine, founded in 1998. It has various features, such as image search, maps, news, shopping, Gmail and more (Wells, 2008).
1.7 Disposition

This thesis is structured in the following way: first the background of the topic was given, in order to provide the reader with an understanding of the context. Derived from the background the problem definition, purpose and research questions are defined.

Next, a theoretical framework of the concepts used in the study is presented, to provide insight on the existing theories and models which are carried through in the research and analysis. This section also provides deeper insight into the introduced topic.

After this, the chosen methodology and method are discussed in order to give an understanding of how the research was conducted.

This is followed by a presentation of the main empirical findings.

The findings section is followed by a thorough analysis and discussion of the interviews responses with the help of existing academic literature and theories provided in the theoretical background.

After the analysis and discussion the research questions will be answered in detail and an overall conclusion will be drawn. After the conclusion contributions and limitations of the study will be addressed. Finally, further implications for companies, Pinterest and further research are provided.

Figure 1. Disposition
2 Theoretical Framework

This section is a review and discussion of previous literature and concepts relevant to the topic areas. It will also investigate theories that are considered fundamental for a later analysis of the collected data.

2.1 Social Media Usage and the Place of Pinterest

Traditionally, individuals used the Internet only to consume it: browsing, reading and purchasing. Nowadays, people are increasingly using the Internet to share their own content within various social media platforms (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Social media is, according to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), “a group of Internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of the Internet 2.0, and it allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content”. The new era of social media has changed the behavior of consumers, since it has enabled a two-way online communication between consumers and companies (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2013).

2.1.1 Social Media Consumption in Sweden

The Nordic countries use the Internet most densely in the world, as they are small, homogeneous and technologically advanced countries. The Swedish government’s aim is to be the best in the world at taking advantage of the Internet’s opportunities, which means utilizing the benefits of IT to promote work and entrepreneurship. Today they are in third place after Finland and Singapore. On average, Swedes are spending 7.6 hours every week on different social media platforms, especially young (16-25 year old) people and increasingly on mobile devices. The time Swedes spend on mobile Internet has more than tripled in two years, which is the most recent major change in online media consumption. One third of all Internet usage in Sweden is on social media, as it can be seen in the following information: the most popular Internet sites in Sweden are Facebook, YouTube, music services with streaming and Blocket, which is a Swedish advertisements website for buying and selling. Many out of those who use Facebook combine it with other social networks, such as Instagram (14%), Twitter (12%) or LinkedIn (7%) (Findahl, 2014). The diagram below (Figure 2) shows the number of Swedish Internet users (12+ years old) who sometimes or daily visit different networks (Findahl, 2014).

![Diagram showing social media usage in Sweden](image)

Figure 2. Swedish Internet users (12+ years old) who sometimes or daily visit difference networks (Findahl, 2015)
Visiting different social media networks in general is the most common online activity among Swedes, as seen in the Figure 2, 70% visit social networks sometimes and almost 50% visit them daily. Among those who visit social media networks, 68% sometimes visit Facebook and 47% visit it daily, followed by interest communities (54% sometimes and 10% daily). In popularity after that, Swedish Internet users are reading blogs (40% sometimes, 8% daily) followed by micro blogs, such as Twitter and Pinterest (28% sometimes and 6% daily).

Even though more than 40% of Internet time is spent sharing contents, it is twice as likely for Swedes to only follow others, e.g. on Twitter, than to post something themselves. Most people who visit social media platforms do it in order to read and take note of their environment. This means that many people are active on social media, even though they do not necessarily share their own content. However, the most common online activity among Swedes is to communicate with others by posting messages on social networks. Even though sharing is the second most popular activity Swedes do online and the time spent on social media has increased, file sharing (e.g. sharing photos) among Swedes has decreased over the past few years. The diagram below (Figure 3) more clearly illustrates which are the most popular online activities among Swedes (12+ year old).

As can be seen in the Figure 3 above 60% of Swedes post messages on social networks sometimes and 15% daily, making it the most popular online activity. Followed by 49% sharing or forwarding content sometimes and only a small percentage of 4% share contents daily. 42% post own comments sometimes and only 3% daily and even less in discussion forums. A very small percentage of 11% of Swedes write on Twitter sometimes and only 2% daily. Finally, the least popular online activity of Swedes is writing on blogs, only 8% do it sometimes and 1% daily (Findahl, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, the mobile Internet usage has rapidly increased. Not only is there a constantly increasing number of Swedes who own smartphones but they are also using mobiles today more than ever before. Almost half of the Swedes who own smartphones use them several times a day. Particularly Swedes between the ages 12 to 35 years are using
mobile Internet frequently. The chart (Figure 4) below portrays the number of mobile phone time in total Internet time among different Internet users (Findahl, 2015).

![Chart showing mobile phone time in total Internet time among different Internet users]

Figure 4. Number of mobile phone time in total Internet time among different Internet users (Findahl, 2015)

As can be seen in the Figure 4 above, of all age groups Swedish 12-15 year olds spend the most time on the mobile Internet, followed by 16-35 year olds. In general, the mobile Internet usage is decreasing with age (Findahl, 2015).

2.1.2 Pinterest

As mentioned in the introduction, Pinterest is categorized as a micro blog. However, Pinterest differs from most micro blogs by being a very visual platform where mostly pictures, but also videos are posted or “pinned” instead of publishing text. It is a pin board-style social photo-sharing website and mobile application, where pictures and ideas can be shared with followers (Hansen, Nowlan, & Winter, 2012; Syrman, 2013).

Pinterest also has a downloadable “pin this” button as a browser add on, which enables its users to pin any image or video found online. The pins (images or videos) are then organized into different categories or boards, such as “Fashion” or “Interior Design”, which are created by the user (Hansen et al., 2012). Pictures can also be added into users’ private, hidden boards, if the users wish to keep certain pictures and boards to themselves (Pinterest, 2015b). Users can repin other users’ pins by adding them to their own boards. Others’ pins can also be liked and commented on. Pinterest also has a social aspect to it, as it enables users to add their friends and share pins with them. The Pinterest account can be synchronized with other social media, for example Facebook, in order to more easily connect with existing contacts (Hansen et al., 2012).
Pinterest further has a homepage or “smart feed” where users see various pins or pictures. According to Bennett (2014b) these are based on the following three different factors:

1. Highest quality pins, which users are following;
2. Related pins based on what users pin and whom they follow;
3. Interests that users are following.

The picture below shows the explained smart feed of Pinterest as it appears when logged in.

![Pinterest Smart Feed](image)

**Figure 5. Interface of Pinterest (Pinterest, 2015c)**

A more detailed picture of Pinterest’s interface can be seen in appendix 1.

Pinterest recently added a new feature for companies, which enables them to promote pins and, hence, better reach their specific target markets. The promoted pins are shared on Pinterest on average 11 times. A study further found that for every $1000 spent in advertising on Pinterest, brands gain $300 more worth. Thus, promoted pins can be a great source for returns of investments for brands (Bennett, 2015).

Pinterest is a fairly new platform, which was launched in 2010. Additionally, it is the world’s fastest growing social media channel (Bennett, 2015; Statista, 2013), which can be seen by for example, Pinterest’s CEO Ben Silbermann stating that out of the existing over 30 billion pins, nearly 50% was posted in only 6 months (Lawler & Constine, 2014). Pinterest has become especially popular among people who like to collect images in order to help them plan, organize and explore any topics of their interest (Hansen et al., 2012).
2.2 Need Fulfillment

According to Solomon et al. (2013: 100), a motive is: “an underlying reason for behavior and not something researchers can see or easily measure”. Furthermore, needs are the sources of motivation and result in human behavior. For example, an individual can have the physiological need of hunger, which then motivates the person to purchase something to eat.

What needs drive individuals’ Pinterest behavior and to what extent does Pinterest satisfy them? According to a study conducted by Java, Song, Finin & Tseng (2007) about why people use Twitter, micro blogging fulfills a need for fast and frequent communication. However, there exist stronger basic human needs. The psychologist Abraham Maslow (1968) created an influential human motivational approach called the Hierarchy of Needs where human behavior is motivated by the following set of needs: (1) physiological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) love and belongingness needs, (4) esteem needs and (5) self-actualization needs. Maslow suggested that first the most basic needs must be fulfilled before progressing the ladder and fulfilling the more complex needs (Solomon et al., 2013). This means that, for example, if a person is starving or has no shelter, his or her first priority is not to try to receive as many likes on their Pinterest pictures as possible, instead the person would try to fulfill his or her physiological and safety needs.

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Based on Maslow (1968)](image)

Even though Maslow’s Theory of Needs was originally developed for clinical psychology it can be implicated in various ways e.g. with regards to social media usage. Despite the fact that Maslow’s theory is one of the world’s most cited theories of human motivation, it has also been criticized. For example by suggesting that the model is subjective and specifically American biased for focusing on an individualistic approach. Since in some cultures, such as China, people are less individualistic and more collective, which means that for them the self-actualization need is not of highest importance (Mook, 1987). However, the theory suits this particular thesis, as Sweden is a relatively individualistic country. When comparing it to China for example Sweden’s degree of individualism is 71 (on a scale from 0 to 100) whilst China’s degree of individualism is only 20 (Hofstede, 2015a; Hofstede, 2015b). In this thesis, the Hierarchy of Needs will be used to explore which of the three needs: (1) self-actualization, (2) esteem and (3) love and belongingness from Maslow’s motivational approach apply to the Pinterest usage of Swedes. These three needs are chosen because so-
cial media does not fulfill physiological needs such as food and sleep or safety needs such as shelter. Further, for example Seidman’s (2013) study of Facebook showed that these three needs are relevant to social media users.

**Love and Belongingness Need**

The need for love and belongingness can be defined as needing friends, companions, a family, an identification with a group or an intimate relationship. The need to belong is a fundamental human motivation that drives maintaining relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Bowlby’s (1969) attachment theory also included the need to form and maintain relationships as an essential human need. The Internet has had a major impact on today’s social life (Bargh & McKenna, 2004). According to Findahl (2014), personal online activities create, for example, a sense of belonging. Thus, people who are very active on the Internet feel most included in a part of the new online society of today. According to Seidman’s (2013) study, the need to belong is the main reason for people to be on Facebook. The question arises if this also applies in the case of Pinterest.

**Esteem Need**

According to Maslow’s (1968) Hierarchy of Needs, human’s esteem need comes after the love and belongingness need. The esteem need is an individual’s need for achievement, status and reputation. According to Zhao, Grasmuck and Matin (2008), a major reason why people are being active on Facebook is self-presentation, which is fulfilling the esteem need. McKenna, Green and Gleason (2002) suggest that certain people, specifically with high social anxiety, can better and more freely express themselves online, which can give them esteem fulfillment. Therefore, one reason people are on Pinterest might also be to fulfill personal status or reputation. Liking and following behavior on Pinterest could drive individual’s self-esteem by increasing their confidence level.

**Self-Actualization Need**

The final and highest need on Maslow’s (1968) Hierarchy of Needs, is the need of self-actualization. It is the need for individuals’ personal growth and fulfillment. According to Maslow (1968), this need can be reached only if all of the other needs are fulfilled. However, as earlier mentioned there has been criticism (e.g. Mook, 1987) that particularly the self-actualization need is culturally biased and applies mostly to individualistic cultures that strive to hone their own skills. The need of self-actualization is less relevant than the need of love and belongingness and esteem on social media such as Facebook. However, this thesis will study to what extent Pinterest fulfills this need for its Swedish users.

### 2.3 The Theory of Reasoned Action

Another important theory to take into consideration is the Theory of Reasoned Action, which is based on the Fishbein Model. According to Solomon et al. (2013), the Fishbein Model focuses on measuring consumer’s attitudes towards a product. It measures three components of attitude:

1. Salient beliefs people have about an object;
2. Object-attribute linkages, or the probability that a particular object has an important attribute;
3. Evaluation of each of the important attributes.
The original Fishbein model has been extended into a model called the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). The TRA was developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1975) and it is “a version of the Fishbein multi-attitude theory that considers such factors as social pressure and the attitude towards the act of buying a product rather than attitudes towards just the product itself” (Solomon et al., 2013: 153). It explores individual’s behavior and suggests that it is defined by three main components, which are (1) attitude toward behavior, (2) subjective norm, and (3) behavioral intention.

![Figure 7. Theory of Reasoned Action Based on Fishbein & Ajzen (1975)](image)

**Attitude Toward Behavior**

An individual’s attitude toward a certain behavior is the weighted average of one’s beliefs about the behavior and the evaluation of the behavior. It can be either positive or negative. Individuals are more likely to perform a specific behavior if they have a positive attitude toward it (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). For example, a person believes that exercising makes one look good but also that it is hard work. If this person values looking good more than hard work, then his or her attitude towards exercising is positive.

**Subjective Norm**

The TRA also recognizes the fact that other people have an impact on individuals’ behavior, even though it could be unconsciously (Solomon et al., 2013). The subjective norm is an individual’s perception of how others feel about a certain behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). For example, an individual would like to buy new shoes. However, if he or she thinks that the shoes would be an unpopular choice among other people, this might influence the person’s behavioral intention.

**Behavioral Intention**

The behavioral intention is based on a combination of one’s attitude toward a behavior and subjective norm and it defines the likelihood of that person performing a certain behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). However, even if a person originally has strong intentions towards a certain behavior, various factors can interfere with the actual behavior. For example, one might have planned to buy an expensive car, however a factor such as losing his or her job could interfere and therefore this person can no longer afford to buy the desired
car. The TRA strives to measure individuals’ behavioral intentions whilst acknowledging the fact that some uncontrollable aspects may prevent this behavior (Solomon et al., 2013).

In this thesis, the TRA will be adapted to find out about individuals’ pinning behavior. More specifically, why Swedish Pinterest users are pinning certain pictures by finding out what their attitudes toward the picture and category are (either positive or negative) and how influenced they are by others’. Adding these two factors together the person's behavioral intention can be predicted. However, not the actual behavior as something might interfere with the person’s intention to perform a specific behavior and the person’s actual behavior. Also the TRA is used in this thesis in order to understand the Technology Acceptance Model, which will be explained in the following section.

Even though the TRA is a quantitative model, it is suitable for this qualitative research in order to identify different factors influencing the pinning behavior if Swedish user.

2.4 The Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model, short TAM, is a behavioral model proposed by Davis (1989). The model is based on the prior explained Theory of Reasoned Action. As the TRA, the TAM aims to explain and to some extent predict the acceptance of a certain technology through an individual’s attitude towards it. The concepts ‘Attitude Toward Using’ and ‘Behavioral Intention to Use’ are here directly adopted from the TRA (Surendran, 2012). The concept of ‘Attitude Toward Behavior’ deriving from the TRA model was replaced by ‘Perceived Usefulness’ and ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ as the two main factors influencing the ‘Attitude Toward Using’ and therefore also the ‘Behavioral Intention to Use’ (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; Kolitz, 2007).

Perceived Usefulness

The ‘Perceived Usefulness’ is the degree to which an individual believes that using a certain technology system increases his or her performance (Davis, 1989). If a new technology is therefore simplifying or improving the performance of a certain task, it increases the likelihood that this person will accept the particular technology (Huber et al., 2011).
**Perceived Ease of Use**

The ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ is the degree to which an individual finds a certain technology system free of effort (Davis, 1989). This factor not only influences the ‘Attitude Toward Using’ a technology, but also directly influences the ‘Perceived Usefulness’. Hence, a technology’s acceptance also depends on the factor, how easy it is for users to interact with. (Huber et al, 2011).

In the TAM, both of these variables are seen as endogenous, which can be further influenced by unspecified external variables (Huber et al., 2011). Those external variables can for example be word-of-mouth, which showed to have significant influence on the concept of ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ (Parry, Kawakami & Kishiya, 2012). As in the TRA, the TAM suggests that actual behavior can be predicted by individuals’ behavioral intentions. However, even if an individual finds that a technology is enhancing his performance and is further easy to use, various external factors can interfere between the ‘Behavioral Intention’ to use a certain technology and the ‘Actual System Use’ (Kolitz, 2007).

Despite some criticism on the TAM, many empirical studies have confirmed the correlations between the two main variables ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ and ‘Perceived Usefulness’ on behavioral intentions. The TAM is therefore seen as an important “tool for understanding and managing technology initiatives” (Sourina, Wortley & Kim, 2015: 103).

Even though the TAM is commonly used in quantitative research, in the context of this qualitative thesis, the aim of using this model is not to present exact quantifiable results regarding the acceptance of Pinterest, but to obtain a deeper understanding of how Swedish users perceive Pinterest’s ease of use and usefulness. This should answer for example, if the participants found the platform easy to use from the beginning and what purpose does the usage of Pinterest fulfill to them. These are important aspect in the overall exploration how Swedes use Pinterest.

**2.5 Social Media Marketing and the Awareness of Brands on Pinterest**

As the use of social media is constantly growing, businesses need to understand how to utilize different social media platforms in order to reach their customers. This is important, since social media has an increasing influence on the purchasing decision of consumers (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt & Füller, 2013). For many companies though, especially SME’s, being active on social media is still seen only as an additional service, underestimating the benefits arising from it (Karjula, 2015; Chandler, 2013). However, since customers of all companies are using social media, being active on various social media platforms can only be advantageous for businesses, especially with regards to potential competitors (Karjula, 2015).

Blogs and micro blogs, such as Pinterest, are especially great opportunities for businesses to communicate with and publicize to consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This kind of social media activity of brands and companies is called social media marketing. Social media marketing is a form of online marketing, which includes all operative and strategic marketing activities that involve the use of social media platforms in order to increase brand awareness and to strengthen brand communications within the target group, which often means a direct interaction with the end consumer (Ehlers, Eugster, Stuber & Vogelbacher,
2013). Those interactions are for example, participating and stimulating two-way conversations with the consumers, embracing new ideas, supporting consumers to help each other and monitoring their conversations in order to acquire better consumer insights (Li & Bernoff, 2008; Zarella, 2012). Selling products or services is usually not a main task of a brand’s social media activity (West, Ford & Ibrahim, 2015). Compared to traditional media marketing, social media marketing is often less costly, has a greater reach and enables marketers to target their audience more precisely (Zarella, 2012). Another advantage of social media marketing is also the instant popularity gauge, which is rather limited or delayed in traditional media marketing. Further, consumers provide companies with valuable direct feedback to products or campaigns, to which companies can immediately react (Stokes & Blake, 2009).

The most common practice of social media marketing is for companies to create a brand or product page on social media platforms, on which they can share content from various media, from text, over pictures to videos, usually related to the product or brand. Followers of the page can like, comment or share the content and thereby interact in real-time with the brand or other brand followers (Stokes & Blake, 2009). In general, social media marketing can be beneficial for companies of all sizes, but they have to use this medium in the right way. One example that is often cited as an excellent paradigm of social media activity by a small company is Blendtec, a manufacturer for premium priced blenders (Zarella, 2012). Blendtec started sharing YouTube videos showing their blenders shredding everything from iPhones to Wii remotes. These videos received up to 17 Million views and were resulting in immense press coverage and consumer awareness for the company (YouTube, 2015; Zarella, 2012).

Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) suggest for companies to consider the following five points when using social media:

- **Be active.** As social media is an ever-changing environment, a company must be constantly updated and further engage in rich two-way communication with its consumers that goes beyond the simple display of products.
- **Be interesting.** There is a constantly increasing social media clutter, which means that in order for consumers to follow businesses on social media they must be interesting and relevant to their target audience.
- **Be humble.** Before diving into the big ocean of social media, it is good to test the water by researching the history and use of the chosen social media platform. Each platform has their own rules of interaction and a company should wait until it gained the necessary insight before posting.
- **Be unprofessional.** In order to blend in with others, it is advisable for businesses to be playful and unprofessional online as social media is mostly used for entertainment. Having edges and flaws makes a company more relatable for social media users. Being charming can often bring one further than being perfect.
- **Be honest.** Information gathering for consumers is easy nowadays, which is why it is vital not to lie online. When something is posted online it can never be completely deleted. Also instead of trying to delete negative comments and being deaf to critique, companies should more openly discuss those issues to show that they care about their customers’ opinion.

Social media marketing has become crucial for many businesses, since it increases consumer’s exposure to a brand, which then creates brand awareness. This is important since
brand awareness is one of the main factors influencing consumer’s purchase decisions (Hutter et al., 2013).

When making purchase decisions, consumers rely on a predefined set of products or brands they take into consideration, raising brand awareness therefore increases the chances that a specific brand will be within this consideration set (Hutter et al., 2013). Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, & Wong (2005) more specifically define brand awareness as “the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, and is correctly associated with a particular product”. These definitions explain, what is commonly understood of brand awareness. Publicity is, among many others, a central factor in how to create brand awareness, using suitable social media platforms with regards to the target group and taking advantage of their individual strength, is therefore vital for today’s businesses (Reed, Turner, Shih & Corbett, 2012). In the context of this study, the focus will not directly lay on brand awareness itself, but rather on the extent to which Pinterest users are aware of brands on this social media platform and on their attitude towards brands’ activities there. The consumers’ awareness of brands through the brands’ social media activity can of course then lead to brand awareness (Hutter et al., 2013).

Concerning its American home market, Pinterest is attracting already many companies from so called ‘mom-and-pops stores’ (small, independent and family owned businesses) over major retail companies, e.g. Martha Stuart, Whole Foods or Bergdorf Goodman, to start-ups (Petrecca, 2012; Wassermann, 2012). These firms use Pinterest to attain contact with new and existing customers, show their products and services, but also, just as regular users, become inspired and take on new ideas from others (Petrecca, 2012). One of the questions that is essential to know for companies in Europe and Sweden is, if and how users are engaging with brands on Pinterest. The answers to these questions do not only decide whether a company should become active on Pinterest but they also give implications on how a company should best interact with users on this platform.
3 Methodology and Method

This section starts with the methodology, which will discuss the chosen research philosophy and approach. This chapter will also go through the method used to define, collect, and analyze the data. The first part comprises the philosophical basis for the research and is followed by an explanation of the method chosen to study the phenomena in question.

3.1 Methodology

Within the methodology, the philosophical foundation of the research and the research design will be presented.

3.1.1 Philosophical Foundation of the Research

In accordance with the qualitative approach chosen to explore the Pinterest usage of Swedes, the philosophical foundation of this thesis is based on an interpretivistic point of view. Interpretivism differs from positivism, which has its roots in the natural science, regarding their scientific aims (Schwandt, 2000; Malhotra & Birks, 2007). An interpretivist is trying to understand the research subject, whereas the positivist is searching for a universal explanation or law that can be used to predict future incidence (Schwandt, 2000). As “human actions are meaningful” one needs to understand the meaning behind an action in order to draw conclusions from it. These meanings can differ depending on the context (Schwandt, 2000: 191). The interpretivistic research philosophy is based on the idea that there exists no ‘context-free’ theory and that every interpretation of a text or information has to be viewed within its individual framework (Bender, 2014). With regards to the research subject, the interpretivistic research philosophy best reflects the goal of this thesis, which is, in depth, to understand the Pinterest usage of selected Swedes, rather than delivering generic explanations why people are using this platform. Therefore, the results of this study need to be understood within the context of Swedish users and Pinterest and they cannot automatically be applied to other countries or social media platform.

In the context of user behavior, a qualitative research approach has certain advantages over quantitative research. Qualitative research has for example a low degree of abstraction, which results in proximity to the research object that is often lost in quantitative research (Heinze, 2001). Also, as there has neither been sufficient research done on the usage of Pinterest in Europe nor Sweden, qualitative research is the most suitable approach for exploring an unknown subject, since it does not require the formulation of specific hypotheses, that would need to be tested in quantitative research (Heinze, 2001; Malhotra & Birks, 2007; Dworkin, 2012). Further, qualitative research allows conducting a study with a relatively small group of participants compared to the amount of primary data that is needed to draw conclusions from quantitative research (Malhotra & Birks, 2007; Dworkin, 2012). Since the usage of Pinterest in Sweden is not very common yet, finding an adequate number of participants is in any case difficult. However, the main advantage of qualitative research and an important task of this study is the ability to truly understand the participants’ behaviors, feelings and motivations when using Pinterest (Dworkin, 2012; Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Qualitative studies enable the researcher to uncover these often-subconscious thoughts through bonding with the participants and probing (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Finally, it can be concluded that only a qualitative approach can picture the holistic dimension of the research subject: Swedes usage of Pinterest.
With regards to the fairly limited theory and research in the field of Pinterest usage, conclusions from this study will be drawn by abductive reasoning. Unlike deduction, where the researcher uses general and sound theory to explain specific empirical findings (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012) or induction, where the observation of many single empirical events lead to general theory, abduction is not seeking for a universal explanation (Malholtra & Birks, 2007; Thagard & Shelley, 1997). Abductive reasoning tries to find the most likely explanation and therefore also a set of incomplete information can be used to draw conclusion from (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011). This is important, since only a limited amount of selected participants will be interviewed within this study, which, to some extent, can be seen as incomplete information. In the process of abductive reasoning, existing theory or a set of hypotheses are used to explain empirical findings (Thagard & Shelley, 1997). In some cases though, existing theories need to be adapted to new scientific insights. This advantage of abductive reasoning is crucial, since the questionnaire of this study, used for the interviews, is based on four distinct consumer behavior theories, which might need to be extended or reduced depending on the outcome of the interviews. Further, in a qualitative and exploratory study, where, as it has been explained, no generalizations to a large population can be made, abduction is the appropriate method of inference.

3.1.2 Research Design

Generally, there are three distinctive research designs known as descriptive, causal and exploratory research. As it can be derived from its name, the objective of descriptive research is to describe and measure individual variables (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). The research design is very structured and based on specific hypotheses that need to be tested. However, compared to causal research design, descriptive research is not investigating the relationships between different variables (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). Exploratory research differs from the other two research approaches through its flexibility (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). The focus of exploratory research lays on understanding the research subject and gaining new insights without the necessity of quantitative measurement (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). In the light of the limited research that has been done regarding the use of Pinterest, there is no background of previous studies to form hypotheses from, which makes neither descriptive nor causal research an appropriate research design at this point. Instead, an exploratory research design is seen as the adequate method, to explore the research subject from different angles. Especially with regards to the research questions of this study, which, among others, want to explore the underlying motivations people have for using Pinterest. Further, the question of how users perceive brand activity requires a deep understanding, independent of quantitative measurements and hypotheses, of how users interact with this new social media platform and what they expect from it.
3.2 Method
The method consists of information about the data collection, in-depth interviews and how the analysis of the data was conducted.

3.2.1 Data Collection

Secondary Data
Secondary data is, other than primary data, not specifically collected for the current research problem (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Despite that, secondary data is important for the theoretical background in order to reach a broad understanding of the research problem. In this case previous developed theories were used to develop a question guide for the in-depth interviews. Furthermore, secondary data can aid the interpretation and verification of findings from primary data collection (Malholtra & Birks, 2007).

Primary Data
Primary data collection enables the researcher to gather information, which directly addresses the research question (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). For this thesis, primary data was collected through qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews with Pinterest users from Sweden. As the advantages of qualitative research over quantitative research with regards to the research problem have already been explained earlier, the next step is to understand how the quality and accuracy of qualitative data can be assessed.

3.2.2 Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research
Every study, whether it is of qualitative or quantitative nature, needs to be “open to critique and evaluation” (Long & Johnson, 2000: 30). Quantitative studies are evaluated based on their reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the extent to which findings from a study can be repeated and the method and same measurement techniques will lead to the same results (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). Validity questions the appropriateness of the measurement tool and asks whether the chosen tool is actually measuring what it claims to do (Malholtra & Birks, 2007; Long & Johnson, 2000). The use of the terms validity and reliability for qualitative studies is a highly controversial topic among researchers and the concept trustworthiness is often found to be more appropriate (Shenton, 2004). To reach trustworthiness, four criteria have been identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and are accepted by most qualitative researchers that need to be fulfilled: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility in this case can be compared to internal validity and refers to the accuracy of the research data in representing reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are many different procedures that can be undertaken to ensure credibility; the following was realized within this study. First, the adoption of well established research models and method for data analysis. In this case well-known models such a as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Theory of Reasoned Action were used to develop a question guide, further the method of content analysis was used to analyze the data (Shenton, 2004). Second, through prolonged engagement in the usage of Pinterest, the researchers themselves have gathered information and knowledge on how to approach this topic (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Third, equivalence, a technique that uses alternative wordings for questions with the same meaning and projective questioning, a technique which “requires the subjects to give opinions of other people's actions, feelings or attitudes” (Donoghue, 2000: 49), were used
to increase honesty during the interviews (Long & Johnson, 2000; Shenton, 2004). As a fourth procedure, peer scrutiny was used to receive feedback from colleagues regarding the approaches and methods used to explore the topic of Pinterest usage in Sweden (Shenton, 2004; Long & Johnson, 2000). Fifth, the researchers kept a reflective journal throughout the interview process in order to constantly evaluate e.g. the effectiveness of the chosen methods (Long & Johnson, 2000; Shenton, 2004). At last, each interviewee was asked to validate his or her transcripts, in order to improve the credibility of the data (Long & Johnson, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004).

The second criterion for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research is transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability is supposed to represent external validity or generalizability, which is not a strength of qualitative studies, since they can hardly be applied to a context other than the one investigated in the study (Long & Johnson, 2000; Shenton, 2004). However, a “thick description” (Shenton, 2004: 70) of how the study was conducted, as it is presented in the methodology and method part, facilitates transfers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability asks whether the study’s results are consistent and if the same results can be repeated, it therefore is similar to reliability used to evaluate quantitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Again, a repetition of qualitative research may be difficult due to its strong contextual character, but a detailed description of the research design, how information were gathered and a reflection regarding the effectiveness of the chosen methods increase the study’s dependability (Shenton, 2004).

The last criterion that ensures the trustworthiness of a qualitative study is conformability, which evaluates a study’s neutrality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Especially in qualitative studies, a researcher’s motivation and interest can bias the outcome of the study. Therefore, detailed reasoning with regards to the strength and weaknesses of the chosen methods and a strong focus on the researchers own reflectivity maximize conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004).

### 3.2.3 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were chosen as the appropriate qualitative method for conducting this study. In-depth interviews are personal and direct interviews, where only one participant at the time will be questioned through an experienced interviewer (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). This method is used to gain deep and rich knowledge and understandings from individuals on a specific topic (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Chirban, 1996). Especially, the interviewees’ personal experience with Pinterest, their emotions and motivations behind the usage and the everyday context in which they are using this social media platform is important with regards to the research questions (Chirban, 1996; Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

The question guide of the in-depth interviews is semi-structured, which means that there is a predetermined set of open ended questions, but depending on the process of the interview, the interviewer will ask follow-up questions, probe and through active engagement motivate the participant to give rich information (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The interviews took place in private surroundings, where the participants were able to relax and feel comfortable answering to the questions; the participants were further informed that their identities would be kept anonymous (Chirban, 1996). In this study some interviews were online in-depth interviews, which means they were conducted over Skype or another online video call software. This is due to the fact, that some interviewees are not living
within the reach of the interviewers. In total fourteen interviews were conducted. In general, there exist no universal rule about the sample size of in-depth interviews and researchers have been trying to quantify this issue throughout the years with recommendations varying between 5 and 50 interview participants (Dworkin, 2012). Nevertheless, most researchers agree, that the point of saturation, when any further data collection is not giving any new insights, is an important indicator for when sufficient data has been found (Dworkin, 2012). The researchers believe, the point of saturation was reached with fourteen participants; otherwise the number of interviews would have been adapted.

The interviews were on average 45 minutes long. In the beginning of the interview, the interviewer clarified the goals and objectives to the participant. Through this procedure, the participants better understood what is expected from them and were additionally given the possibility to clarify questions for their part (Chirban, 2012). Further, throughout the interview, the interviewers were attentive and empathetic with the participant in order to successfully probe and receive the desired depth of answers (Chirban, 2012). Despite that, the interviewers needed to be self-aware of their individual impact on the participant (Chirban, 2012). Any conspicuousness was part of the notes the interviewers took during the interview session and were further written down in the reflection journals that both researchers kept. The notes from the interview were additionally supported by audio-records and the journals were discussed between the interviewers in order to improve later interviews. The question guide for the interviews can be found in appendix 2.

3.2.4 Selection of Participants

The interviewees for this study will be selected through purposive sampling or judgment sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method, which means that participants are selected by the researcher “without the using of any probability mechanism” (Singh & Singh Mangat, 1996: 7; Malholtra & Birks, 2007). Usually, purposive sampling is used when the participation in a survey or interview requires certain skills, which in this case is the factor that all participants have to be Pinterest users (Singh & Singh Mangat, 1996). Therefore, only a distinct part of the population of Sweden can be considered for this study and due to the still relatively low usage of Pinterest, it is difficult to find participants that have enough experience with the subject if using random sampling methods. By using purposive sampling the researchers can decide upon each case if a participant is suitable for the study (Black, 1999).

In this thesis, the participants were mainly bachelor or master students of the field of business, design or industrial engineering. In the sample there were also three working participants, one who works at an advertising agency, one who works for a TV channel and one person is working in telecommunication. The participants were in the age range of 20 to 26 years old. The requirement for selecting the participants was that they are Swedish and have an active Pinterest account.

3.2.5 Qualitative Data Analysis

The notes and audio data collected during the in-depth interviews were transformed into anonymous interview transcripts, where the participants were only characterized as male (M) or female (F). Subsequent to the transcription process the transcripts were coded and analyzed through directed qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).
Directed qualitative content analysis was chosen since it is combining the advantages of quantitative content analysis with interpretative analysis techniques (Mayring, 2000). This method is “used to interpret meaning from the content of text data” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1277), at which the focus is on understanding, rather than explaining the feelings, motivations and attitudes of the participants within the context of the research subject (Mayring, 2000). More specifically, during the content analysis process, the transcripts were fragmented and the textual fragments were then be assigned to different categories (Mayring, 2000; Malholtra & Birks, 2007). The addendum ‘directed’ refers to the way these categories are formed for the analysis process. In this case a deductive application of pre-defined categories was chosen. This means that the theories and concepts that have been described in the previous chapter, the Technology Acceptance Model, the Theory of Reasoned Action, need fulfillment and awareness of brand activity were used as guidelines for the precise definition of the categories and their coding rules (Mayring, 2000). This will be described more in detail in the following.

The Categorization of the Concept of Need Fulfillment

There are three distinct needs that Internet users are confronted with, the need of love and belongingness, esteem and lastly self-actualization. Specific question were asked in order to test the participating users which of these needs Pinterest addresses the most. These questions asked for example about the importance of the social aspect of Pinterest or the feeling that interviewees have when other Pinterest users start following them or repinning their pictures. Need fulfillment was therefore divided between the three needs mentioned above. The definitions for these categories were formulated in accordance with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, which can be found in the Theoretical Background. Table 1. Illustrates the content analysis categorization for the need of self-actualization used in this thesis. Similar tables were created for all three introduced needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C9: Self-actualization</td>
<td>Using Pinterest fulfills needs that are related to self-actualization. Expressing one’s creativity and ideas and/or finding solutions for problems play an important part</td>
<td>At least one aspect of the definition is clearly supported by the interviewee’s statement</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>“I’ve done a lot of baking and food from Pinterest and also sewing and crafts especially.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Mostly I use it for myself, so who’s on there and what they are doing is not that important.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Example Coding Sheet Based on Mayring (2000)

The Categorization of the Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action was chosen to find out, why Pinterest users are pinning specific pictures to their pin boards. As it has been explained in Chapter 2, two main factors influencing people’s behavioral intentions are a person’s own attitude towards the specific behavior and the subjective norm, which can be explained as the influence of other’s on a person’s behavior. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1975), as it has been explained in the Theoretical Background, ‘Attitude Toward Behavior’ can either be positive or negative and the ‘Subjective Norm’ either is high or low.
In order to test the user’s attitude towards pinning a certain picture, a neutral Pinterest picture was chosen to be shown to the participants. The participants were then asked if they would pin this picture and if they could explain their decision. Attitude towards behavior was therefore divided into two categories: positive attitude and negative attitude towards the behavior.

Thus, the factor subjective norm was also divided into high and low influence of other’s. Here, the interviewers asked the participants specific questions, regarding for example their opinion formation on social media or the general influence of friends on their decision-making. Table 2 is an example of how the Theory of Reasoned Action was categorized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1: Positive attitude toward behavior</td>
<td>Has positive associations toward the category (by e.g. having a board of the category) Has positive associations toward the picture Picture fulfills some kind of purpose for user</td>
<td>Minimum of two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward positive attitude about pinning behavior, otherwise C15 applies</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>219-220</td>
<td>“I pinned swings before but I want things to be a finesse with it.” “I like it.” “…but it’s not special enough for me to pin it.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Example Coding Sheet Based on Mayring (2000)

The Categorization of the Technology Acceptance Model

In accordance to its model, technology acceptance was divided in to the two primary categories ‘Perceived Usefulness’ and ‘Perceived Ease of Use’. Each primary category was then further divided into three sub-categories that classify the usefulness and ease of use of Pinterest as high, medium or low. An extract can be seen in the table following beneath. The table below shows exemplarily the category “C1: High Usefulness” with regards to factor ‘Perceived Usefulness’.

Technology Acceptance Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1: High Usefulness</td>
<td>Can verbalize a clear purpose for why he/ she is using Pinterest States that using Pinterest has made life better/easier Uses Pinterest at least once a week Rates ≥ 7</td>
<td>All four aspects mentioned in the definition have to point to “High Usefulness”, no aspect only ‘medium’ Other wise C5 applies</td>
<td>F6</td>
<td>88-90</td>
<td>“I can mind travel somewhere else and get ideas or get inspired and it’s just perfect when you have time and you don’t have anything else to do.” “Yes it has made life better. Easier maybe in for example cooking.” Uses it daily Rates usefulness 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Example Coding Sheet Based on Mayring (2000)
The Categorization of the Concept of the Awareness of Brand Activity

With regards to the awareness of brand activity, two main categories, awareness of brand activity on Pinterest and attitude towards brand activity on Pinterest, were formulated. Both were further sub-categorized into positive and negative attitude towards brand activity and awareness and accordingly unawareness of brand activity on Pinterest.

Table 4 is an example of the awareness of brand activity categorizing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C10: Is aware of brand activity on Pinterest</td>
<td>He/she is aware that brands are on Pinterest</td>
<td>Clearly states that he/she knows that there are brands on Pinterest, otherwise C11 applies</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts “Well Ben &amp; Jerry’s I know”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Example Coding Sheet Based on Mayring (2000)

After defining all categories and determining the coding rules, a first transcript was taken to test the coding sheet and necessary changes were made to ensure its immaculate applicability. Each researcher was then individually coding and analyzing the transcripts of the other party to minimize potential bias.

Lastly, critique on qualitative content analysis is expressed for example by Malholtra and Birks (2007), who are describing three main weaknesses. What the authors call ‘Manifest content’ refers to the problem that the categories must be clearly defined so that anyone coding the transcript will come to the same the results, but this way some implicit meanings cannot not be gathered (Malholtra & Birks, 2007). Further, fragmenting the text and analyzing the fragments isolated from its context can result in a “process described as losing the phenomenon, or failing to respect the original right of the data” (Malholtra & Birks, 2007: 251). Lastly, content analysis is described as a, by nature, quantitative method because its strength lays in detecting frequencies rather than simply examining the “the presence or absence of a ‘theme’” (Malholtra & Birks, 2007: 252).

The complete coding sheet for all models and their categories can be found in appendix 4.
4 Presentation of Empirical Findings

In this chapter the primary data collected by the authors are presented to the reader. The findings are grouped into the following 4 categories: (1) Need Fulfillment, (2) Theory of Reasoned Action, (3) Technology Acceptance Model and (4) Awareness of Brand Activity.

4.1 Need Fulfillment Findings

This thesis strives to find out which basic human motives, deriving from Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, relate to the usage of Pinterest. The needs for love and belongingness, esteem and self-actualization were identified in the Theoretical Background, as being the most relevant to social media users.

Love and Belongingness Needs

The love and belongingness need does not seem to be the main motive for any of the participants’ Pinterest usage. Most people stated that the social aspect is not important to them on Pinterest, unlike on Facebook or Instagram. For example, M2 stated: "I don’t care much for the social aspect of Pinterest and I really don’t care if somebody follows me or not” (lines 239-240). Many of the interviewees in this study feel that Pinterest differs from other social media in this specific category, for example F8 said: "I feel like it doesn’t get to a part where people get bullied for it. But on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram you need to be cool otherwise you can get bullied for it.” (lines 172-179). Generally, the respondents see Pinterest as a place to obtain inspiration from, not as a place where one must belong to a social group. “I don’t really care if my friends use it. I look at inspirational pictures for me and not for anyone. I think it’s more of a personal use so I don’t think I would be really affected about other people using it.” (F2, lines 464-467).

Esteem Needs

Esteem was another factor that did not seem to drive most of the interviewees to be on Pinterest, which was found out by for example asking the participants how it makes them feel when someone follows them or repins their pictures on Pinterest. Only a few people said that it feels good when someone follows them, likes or repins what they have pinned. For example F6 said: "Oh my god, they like what I like […] and I’m like ok I’m the best” (lines 44-47). Also M4 mentioned that: "It makes me feel good [when someone follows him on Pinterest]. Especially since I always get an e-mail when somebody starts following me.” However, most of the people who were interviewed did not care about how many people follow them, like or repin their pictures. For example when M5 was asked if he feels there is social pressure to be popular on Pinterest, he answered: "I don’t feel that at all when I use Pinterest and I think it’s impossible not to feel that when you use either Instagram or Facebook, or at least when you apply your own content.” (lines 280-286).

Self-Actualization Needs

Based on the interviews, self-actualization was found to be the biggest driver or motivator for users to be on Pinterest. Exactly half of the respondents utilize Pinterest, to some extents, in order to fulfill their self-actualization need. Most of the interviewed people use Pinterest to become inspired. Some said they use Pinterest to realize things they have pinned, for example, recipes or do-it-yourself crafts. M6 said: “I made my bar shelf in my apartment based on a picture I saw on Pinterest.” (line 84). Also a few people said that they have bought things based on their Pinterest boards. For example F8 said: “Me and my friend moved in August and we definitely have stuff that I have pinned.” (lines 141-144). Also M5 said: “Actually
The majority of people had a positive attitude toward the category of the picture of the swing, for example F8 said: “That makes me really excited for summer, it makes me feel I wish I was a kid again.” (lines 356-358) and F2 said: “It’s so summery, it looks really nice.” (line 269). However, having positive associations did not automatically mean that the individual would pin the picture. The attitude toward the category should in addition to being positive also be relevant for the participant. For example the participants who had a negative attitude toward the category of the shown picture seemed not to relate to the category. However, when these participants were asked how they feel about the category of a picture shown to them that they had pinned themselves they usually felt interested in the category. For example, M2 said he would not pin the picture of the swing because he said he is not at all interested in the category of the picture (line 325). However, it was obvious when participants were shown pictures that they had pin themselves that the interest in the category played an important role.

In addition to these main factors influencing the attitude toward pinning behavior, two other minor factors were encountered when conducting the in-depth interviews. The first additional finding affecting the participants pinning behavior was whether they had existing suitable boards, which suited the category the picture they saw was in. Some participants also liked to pin photos on their own private boards. For example, F3 said that she likes to
keep some of her pins e.g. recipes on hidden boards, because she likes the way her boards looks and the recipes do not visually suit her other boards (lines 20-27).

Finally, the fourth factor influencing the participants attitude toward pinning a certain picture seemed to be the frequency of pinning. The more often an individual pinned pictures, the more likely that person was to pin in general. A good example of this situation is participant F6. F6 is very active on Pinterest and has in total over 13,000 pins. She said: “I am really easily pinning everything, because I have I think quite many boards so I found like every picture almost suit one of my boards so if I found it even somehow interesting or that it tells me or that it’s related somehow to me then I’m just pinning it. I know that some people are going first to the, clicking it again and going to the original page, where the picture is from and checking it if it’s safe or, but I’m not thinking that long, just I just pin it if it’s nice.” (lines 250-254).

Subjective Norm

After exploring the participants’ attitude toward pinning behavior, the influence that others have on them was determined. The majority of people seemed to be generally influenced by what their friends and other social media users think about them. However, Pinterest seemed to differ from most social media platforms. On Pinterest users appeared to care less about what others think than on for example on Instagram or Facebook. However, generally the participants’ thought that what others pin reflects their personality to some extent. The interviewees who were highly influenced by others’ opinions, for example their friends fashion style, mostly thought that what others pin reflects their personality, for example, F8 thought that: “Either it reflects their personality or what they wish they had or who they were.” (lines 123-125). Another common opinion among highly influenced Pinterest users was that an individual’s pinning behavior influences others’ opinions of that individual. F9 stated: “One girl, who went to my class in the Bachelor started a fashion blog. It’s really mean but she posts really ugly things so everyone was making fun of her. So it does affect my opinion about them.” (lines 153-157). One third of the respondents felt that they are not influenced by others, for example M5 said: “Not at all, I’m pretty independent when it comes to that, I don’t try to dress like other people around me. So I wouldn’t say that influences me very much.” (line 353).

4.3 Technology Acceptance Model Findings

As it was explained in the previous chapter, concerning the Technology Acceptance Model, the answers of the interviews where categorized with regards to Perceived Usefulness of Pinterest or its Perceived Ease of Use.

Perceived Usefulness

Overall, for a majority of the interviewees, Pinterest has only a medium usefulness within the three possible categories 'high', 'medium' and 'low'. This means, that the three aspects defining category C5, users can somewhat verbalize a purpose for using Pinterest, the platform is somewhat making life easier for the user and the usage is irregular, are at large fulfilled. In details the aspects will be explained in the following.

Most of the participants stated that they are using the platform a couple of times a week, but that it does not play an important role in their everyday life. Further it can be seen, that it was often difficult for the interviewees to specify the purpose or the usefulness of Pinterest beyond the rather vague word ‘inspiration’. When users were asked about the usefulness of other social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram for example, they were
more clearly able to specify their usefulness in staying in touch with friends and communicating with others (e.g. M1, line 113; M2, lines 160-161; F5, line 127). With regards to that the participants were asked to rate the usefulness of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest on a scale from 1 to 10. Among the fourteen interviewees, Instagram was rated the most useful social media platform and Twitter the least useful. Pinterest placed third, closely behind Facebook.

![Average Rated Usefulness of Different Social Media Platforms](image)

Figure 9. Average Rated Usefulness of Different Social Media Platforms

Other than that, noticeably many interviewees stated that they are using Pinterest as a search engine and even preferring the platform to Google’s image search. Two quotes from two different interviewees best reflect this stance: “When you do a Google search for pictures, when you want something, you can get a lot crap. Like bad images and totally wrong or completely different than what you were searching for and I think Pinterest is more accurate. The things you search for are the things you get exactly” (M1, lines 24-26) and “If you go on Google and just put in a word, there are so many crap pictures that are not even related to the word or subject that you put in there, but on Pinterest it is actually what you are looking for” (F2, lines 23-26).

A main usefulness of Pinterest was also seen in the ability to save and collect pictures in one well-organized place, rather than taking a screenshot of pictures on the phone or downloading pictures from Google search and collecting them in a folder. The fact that Pinterest’s usefulness is mainly not rated highly can moreover be seen in the answers regarding the question, if Pinterest has made the user’s life easier or better in any way, which most users were negating.

Five of the interviewees found that Pinterest has a high usefulness for them. These participants are using the platform daily and were often able to recall specific situations when Pinterest was especially helpful and made life easier for them. One user for example stated that she was using Pinterest to create ideas for university projects, since she is a design student and another female user, who used to be an Au pair, found Pinterest very helpful in order to obtain ideas for arts and crafts projects she could do with the children she was taking care of (F1, lines 73-77; F3, lines 4-5). Further, these users were very enthusiastic about Pinterest and often referred to it as ‘perfect’ and that Pinterest makes them be excited (F1, lines 70-72; F6, lines 88-90).

None of the interviewed Pinterest users thought the platform had low usefulness.
**Perceived Ease of Use**

A majority of the participants found that Pinterest has a medium ease of use, within the three defined sub-categories, ‘high’, ‘medium’ and ‘low’ ‘Perceived Ease of Use’. Although many stated that Pinterest was not at all hard to use, they usually had difficulties in the beginning, when they started using the platform “I don’t think it was easy to use in the beginning” (M5, lines 100-103) or “In the beginning it was kind of hard to understand the concept of Pinterest” (M2, lines 31-32) were common statements. However, generally once they got more engaged with the platform they found it easy to use.

The interviewers further asked the participants to compare Pinterest’s ease of use to other social media platform, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and rate the ease of use of each platform from 1 to 10. Twitter was seen as the most complicated platform, but was also the least used one. Regarding the ease of use, Instagram was seen as the platform, which was the easiest to use, because according to the participants it has very few, self-explanatory functions. Instagram was followed by Pinterest and Facebook, which many said, has a lot of different functions especially for groups and was changing its interface too often.

![Average Rated Ease of Use of Different Social Media Platforms](image)

**Figure 10. Average Rated Ease of Use of Different Social Media Platforms**

When asked, how well they know the different functions of Pinterest, many participants said they only use and need the basic functions such as searching and pinning. Other, more social functions for example, the liking, commenting or messaging functions were rarely, and by some, never used also because they often did not know about them. With regards to how Pinterest can improve its ease of use, many users suggested introductory tutorials and additional tutorials for specific functions (M2, lines 77-78; F4, lines 23-24).

Only one user found that Pinterest has a high ease of use and another one, that Pinterest has a low ease of use. The user, who rated Pinterest to be highly easy to use, is accordingly a daily user, who also finds the platform highly useful. Conversely, the user who thought Pinterest had a low ease of use was rarely using the platform. This might show that the more a user is interacting with the platform, the easier they become acquainted with the functions and the better they understand the concept of Pinterest.
4.4 **Awareness of Brand Activity Findings**

With regards to the awareness of brand activity on Pinterest, the interviewees were asked specific question, aiming to uncover if Swedish users are aware of brands and how they perceive brand activity in general on this platform.

**Awareness of Brands’ Pinterest Activity**

In general, the interviewees did not pay much attention to brands on Pinterest. A small majority of 8 users was aware that there are brands on Pinterest. 6 Pinterest users, among them also frequent users, did not know that brands are active on Pinterest. Even among those who were aware of brand’s activity on Pinterest, only few followed brands. When asked which kind of brands they are following, most participants answered that they are following fashion brands such as H&M, J.Crew, Billabong, Filippa K. and Marimekko or interior designer/brands. Other brands that were mentioned, were for example FC Barcelona and Ben & Jerry’s. The interviewers also asked the participants how they found these brands on Pinterest, most answered that they accidentally found them rather than actively searched for them.

**Attitudes Toward Brands’ Pinterest Activity**

Regarding the interviewees attitudes towards brands’ activity on Pinterest, no user had a clear negative attitude towards brands having their own accounts and posting pins. Most users also said that they think Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands to be on: “I think since Pinterest has everything, it’s a great way to marketing the company without marketing” (F1, lines 272-274) or “I think it’s fun that they [brands] are becoming part of our lives. It’s fun to get inspired” (F2, lines 360-362). Despite that, the users were very particular that on Pinterest, they did not want to see pins from brands they are not interested in, as in regular banner advertisement or pop-up advertisement: “I’m just picturing this flow with a lot of advertisement and prices and it wouldn’t be as beautiful” (M1, lines 323-324). Further, many stated that if they follow a particular brand, the brand should be very selective about what they pin and how often, “[They should] do it a little subtle instead of pinning like crazy, because then I would start not taking it seriously” (F1, lines 298-299). The participants made also clear, that not only the brand itself, but also the content they share needs to be interesting enough for Pinterest users to follow them. According to the participants, what they really want to see from those brands are, next to pins of their products, for example so called ‘behind the scenes’ pictures of a brands creativity or manufacturing process.
5 Analysis and Discussion

This chapter will give a thorough analysis and discussion of the empirical findings combined with the theories presented in the theoretical framework.

5.1 Need Fulfillment Analysis

Love and Belongingness

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, individual’s main motivation to be on social media platforms such as Facebook is the feeling of belonging to a social group (Seidman, 2013). However, the love and belongingness need does not play such an important role on Pinterest, according to the empirical findings, as Pinterest’s main purpose differs from typical social media platforms, where people mostly communicate with friends and share their own personal content with others. Even though Pinterest has a social aspect to it by enabling users to add their friends, comment and like their pictures, most of the participants did not seem to have many of their friends on Pinterest to share their pins with them. Most of the participants either did not know or care if their friends are on Pinterest. For example, M1 said: "I don’t think I have friends at all [on Pinterest]. I don’t see the point of interacting on Pinterest. In the way I use it." (lines 157-158). The fact that many did not have their friends on Pinterest might be a reason why the participants did not seem to care much about the social side of the platform. However, many stated that they like Pinterest the way it is and in fact would not even want their friends to be active there and see everything they post. For example F3 said: "It’s kind of anonymous […] and I don’t have to post anything about myself" (lines 15-18) and that: "I want it to be my own and others don’t see it [what you put on Pinterest] constantly" (lines 115-116). Also F4 stated: “You don’t have to interact with other people on Pinterest. It gives you space and like an own room to be in, where you don’t have to talk to other people.” (lines 37-38). These statements might further underline the findings from Findahl (2015), according to which, Swedes are very active on social media but less likely to actively post themselves. Also the participants felt that Pinterest does not have the same social pressure that other social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) have. Meaning that the participants did not feel that they need to follow their friends on Pinterest the same way they have to on Facebook, where “unfriending” someone could be “the end of the world” (F1, line 322). Participant F2 said: “On Instagram you follow friends because you want to see what they’re doing, I don’t feel the same way about Pinterest.” (lines 210-212). Pinterest is not used as a typical social media platform, where people share their own content mainly to let other know what they are doing. Multiple interviewees stated that Facebook and Instagram are used for social purposes and the motivation to use Pinterest is not related to socializing with others.

From the finding that many of the participants do not find the social aspect of Pinterest important, arose the question whether it is due to the fact that the participants do not have many friends on the platform, or because the platform is designed in a way that the social aspect is not important.

Esteem

Pinterest highly differs from typical social media platforms such a Facebook and Instagram also when it comes to the human motivation to increase one’s self-esteem. On other social media platforms, individual’s self-esteem generally increases if they receive many likes on their posts e.g. photos or status updates. Among the interviewed participants, receiving many likes, comments or repins on Pinterest did not seem to be an important factor, espe-
cially when compared to Instagram and Facebook. One reason for this could be that the participants did generally not feel a high degree of social pressure to be popular on Pinterest.

Many participants felt that people in general do not post much of their own content on Pinterest, but instead repin what other users have pinned, likes or repins do not give them the same feeling as for example if someone likes their own photos on Instagram or Facebook because they feel that they cannot take credit for pictures that they have not taken themselves, which could also explain why their self-esteem level is not increased on Pinterest by the amount of likes or repins the users receive. For example F2 said: “It has a bigger effect on me if someone likes my picture on Instagram or Facebook then if someone repins something. It’s not my origin from the beginning, so I don’t really care about it.” (lines 218-220). M5 felt the same by saying: “To me it’s not important at all, since I usually repin, so I don’t distribute any of my own work.” (line 125). However, for a design student who said that she generally pins pictures related to her school projects said that it feels good when someone else, especially her school friends, like or repin what she has posted (F4, lines 44-47). This might mean that the more personal content Pinterest users pin the more important positive feedback from peer groups becomes, which is connected into the fulfillment of the esteem need. Thus, one reason why the participants did not find the social aspect on Pinterest important for them could be because most of the participants did not have their friends, whose opinion is important for them, on Pinterest, as mentioned also in the love and belongingness need analysis. Many said that they would use Pinterest more actively if more of their friends were using it and maybe the social aspect, such as liking and repining behavior of others would then become more important for the participants.

**Self-Actualization**

According to the empirical findings, self-actualization seemed to be the main driver for the participants to be on Pinterest. The most common motive for participants to be on Pinterest was to become inspired. As stated previously, the participants were mostly on Pinterest for themselves and not to belong to a specific social group. Most seemed to use Pinterest as a platform to somehow hone their creativity either by simply looking at inspirational photos or by creating something they saw on Pinterest such as crafts, recipes, interior design, etc. Compared to Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, Pinterest appears to be the platform, which most enhances its users self-actualization need. This differentiation could be a great competitive advantage for Pinterest.

Another reason why the self-actualization need is the biggest motivator for the participants to be on Pinterest could be because the Swedish culture is relatively individualistic (Hofstede, 2015b). According to Mook’s (1987) criticism toward Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the human behavioral motivation to pursue the self-actualization need applies mostly in individualistic cultures as the highest need. Therefore, an assumption could be made that the cultural values of Swedes is one explanation why Swedes use Pinterest the way they do. However, it could also be argued that the reason Swedes use Pinterest in an individualistic manner is because the platform forces its users to use it in that way. Furthermore, one could question whether the platform is designed to fulfill the individualistic self-actualization need due to the fact that Pinterest was developed in the US, as the American culture is a highly individualistic country (Hofstede, 2015c).

The fact that self-actualization is the main driver why people use Pinterest could possibly explain why it is generally a less used social media platform than for example Facebook and Instagram. The main reason why people use Facebook is to fulfill their love and belong-
The love and belongingness need (Seidman, 2013). The love and belongingness need is located lower on Maslow’s (1968) Hierarchy of Needs than self-actualization. This means that the love and belongingness is a more essential human motivation than self-actualization and, therefore, could explain the fact why Facebook is used more often than Pinterest.

5.2 Theory of Reasoned Action Analysis

The TRA model was used to analyze the participants’ behavior, more specifically their pinning behavior toward a picture of a swing (appendix 3).

Attitude Toward the Behavior

As mentioned in the theoretical framework the attitude toward a behavior can be either positive or negative, and it is more likely for the individual to perform a specific behavior if his or her attitude is positive. Thus, if the individuals have negative associations toward a behavior, in this case pinning a specific picture (appendix 3), they probably will not do it. The finding portrayed that the participants had mainly positive attitudes toward the shown Pinterest picture and the category of the picture. However, this still does not mean that the participants would necessarily pin the picture on their own Pinterest boards.

As stated in the findings the attitude toward the picture itself, whether positive or negative, had an impact on the participants’ pinning behavior. Mainly the participants who had positive associations toward the picture either found an aesthetic appeal or specific purpose for the picture. For example, M3 said that he had one board specifically for pictures of Singapore because he is going to travel there (line 35). The participants who had negative associations toward the picture (appendix 3) mostly said that they did not find anything special about the shown picture. When the same participants, who said they would not pin the shown picture, were shown a picture that they had pinned themselves, they seemed to be interested in not only the picture but also the category of the picture e.g. interior design or fashion. The pictures they had pinned themselves generally evoked some kind of positive emotions in the participants.

When it came to the participants’ attitude toward the category of the shown pictures, the finding was made that the category must be relevant and interesting to the Pinterest user in order for him or her to pin the picture. For example one participant said that she might pin the picture depending on what content she saw it in. She added an example that if she saw it in an outdoors board filled with similar pictures she might pin it, but if she saw the exact same picture on a family board including pictures of kids and puppies she would not pin it because she thought that the family category is too irrelevant for her current life situation (F2, lines 271-275). This finding can relate to the fact that many of the participants thought that what people post reflect their personality and, hence, people also seemed to want to post pictures on their Pinterest that they can relate to. Therefore, if the shown picture did not relate to a relevant category for them, the participants they might not pin it.

Another factor influencing why an individual might not pin a certain picture, in general, even though that person would have positive associations toward it and the category, could be because that person might not have a Pinterest board, which would suit the picture. As found in secondary literature (Hansen, Nowlan, & Winter, 2012) and stated in the theoretical framework, Pinterest is especially popular among individuals who like to collect and organize images. Therefore, if a specific picture does suit a Pinterest user’s other boards it might interfere with individuals’ pinning behavior. Therefore, if they would see a picture,
which is too far from any of their existing boards they might not feel like it is worth the extra effort of creating a new board just in order to pin one picture they find appealing. However, some participants said that they would create new boards if they found a new pin appealing enough, which would not fit the user’s current boards.

Finally, the frequency of the participants pinning also seemed to influence the participants’ attitude toward pinning the picture, as said in the findings. Among the interviewed participants, the more active they were on Pinterest and more specifically the more often they pinned pictures, the less criteria they seemed to have toward pinning a certain picture. Hence, the participants who had only very few pins were a lot more critical about what kind of pictures they would pin. This could be because the frequent users are more used to the platform and have overcome the hesitation that new Pinterest users have.

**Subjective Norm**

The other aspect of the TRA model is the subjective norm, which is the sum of opinions of referent others and individuals’ motivation to comply with their opinions. In this case, the TRA was used to find out how much others’ opinions influence an individual’s pinning behavior. Most of the interviewed participants agreed that what one pins or in general posts on any social media platform reflects that person’s personality to some extent. Also many thought that what others pin could change their opinion of that person. For example, M2 said: “It’s like every other social media platform is a part of who you are.” (lines 356-357). Other pinning behavior might not necessarily change people’s opinions about their personality, unless they post something extreme (e.g. political, religious or other sensitive topics), but it might change the way they perceive that person’s sense of style for example. M1 said that: “I would get another view of how he dresses and his taste in clothing.” (lines 245-249). Many of the participants also perceived Pinterest as a platform where people post pictures of things that reflect what they want to become or have in the future. For example, F8 said when asked if she thinks that what people pin reflects their personality or not that: “Either it reflects their personality or what they wish they were.” (lines 123-125).

One assumption to explain pinning behavior, in the content of subjective norm, could also be that people pin pictures because they want others to perceive them in a certain way. As the participants generally were to some extent influenced by others and thought that pinning reflects one’s personality they might pin things in order to create a self-image that they would like others to perceive them as.

### 5.3 Technology Acceptance Model Analysis

Looking at the findings regarding the technological acceptance of Pinterest, both influencing factors, ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ and ‘Perceived Usefulness’ are rated medium within the possible range of high, medium and low. This points to a medium attitude of the participants towards using the platform. As it has been described in the Theoretical Background, this can lead to medium behavioral intentions to use Pinterest and further to a medium likelihood of the actual system use (Davis, 1989).

Although it needs to be noted, that many participants were very modest about answering the question “How well do you know the different functions of Pinterest?”, which could have led to more interviewees being assigned to category C4, ‘High Ease of Use’. In general the question arises, how many functions are really necessary. As the findings show, the social functions of Pinterest are rarely used by the participants and the example of Instagram,
which had the highest rated ‘Ease of Use’, suggest that few, easily understandable functions might be the best way to attract and retain users.

Another factor that was influencing the result regarding the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ of Pinterest, were the difficulties most participants had when they first started using it. Many of them therefore suggested introductory tutorials to make it easier for first-time users to understand the functions and concept of Pinterest. By creating a new account on Pinterest, it was found out that, at least by now, there exists a short introduction every new user has to through and a detailed introductory guide can be found in the help section. Further, pop-up notes appear in the beginning explaining for example why and how to create pin boards. As the model shows the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ influences the attitude and therefore the actual system use. The results from the interviews however, could also lead to the conclusion that the frequency of the actual system use influences the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’.

According to the TAM, the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ can also be affected by word-of-mouth from current to potential or new users. In this case, it is unclear if the difficulties users face in the beginning of their Pinterest usage or the overall rated ease of use of 7.8 (out of 10) weighs higher concerning recommendations.

The ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ could affect how often specific social media platforms are used. For example, Twitter was found to be the most difficult to use and also it is the least popular social media platform out of Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. Whereas, Instagram was perceived as the easiest platform to use and, as mentioned in the Theoretical Framework, its usage has grown very rapidly in the recent years. Therefore, if minor changes were done to improve Pinterest, its ease of use it might lead to higher usage rates.

From the conducted interviews, assumptions can be made that the medium ‘Perceived Usefulness’ of Pinterest affects the frequency of using the platform. This can be seen in just a small number of participants using Pinterest daily and other users stating that they mostly use Pinterest if they are searching for something specific, which might not be a daily activity. Compared to the three well-known social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, Pinterest with an average rated usefulness of 6.36 out of 10, is placing third, closely behind Facebook. Although, the relatively low ratings of Facebook (6.63) can partly be explained with an overall negative attitude of the participants towards this social media platform and not necessarily reflects Facebook’s true usefulness. However, the comparison shows that Pinterest has to some extent a lack of day-to-day usefulness. The statements regarding the usefulness of Facebook and Instagram for example expose that staying in contact with friends is the participants’ main purpose for using these platforms. Becoming inspired, the use of Pinterest as an image search function and storage for images is not as essential to the participants’ daily life. Or in other words, Pinterest as a technology system does usually not improve their users’ performance in daily tasks, as other social media. The apparently low social interactions, with regards e.g. to commenting, liking or messaging, when compared to Facebook or Instagram, further underline the island position of Pinterest as a social media platforms. In connection with the already discussed social aspect of Pinterest, some users stated that they would indeed use the platform more often if more of their friends were active on Pinterest, although, as it has been explained, others said this would not or even negatively affect their usage. Therefore, having more friends on Pinterest and being able to interact with them would be an additional purpose for some users to be active on this platform, as it can be seen on Facebook or Instagram, and might lead to higher frequency of using Pinterest.
It can be seen, several factors are influencing the ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ and the ‘Perceived Usefulness’, with both contributing individually to the medium attitude towards using Pinterest, which can be seen in the fact that Pinterest is used less frequently than other social media platforms. Overall, this could be part of the explanation, why the distribution and usage of Pinterest is still relatively low in Sweden and Europe in general.

5.4 Awareness of Brand Activity Analysis

The information and numbers that were presented in the earlier parts of this thesis, showed how Pinterest’s is widely used by brands and companies of all sizes, because of its great ability to reach a specific target group, raise brand awareness and even generate significant sales by leading traffic from pins to a company’s online shop.

Comparing this information, which is mainly based on data deriving from Pinterest’s home market, the US, with the findings from interviewing Swedish Pinterest users, the prospect for brands looks a lot different. Not only are many of the interviewees not aware of brands on Pinterest, even the ones who are, do not follow any or just very few brands. This of course can also be due to fact that many brands that users would be willing to follow might not yet be active on Pinterest. In general, this shows the subordinate role brands play on Pinterest. Despite the fact for example that two-thirds of all pins originate from brands and other businesses, even some long time users seem not to be aware of their presence (Schiff, 2015). Also, those users are usually not actively looking for brands further underlines the finding that brands and companies are not very important for many users and the way they interact with Pinterest. It can be argued that there is a coherence between the subordinate role of brands and the statements of many of the interviewed users, that being active on Pinterest can be compared to living in one’s own bubble and planning for a far away and maybe never reached future. Brands in that context would present actual products that can be bought at this exact moment and which might not be available anymore in a few months (e.g. clothing or furniture). Some users might therefore prefer to pin ‘timeless’ and brand unrelated pictures to keep up the illusion, that they could buy these items at the right time in the future, for example when they own a bigger apartment, have a better financial situation or started a family.

Although, the participants were generally not averse to brands being active on Pinterest, many of the Swedish users interviewed were concerned about how brands would want to interact with them. The interviewees accept brands as being a regular part of social media platforms but they are concerned that advertising could take over Pinterest, as it has happened on Facebook, where banner ads are placed in between and next the news feed. Of course the results regarding the awareness of brands on Pinterest and the attitude towards brand activity also have to be seen in the light of Europeans being in general less interactive with brands on social media compared to US-Americans. For example European social media users follow fewer brands, share less brand content and the most likely reason for consumers to interact with brands on social media, is to solve customer service issues faster (Kepner, 2014).

Another point that could affect the extent to which brand successfully interact with Pinterest users, is the amount of attention users pay to the content of pins while browsing Pinterest. As many participants stated, especially the ones who are using the platform daily and without any specific purpose, they often spend time on Pinterest while at the same time watching TV, listening to music or for example when they are on the bus. In these situa-
tions their attention span might be rather low, which in return means that brand pins can easily be overlooked, or users are not realizing that certain pins originate from brands.

The statements the participants made about how they wish companies and brands would interact with them on Pinterest mostly correspond with three suggestions made by Kaplan and Haenlain (2010), namely that companies need to be active, be interesting and be unprofessional. In particular this means that Pinterest users want to see current content, but not an overload of brand related posts, since the inspirational, from users for users character of Pinterest, which is almost seen as sacred, should be maintained. Moreover, brands need offer content that makes it worth following them. This is reflected in the participants’ wishes to see ‘behind the scenes’ pins and not only pure product or brand related pictures. As it has been explained, this can include pins showing the creative process behind new products and also introduce key employees to the consumer. Being unprofessional and playful also means e.g. to share inspirational mood pins (e.g. food or travel pictures) that allow users to better relate to brands and their employees. Additionally, Kaplan and Haenlain’s (2010) advice for companies to be humble and intensively study new social media platforms and their users before becoming active can be affirmed by the many matching and very specific statements the participants have made regarding what they would like and would not like to see from brands on Pinterest.

Compared to brands operating in the American market, the starting position for European or Swedish brands on Pinterest seems to be less promising. However, the inspirational character of Pinterest, especially with regards to fashion products, interior design, food and traveling, may lead to the rather positive and in parts enthusiastic attitude many of the interviewed users had about brand activity. One can argue that Pinterest users are used to seeing products in their feed, which makes it easier for companies to place product related pins without disturbing Pinterest’s distinctive features. Compared for example to other social media platforms, such as Facebook, where users are still dissatisfied with the overload of advertising, Pinterest might be a more suitable and welcoming platform for businesses to raise brand awareness and to interact with consumers, without the usage of ads (Simonite, 2013). Although the low rate of social interaction on Pinterest will likely also affect the interaction between brands and consumers. The often mentioned two-way-communication might be more important on other social media platforms where the social aspect is more distinct. Nonetheless, as it can be seen in the Pinterest’s US-market, the inspiration many user receive from product pins, are more likely to lead to actual sales than marketing efforts on other social media platforms (Patel, 2014).
6 Conclusion

In this section the research questions will be answered in order to provide the reader a clear understanding of the essential ideas of this thesis. Contributions, limitations and implications of the thesis will also be presented in this section.

6.1 Answers to Research Questions

The three research questions, which were set in the beginning of this thesis in order to achieve the main purpose of the study, to explore how Swedes are using Pinterest, are answered below.

RQ1: How do Swedes use Pinterest and what underlying motivations do Swedes have for using Pinterest?

Out of the fourteen interviewed Swedish Pinterest users the majority uses Pinterest as a source of inspiration, either for browsing around or when searching for something specific. For example, when looking for recipes, inspiration for clothing or interior design. Many of the participants use it as a search engine for images and some stated that they prefer Pinterest to Google’s image search as the quality of the pictures on Pinterest is better. The interviewees also use Pinterest as a platform to store, organize and categorize images. The interviewed Swedes mostly use Pinterest when they do not have anything else to do as a pass time, mostly on their mobile phones whilst doing something else at the same time e.g. watching a movie or using public transportation. Pinterest is generally used less often than other social media platforms, such as Facebook or Instagram, but more time is spent on Pinterest. In order for the participants to pin certain pictures, they stated that the picture needs to have either an aesthetic appeal to them or some kind of useful purpose such as do-it-yourself instructions, recipes, etc. Furthermore, the participants generally had positive associations to toward the categories of the pictures they pinned. Other people’s opinions also have, to some extent, an influence on whether the interviewed Pinterest users would pin a picture or not.

The underlying motivations for the interviewed Swedes to be on Pinterest are not belonging into a social group or increasing their self-esteem, as in other social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram), but mostly for self-actualization. Pinterest increases its users self-actualization need by enabling them to become inspired and to be creative.

RQ2. How do Pinterest’s usefulness and its technological features impact Swedes’ attitudes towards the social media platform?

Applying the Technology Acceptance Model to the answers given by the fourteen interviewed Swedish Pinterest users, it was found out that both factors influencing the adoption of a new technology, namely ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ and ‘Perceived Usefulness’ were rated medium, within the three possible categories high, medium and low. The medium ‘Perceived Usefulness’ mostly derives from the fact that Pinterest does not help to improve the performance of essential and day-to-day tasks, such as communication. This can also be seen in the fact that Pinterest’s main purpose of inspiration and creativity deriving from the need for self-actualization is placed higher on Maslow’s need pyramid, making it less vital. Although, the search function and the possibility to save and manage inspirational images was in general seen as useful and something that sets Pinterest apart from other social media platforms.
The medium rated ‘Perceived Ease of Use’ of Pinterest, is firstly stemming from the difficulties many users had in the beginning, in understanding Pinterest’s function and concept. Secondly, from the participants stating that they only used the basic functions and often did not know or care about other functions. Despite that, the general opinion was that Pinterest is a platform that is easy to use, once one is familiar with the concept.

The participants’ attitude towards using Pinterest is therefore also medium. This is reflected in the fact that Pinterest users were not using this platform as frequent as other social media platforms and can generally be seen in the relatively low adoption rate of Pinterest in Sweden.

RQ3: How do Swedes perceive brand activity on Pinterest?

In general, it was found out that so far for Swedish Pinterest user, brands do not play an important role. Even though a small majority of users were aware of the fact that brands exist on Pinterest, only few also followed brands.

Overall, the interviewed participants had a positive attitude towards brands being active on Pinterest and brand activity was seen as an inevitable part of social media. However, this positive attitude was usually on the condition that brands behave in certain ways with the user. On one hand, this means banner advertising and unwanted, frequent pins from brands users are not following were said to have immense negative affect on the perception of these brands. On the other hand, interesting pins, from various sources and regarding various topics, not only product related, were highly appreciated.

Summary

To conclude, even though Pinterest is still relatively unpopular in Sweden the interviewed Swedish participants had mostly very positive associations toward the platform. Minor technological improvements, e.g. to enhance the platform’s ease of use, could lead to potential future growth, particularly in Sweden and Europe. However, and that is important for marketers to understand, Pinterest might be a social media platform that is in general not used as frequently as others, such as Facebook, due to its main purpose of being an inspirational site. Furthermore, according to the empirical findings of this thesis, Pinterest is overall a suitable platform for brands and companies, especially those related to fashion, interior design or food products, since the purpose of this platform in being an inspirational source is often already closely related to various kinds of products. Here, Pinterest might be an exception to other platforms, where social media marketing is more focused on consumer-brand communication than on promoting products. The concept of Pinterest itself is more related to products than to interactive communication, which is why Pinterest can be more attractive to brands than other social media. Pinterest’s effort in introducing promoted pins is also aiming at brands to become more visible to users, which on the long-run needs to be supported by other mechanisms to make users more aware of brands and brand activity. Despite that, brands and also Pinterest have to listen closely to the needs and wants of Pinterest users and respect their demands of keeping the platform’s inspirational character and not over-commercializing it.
6.2 Contributions

There exists only a fairly limited amount of literature concerning the topic of Pinterest and out of the existing literature none focus especially on Swedes Pinterest usage or on how individuals interact with Pinterest. As Pinterest is the world’s fastest growing social media platform, it has great growth potential in Sweden, also since Swedes are especially interested in fashion and design, which are Pinterest’s main categories.

Although there is a fairly small amount of Swedes who use Pinterest, in this study fourteen participants were found for the in-depth interview, who were able to give valuable insights in how they are using this social media platform and also on their perception of brand activity. Therefore, this thesis gives a broad overview of different aspects of Swedes’ Pinterest usage connecting it with multiple well-known theories.

If Pinterest usage in Sweden is increasing, this study can be useful for various Swedish and European brands, especially SME’s with limited resources. Instead of the brands needing to ‘chase the market’, this study can work as an instruction for these brands by helping them create a social media marketing strategy and, furthermore, better reach their target audience by knowing how to best utilize Pinterest.

6.3 Limitations

With regards to this thesis certain limitations need to be addressed. First, the overall lack of research resulted in a deficiency of sufficient academic articles regarding Pinterest. Therefore, in the majority, the authors had to rely on Internet sources, such as specialized business and advertising websites. The advantage of using these sources is however their currentness.

Second, the Theory of Reasoned Action was mainly used to explore, if certain factors (e.g. attitude towards the picture, attitude toward the category or the influence of others) have an impact on a person’s pinning behavior. These factors in questions are by now means exhaustive and need to be studied more thoroughly.

As earlier mentioned, Pinterest is still relatively unpopular in Sweden, which is why finding Swedish Pinterest users to participate in the in-depth interviews was rather challenging. Thus, purposive sampling was used, which does not give a broad variation among the participants’ demographics. Further, also some Pinterest users, with a less frequent usage of the platform, were interviewed, which could affect the results regarding e.g. the Technology Acceptance Model. Also as the study is qualitative, no generalizations of the whole population of Sweden can be made based on this thesis.

Another limitation is that the secondary data used in this thesis was not originally meant for the topic at hand, which means that some adaptations had to be made. Additionally, certain secondary data e.g. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and the TAM have, to some extent, been criticized, but are still widely recognized and were found to be suitable for this study.

Finally, the study broadly touched upon multiple theories and concepts and therefore cannot give in-depth results to each of the presented topics.
6.4 Implications

In the following, deriving from the findings of the study, implications for companies, Pinterest and for further research are presented.

6.4.1 Implications For Companies

Customers of all businesses are active on social media, which is why companies should also use various social media platforms more actively. Social media has proven to strengthen multiple business strategies and not knowing how to use social media platforms, especially Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest could be a huge disadvantage for companies. Therefore, companies should take action and learn how to use as many social media platforms as actively as possible. Pinterest is a suitable social media platform for businesses, especially of the fields of fashion and interior design, targeting women, however they should use it in a strategic manner, which attracts their consumers.

Brands should be selective about what they pin and not to pin too many pictures too often; otherwise Pinterest users will become irritated. Not only should brands’ pins be selective Pinterest users do not want to see sales pitches or direct advertisement, which would destroy the creative atmosphere of Pinterest. Especially prices in product picture would ruin the dream world that Pinterest users create for themselves.

Companies should pin pictures, which are aesthetically appealing, relevant to their target audience and fulfill some kind of purpose. Companies should not only pin pictures of their own products but also show some ‘behind-the-scenes’ pictures e.g. photos from the brand’s office, mood board pictures, product development pictures, etc. There additional pictures would invite the consumers to see what the brand’s values are and where they receive inspiration from, which could create a closer relationship with their customers. An implication especially targeted for clothing brands is that they should not only post catalogue style pictures with high fashion models but also images of ordinary people wearing their clothes.

A good way for brands to increase their sales is to direct Pinterest users straight from their pins to their online stores, to facilitate purchasing.

Not only should brand be more active on Pinterest but they should also advertise their presence on it more actively so that Pinterest users are more encouraged to search for brands. Therefore, brands should use Pinterest’s promoted pins feature or other methods to make themselves more visual for Pinterest users.

6.4.2 Implications For Pinterest

As it was explained, technological and conceptual difficulties in the beginning of the usage were the main issue interfering with Pinterest’s ease of use. Although the suggestion arising from that, regarding an introductory tutorial, which clearly explains the platform’s different features, was already implemented. Still, the “Help Center”, which additionally provides the user with information, could be made more visible. Further, in case Pinterest was not synchronized with Facebook, it was mentioned that finding ones friends or specific people to follow, was rather difficult. In that context, Pinterest should also improve its search function, especially for the mobile application.
In general, Pinterest should focus on improving the functions that are essential to the user, which is the search function and the smart feed, instead of constantly adding new functions to the platform. Especially the social functions, for example the messaging tool, are rarely used. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that people would rather use Facebook or other social media to communicate with. On the other hand, even if they wanted to use Pinterest’s social functions, the interviewed Swedish users often did not have many friends on Pinterest that they could talk to or share pins with. The smart feed on the other side would need more attention from Pinterest’s developers. The smart feed often shows certain pins repeatedly and it does not have, unlike for example Facebook’s feed, a memory regarding which parts of the feed the user has already seen.

In order to improve the interaction of brands and user, Pinterest could recommend popular brands to follow, with regards to each user’s individual interest. In that way, Pinterest enables brands to attain contact with users more easily, but at the same time gives it’s users the opportunity to carefully select which brands might be of interest to them.

Also, Pinterest should market itself better as it is still fairly unknown in Sweden. Pinterest could for example cooperate with popular Swedish fashion or food bloggers, who then integrate a Pinterest account to their websites and ask their readers to also follow them there.

Finally, as it has been explained Pinterest users highly value the site’s inspirational and advertising free concept, which is why despite Pinterest’s recent effort to integrate brands more into the platform, the platform’s original inspirational and do-it-yourself character should be maintained.

### 6.4.3 Implications For Future Research

This thesis was a qualitative study exploring Swedes’ Pinterest usage behavior. Some aspects that were addressed in this study are worth exploring more in depth or respectively worth to be investigated from a different perspective.

As it has been mentioned for example in the previous chapter, Pinterest was often used in situations were users could easily be distracted. This phenomenon could be further researched with help of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which mainly focuses on the explanation how consumers are differently persuaded by certain advertisement messages, depending on their individual level of involvement (Solomon et al., 2013). The results would be both vital for brands and Pinterest, since it is important to know if users notice the difference between regular pins and explicit brand related pins.

Another suggestion for further research is to study which factors interfere between the behavioral intention to pin a certain picture and the actual pinning behavior.

It would also be very interesting to further research how other different cultures use Pinterest. India for example has the second highest Pinterest usage in the world and is, unlike Sweden, a collectivist country. Therefore, a study about Indian Pinterest usage could be compared to this thesis in order to see whether the assumption that self-actualization is the biggest motivator among Swedes for using Pinterest derives from the fact that Sweden is an individualistic country or if the way Pinterest is developed, is meant to serve the need for self-actualization.

An interesting comparison and worth to investigate is, if the subjective norm is indeed significantly higher on other social media, such as Instagram or Facebook, since users have
more friends there and the need for love and belongingness on these platforms seems to be more distinct.

Further, the Theory of Reasoned Action should not only be used to explore what other factors can influence the pinning behavior of Pinterest users, but a quantitative study should also focus on how much influence each individual factor (e.g. the attitude towards the picture, the category etc.) has.
List of references


Appendix

Appendix 1. Pinterest Profile Interface

1. The image search feature
2. Notifications
3. The number of boards a user has
4. The number of pins a user has
5. The number of pictures a user has liked
6. The number of followers a user has
7. The amount of people a user is following
8. An example of a Pinterest user’s board
9. The help center button

(Pinterest, 2015d)
Appendix

Appendix 2. Guide for Semi-Structured Interviews

Introduction Questions
How old are you?
What is your occupation?
What are your general thoughts about Pinterest?
When did you start using Pinterest?

TAM
What makes you be on Pinterest/What do you like about it? (How did you find out about Pinterest?)
Do you find Pinterest easy to use and why?
How well do you know the functions of Pinterest?
Would you like to change something?
How useful is Pinterest for you and what purpose does it fulfill?
Has Pinterest made your life easier/better in any way and how?
Have you ever realized/bought anything that you pinned?
Where do you see advantages/disadvantages of Pinterest compared to similar social media platforms? (general, regarding the usefulness, ease of use)

Usefulness: Facebook 1-10 Ease of Use: Facebook 1-10
Twitter 1-10 Twitter 1-10
Instagram 1-10 Instagram 1-10
Pinterest 1-10 Pinterest 1-10

Need Fulfillment
How important is the social aspect of Pinterest to you? (are many of your friends on Pinterest?)
How does it make you feel when someone follows/likes/repins? (Why?)
Is there a difference for you, if a friend or an unknown Pinterest user likes/repins your pin?
How does looking at images from Pinterest make you feel? (Why?)
Do you re-visit your boards to look at your pins? (Why and how does it make you feel?)

TRA
What are your criteria for pinning/liking?
-- Showing one of their own pictures
Appendix

What’s your general opinion about this topic?
Why did you pin this picture?
  -- Showing a random Pinterest picture?
Why or why not would you Pin this picture?
What’s your general opinion about this topic?
How much does the pinning behavior of others influence your opinion of them?
To what extent do you think that what people pin reflects their personality?
How much does your friends’ fashion style influence you?
How much do you think, you are influencing your friends fashion choices?

Awareness of Brand Activity

Are you aware that brands have their own Pinterest accounts and how does this make you feel?
Do you follow any brands on Pinterest?
If yes -- did you know it before? Search for it? New brand discovery?
How did you find it?
How does brands’ Pinterest activity affect your attitude about the brand? (Do you see brands on Pinterest as advertisement?)
How should the ideal brand/company activity on Pinterest look like? (How should they page look like, what should they share (normal catalogue pictures or how should the pictures be set up?; should they only post product pictures or also other).

End

Do you have anything to add?
Do you have any questions for me?
Appendix

Appendix 3. Picture of a Swing
### Appendix 4. Content Analysis

#### Technology Acceptance Model

**Perceived Ease of Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1: High Ease of Use</strong></td>
<td>• From the start, found the platform easy to use</td>
<td>F6</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>“Yeah extremely easy to use.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knows all functions well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75-76</td>
<td>Knows the functions well: “I think it is not that complex, the whole thing is really easy.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No suggestions for improvement with the ease of use, very satisfied with the platform's ease of use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>182</td>
<td>No improvement suggestions: “I’m quite satisfied.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rates ease of use at least 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rates ease of use as 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2: Medium Ease of Use</strong></td>
<td>• Finds the platform easy to use, despite some difficulties in the beginning</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56-57</td>
<td>“I think it’s super easy.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Knows all basic technical functions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I think there is so many functions that I don’t know about. I use such basic stuff and I don’t have the energy to look through everything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some minor suggestions for improvement regarding the ease of use, generally satisfied with the ease of use</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Finds it easy to use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Knows the basic functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>177</td>
<td>Has not suggestions for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F3</td>
<td>39-40</td>
<td></td>
<td>“First it wasn’t that easy because you have t find the</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>People who you wanna follow</td>
<td>Maybe I don’t know all of the new functions, but the basics</td>
<td>Maybe I would change that you can find people more easily</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates ease of use a 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F4</th>
<th>“I am not really sure if it’s easy to use. It’s easy to use but maybe not so easy to know every function”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“When you first get the app, there could be an introduction that shows how to use it and to do different things to go through the app”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F5</th>
<th>“Everything was a bit complicated in the beginning, yes. But it’s for sure not hard to use”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Just feel like everything’s clear”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not know the functions well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No suggestions regarding the ease of use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rates ease of use a 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F7</th>
<th>Finds it easy to use.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendix</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F8</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>“I think it’s the easiest place to use.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75-77</td>
<td>“I bet there is more stuff that I don’t know that you can do, but I feel like I know the basics.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95-96</td>
<td>“I wish I would notice where on the page I was at, now I have to scroll all the way back through what I’ve already seen.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
<td>Rates ease of use as 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M1</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Finds it easy to use.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-42</td>
<td>“I don’t really have a complete knowledge of how to do [all the functions]. I don’t do all that.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54-55</td>
<td>“A development could be a build in function for stores if you wanna buy stuff”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Rates ease of use 5-6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M2</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>“It’s not difficult to understand how you use it”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-32</td>
<td>“In the beginning it was kind of hard to understand the concept of Pinterest”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Knows the basic functions well. No improvement suggestions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-78</td>
<td>functions well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>184</td>
<td>Suggestion for improvement: clear tutorial when start using the platform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rates ease of use as 8</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M3</th>
<th>163-164</th>
<th>Finds it easy to use: “It’s a pretty intuitive way”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Rates ease of use 8. “It’s really easy to use. At least the main functions. But then again the small like if you wanna go pro with it. There should be some tutorials or whatever”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M4</th>
<th>37-38</th>
<th>Finds the platform relatively easy to use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55-56</td>
<td>Suggests improvement regarding the easiness to find other people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M5</th>
<th>100-103</th>
<th>“I don’t think I though it was easy to use in the beginning.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>113-117</td>
<td>“The technical things I’ve mastered.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>167-170</td>
<td>“I think Pinterest needs to start deciding what kind of functions do we absolutely need and how we develop them, instead of trying to add stuff into it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>267</td>
<td>Rates ease of use as</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Perceived Usefulness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C4: High Usefulness</td>
<td>• Can verbalize a clear purpose for why he/she is using Pinterest</td>
<td>All four aspects of the definition have to point to “high usefulness”, no aspect points to “medium” or “high ease of use”</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>“It’s very useful, it’s useful in the way that I am getting inspired and getting excited about stuff, because I like to do a lot of crafts, both clothes and food and it’s super useful to get inspiration.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• States that using the platform has made life better or easier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is using the platform regularly (at least once a week)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rates usefulness at least 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C3: Low Ease of Use

- Does not find it easy to use; ongoing difficulties in understanding how to interact with the platform
- Difficulties in understanding the technical functions
- Generally dissatisfied with the ease of use; many suggestions for improvement regarding the ease of use

Rates ease of use below 4

All four aspects of the definition have to point to “low ease of use”, no aspect points to “medium” or “high ease of use”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F9</td>
<td>25-26</td>
<td>“It’s not easy at all when you first started, because I don’t understand what’s the point to pin stuff and like that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-33</td>
<td>Doesn’t know the functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34-36</td>
<td>Improvement suggestion: “I think there’s too many functions.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Especially when I was an Au Pair. I had smaller kids, they were...”
home quite a lot and because the days can be very long, so I’ve been searching on Pinterest for a ton of times to get inspiration and to get crafts…”

Uses Pinterest regularly: “Maybe two, three times a week.”

Rates usefulness of Pinterest a 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F3</th>
<th>4-5</th>
<th>“You can find a lot of inspiration and I think it’s very useful for our projects”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-32</td>
<td>“Every time I search for a picture I don’t go to Google anymore. I go to Pinterest first.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>“But now I use it almost daily.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
<td>“The main purpose is inspiration”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Pinterest has made life easier with regards to saving pictures at one place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Rates usefulness a 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F6</th>
<th>88-90</th>
<th>“I can mind travel to somewhere else and get ideas or get inspired and it’s just perfect when you have time and you don’t have anything else to do.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106-107</td>
<td>“Yes, it has made my life better. Easier maybe in for ex-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Coding Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **C5: Medium Usefulness** | • Can somewhat verbalize a purpose or use for why he/she is using Pinterest; states that the platform is not very useful for them but for others  
• States that using the platform has made life somewhat/partly better or easier  
Is using the platform irregularly (sometimes more, usually less than once a week) | If not all aspects of the definition point to “high”- or “low usefulness” | F2        | 49   | *Uses it “Once or twice a week”*  
“I think it’s useful for when you need inspiration”  
“It’s made it easier and better in terms of finding”  
Rates usefulness 6 to 7 |
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>Has not made life easier/better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>121</td>
<td>Rates usefulness 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F7</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>The purpose is “to get inspiration”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83-84</td>
<td>Has “not really” made life easier.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>“For inspiration. Looking for something specifically.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>“I haven’t really gotten into it.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>“I might have been on Pinterest like 2 times this year”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68-69</td>
<td>“It isn’t the most useful site, but no social media is very useful in that sense, it’s more like a hobby”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69-70</td>
<td>“Sometimes I use it as a search engine when Google isn’t good enough. Like I said you get more accuracy on Pinterest”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Hasn’t made life any easier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Rates usefulness a 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>87-88</td>
<td>“Finding sketches and concepts would be my primary object of using Pinterest”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106-7</td>
<td>“I wouldn’t say it’s made life better”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>“That would be like once a week or something like that”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Coding Rules</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6: Low Usefulness</td>
<td>• Cannot verbalize a purpose for</td>
<td>All four aspects of the definition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
why he/she is using Pinterest or what he/she is using the platform for; states that the platform is not useful
- States that using the platform has not made life better or easier
- Seldom using the platform
- Rates usefulness below 4

have to point to "low usefulness", no aspect points to "medium" or "high usefulness"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need fulfillment</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **C7: Love and Belongingness** | Using Pinterest fulfills the need of belongingness, by being included in a social network, where interpersonal communication and the exchange of information plays an important role | At least one aspect of the definition is clearly supported by the interviewee’s statement | **F2** | 199-210-212 | Social aspect not important  
“Like on Instagram you follow friends because you wanna see what they’re doing. I don’t feel the same way about Pinterest.”  
“I don’t really care if my friends use it. I look at inspirational pictures for me and not for anyone. I think it’s more of a personal use so I don’t think I would be really affected about other people using it.” |
| | | | | 464-467 | |
| | | | **F3** | 15-18 | “It’s kind of anonymous. [...] they are not my own pictures, they’re somebody else’s [...] And I don’t have to post anything about myself if I don’t want to.” |
| | | | | 115-116 | “I want to be my own and others don’t see it constantly.” (What you
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>37-38</td>
<td>“You don’t have to interact with other people on Pinterest. It gives you space and like own room to be in, where you don’t have to talk to other people”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F5</td>
<td>169-170</td>
<td>“I don’t feel I have to be social on there. I don’t think it’s really necessary for the like and comment thing on it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>182</td>
<td>“I haven’t looked for my friends who are on there yet”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F6</td>
<td>188-190</td>
<td>Social aspect is not so important: “Of course it’s some sort of interaction going between the users, but it’s not kind of a thing that you don’t even see or feel or anything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8</td>
<td>172-179</td>
<td>“I feel like it doesn’t get to a part where people get bullied for it. But on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram you need to be liked to be cool otherwise you can get bullied for it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>“Just like getting inspired and finding interesting photos. I don’t upload or share or save anything at all really”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>157-158</td>
<td>“I don’t think I’d have friends at all [on Pinterest] at all. I don’t see the point of interacting on Pinterest. In the way I use it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>239-240</td>
<td>“As I said I don’t care much for the social as-”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C8: Esteem</td>
<td>Using Pinterest fulfills needs with regards to esteem. Gaining the respect of others and their affirmation plays an important role</td>
<td>At least one aspect of the definition is clearly supported by the interviewee’s statement</td>
<td>F1 153-157</td>
<td>Does not give much energy or though to someone following me or repining my pins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F2 218-220</td>
<td>“I actually don’t really think of it that much. It has a bigger effect on me if someone like my pictures on Instagram or Facebook than if someone repins something. It’s not my origin form the beginning, so I don’t really care about it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F3 165-167</td>
<td>“It feels nice. But then again it doesn’t really matter cause they’re not my pictures […] it’s not the same as maybe somebody likes your own photo.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F4 44-47</td>
<td>“Oh my god, they like what I like. Almost everybody at school got Pinterest and a lot of students […] usually like my pins and repin them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Page Range</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F6</td>
<td>“Honestly, I’m not counting or even checking how many people are following me. Of course it feels nice, but it doesn’t really give me anything.”</td>
<td>208-210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F7</td>
<td>“Well, probably it would be a good feeling, that other people would like what I like, I guess.”</td>
<td>149-150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8</td>
<td>“I can’t take credit for it, but I’m like “Okay someone else likes some things that I like” so I’m not the weirdest person in the world, but it’s not that I feel like that makes me one higher step on the cool level.”</td>
<td>279-281</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F9</td>
<td>Thinks that “it’s weird” when people start following her.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>Regarding how it feels of someone likes his pins: “It’s like ‘ok cool, right, ok’.”</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>“It makes me feel good. Especially since I always get like an email when somebody starts following me. I mean it feels good.”</td>
<td>87-88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td>Does not care about likes “I don’t feel that at all when I use Pinterest and I think it’s impossible not to feel that when you use either Instagram or Facebook, or at least when you apply your own content. In the beginning I think I felt more obliged to try to be</td>
<td>280-286</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C9: Self-Actualization</td>
<td>Using Pinterest fulfills needs that are related to self-actualization. Expressing one’s creativity and ideas and/or finding solutions for problems play an important part</td>
<td>At least one aspect of the definition is clearly supported by the interviewee’s statement</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>“I’ve done a lot of baking and food from Pinterest and also sawing and crafts especially.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>“Mostly I use it for myself, so who’s on there and what they are doing is not that important.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F6</td>
<td>114-120</td>
<td>“I found some sort of recipe and then I got an idea ‘that’s something I could do tonight’ but rarely I’m buying outfits I found there. It’s more about dreaming, something maybe in the future”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>188-190</td>
<td>Social aspect is not so important: “Of course it’s some sort of interaction going between the users, but it’s not kind of a thing that you don’t even see or feel or anything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>“I’ve used the recipes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>113-114</td>
<td>“It’s more about the pictures, not at all social. That’s what I do through Instagram and Facebook.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F8</td>
<td>141-144</td>
<td>“Maybe not clothes, but definitely interior. Me and my friend moved in August and we definitely have stuff that I have pinned.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Awareness of Brand Activity

**Awareness of brand activity on Pinterest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C10: Is aware of brand activity on Pinterest</td>
<td>He/she is aware that brands are on Pinterest</td>
<td>Clearly states that he/she knows that there are brands on Pinterest, otherwise C11 applies</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts “Well Ben &amp; Jerry’s I know”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F3</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F6</td>
<td>339-340</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F9</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>370-371</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M3</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C11: Is not aware of brand activity on Pinterest</strong></td>
<td>He/she is not aware that brands are on Pinterest</td>
<td>Clearly states that he/she does not know that there are brands on Pinterest, otherwise C10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coding Rules</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview</strong></td>
<td><strong>Line</strong></td>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11: Is not aware of brand activity on Pinterest</td>
<td>He/she is not aware that brands are on Pinterest</td>
<td>Clearly states that he/she does not know that there are brands on Pinterest, otherwise C10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Attitude toward brands on Pinterest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C12: Positive attitude toward brands on Pinterest</strong></td>
<td>• Follows brands on Pinterest</td>
<td>Minimum of two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward positive attitude about pinning behavior, otherwise C13 applies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>Is aware that brands have Pinterest accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Example

- F1 263-268: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.
- F4 107: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.
- F5 312: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.
- F7 249: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.
- F8 396-397: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.
- M1 277: Not aware that brands are on Pinterest.

#### Example

- F1 272-274: Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for companies: “I mean since Pinterest has everything, it’s a great way to marketing the company without marketing.”

  - Does not have a negative feeling about brands being on Pinterest.
- F2 351-352: Is not bothered by brand’s activity on Pinterest: “I think it’s fun that they do it. It think it’s really really fun that they are part of social media.”

  - Follows Ben & Jerry’s
- F3 347: “I think it’s fun that they are becoming part of our lives. It’s fun to get in-
<p>| F3 | “I follow a few brands. Like Marimekko and Filippa K.” |
| F4 | “Yeah I do follow one brand” |
| F5 | Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands |
| F6 | Follows brand on Pinterest. |
| F7 | Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands: “If Pinterest is popular and has a lot of users, which it has in the US, I guess then it’s a very good idea.” |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F8</strong></td>
<td>405</td>
<td>Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **F9** | 166, 172, 174, 188 | Follows H&M on Pinterest.  
  Does not think Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands: “I don’t really see any point of companies and brands having it.”  
  No negative associations toward brands on Pinterest. |
| **M1** | 278-280, 308-309 | Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands: “If I were a big brand, I might use it, because I think there’s a lot of people […]. So I think it’s a good platform for posting this like that.”  
  Does not have a negative feeling about brands being on Pinterest |
| **M2** | 376-396, 397, 277-278 | Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands “I would love to see behind the scenes [pictures]”  
  No negative associations towards brand’s activity on Pinterest: “I would maybe become more involved with the brand”  
  Does not follow any brands on Pinterest |
| **M3** | 260, 252-253, 280-282 | Does not follow any brands  
  Isn’t bothered by brands being on Pinterest if their posts fit to the inspirational character of Pinterest and do not take up too much space from regular inspirational posts |
| **M4** | 192 | Does not follow any brand |
Is generally not bothered by brands on social media if they are selective about what they post. Would follow brands interest.

Thinks Pinterest is a suitable platform for brands: “Sure, you still have to be interesting enough for me to care. So go ahead and try.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| C13: Negative attitude toward brands on Pinterest | • Does not follow brands on Pinterest  
• Thinks Pinterest is not a suitable platform for brands  
• Negative associations toward brands’ activity on Pinterest | Minimum of two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward positive attitude about pinning behavior, otherwise C12 applies | M5 | 378 | |

**Theory of Reasoned Action**

**Attitude toward behavior (pinning a specific picture on Pinterest)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<th>Line</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| C14: Positive attitude toward behavior | • Has positive associations toward the category (by e.g. having a board of the category)  
• Has positive associations | Minimum of two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward positive attitude about pinning behavior, otherwise C15 applies | F1 | 219-220 | “I pinned swings before but I want things to be a finesse with it.”  
“I like it.”  
“…but it’s not special enough for me to pin it.” |
| | | | | 219 | |
| | | | | 219 | |
| | | | F2 | 269 | “It’s so summery, It looks really nice.” |

Positive associations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Coding Rules</th>
<th>Interview Line</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C15: Negative attitude toward behavior</td>
<td>• Has negative associations toward the category</td>
<td>Minimum of two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward negative attitude about pin-</td>
<td>F3 66-68</td>
<td>“I pin pictures that I really do like and that reflect something that I want to do.” Positive associations towards the picture. Interested in the category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4 76-77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F6 284-285</td>
<td>Likes the category</td>
<td>“Yeah absolutely”. “It’s a nice picture.”</td>
<td>281</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F7 194-198</td>
<td>Has positive feeling toward picture. “I think that in general that gives you good vibes.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>361-362</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8 356-358</td>
<td>“That makes me really excited for summer, it makes me feel I wish I was a kid again or it makes me feel I wanna send it to my friend for her wedding, to take wedding pictures and yeah I would definitely pin this for my home board.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3 256-259</td>
<td>Positive associations towards the picture. Positive associations towards the category</td>
<td></td>
<td>259</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F3 238-239</td>
<td>Not interested in the category “There is not really anything special!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Norm</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Category</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coding Rules</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview</strong></td>
<td><strong>Line</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C16: Influence</td>
<td>• Strongly</td>
<td>Minimum two out of three aspects of the pinning behavior, otherwise C14 applies</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix**

- Has negative associations toward the picture
- Picture does not fulfill purpose for user

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F9</th>
<th>132-133</th>
<th>Positive association toward the category. Negative association toward picture. Picture does not fulfill purpose for her.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>125-129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M1</th>
<th>234-235</th>
<th>Not interested in the category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s nice, nice environment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
<td>“It doesn’t talk to me in any specific way”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td></td>
<td>”It looks a bit sad. An empty swing.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M2</th>
<th>316</th>
<th>“I’m not interested in that picture at all. It’s not my thing.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>321</td>
<td></td>
<td>“It reminds me of summer and also it’s creepy in a way”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not interested in the category at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M5</th>
<th>335</th>
<th>Positive association toward category. Negative association toward picture and picture does not fulfill purpose: “It doesn’t make me feel anything. I think it looks like a generic picture of a swing. I mean you could see this on any website selling some sort of rehab.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>328-329</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>of others high</th>
<th>agrees that one’s pinning behavior reflects their personality</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agrees that an individual’s pinning/sharing behavior can influence others’ opinion of that individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friends have high influence on decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>definition need to point toward high influence of others, otherwise C17 applies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>310-312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reflects their personality “[…] so then that would always affect my opinion and the way I perceive that person to be.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends have influence on fashion decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>255-257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not necessarily agree that an individual’s pinning/sharing behavior can influence others’ opinion of that individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>261-264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agrees that one’s pinning behavior reflects their personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends have high influence on decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>88-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agrees that an individual’s pinning/sharing behavior can influence others’ opinion of that individual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>101-102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agrees that one’s pinning behavior reflects their personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F7</td>
<td>200-206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinks pinning behavior of others influences opinion about them: “It could probably change my opinion on them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>230-231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends have high influence on decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F8</td>
<td>123-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Either it reflects their personality or what they wish they had or what they wish who they were.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>385-386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends influence her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F9</td>
<td>fashion choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Thinks pinning behavior of others influences opinion about them: “I would get another view of how he dresses and his taste in clothing”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinks that people post things based on their personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends influence each other during decision making process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>“Somehow yeah it does reflect your personality, but it also reflects who you wanna be. Gets inspired by friends. Inspires friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>Agrees that one’s pinning behavior reflects their personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“If I would pin like a lot of weird pictures I guess people would think of me as a weird person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**C17: Influence of others low**

- Strongly disagrees that one’s pinning behavior reflects their personality
- Disagrees that an individual’s pinning/sharing behavior can influence others' opinion of that individual
- Friends have low influence on decision making

Minimum two out of three aspects of the definition need to point toward low influence of others, otherwise C16 applies.

<p>| | | |</p>
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</thead>
</table>
| F1 | 241-242 | “Pinterest feels like you pin a lot of stuff and then you select what's important to you”
|   | 251 | “I feel like I wear what I want.” |
| F6 | 316-317 | “Personality is difficult, just what these people are interested in.” |
| M1 | 370-371 | “Nowadays no. I am not that influenced.” |
| M2 | 356-357 | “It’s like every other social media platform is a part of who you are.”
|   | 363-367 | Pinning behavior of others no influence on opinion formation |
| M5 | 353 | Friends do not influence choices: “Not at all, I’m pretty independent when it comes to that, I don’t try to dress like other people around me. So I wouldn’t say that influences me very much.” |