

Social Media Madness: How to Win on Instagram



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Did you know that 70% of all Instagram posts go unseen by your followers? That's a lot of content and creativity to be lost to a stingy algorithm. Instagram is not necessarily an artform, but there is a science behind it. You don't have to be a tech wiz or a mathematician to figure out how to boost the engagement of your Instagram posts. These tips can help turn your Instagram game from stale and impersonal to engaging and appealing.

Understanding the Algorithm

- Instagram is very open about how their algorithm works. For a full explanation of why your posts get seen (or unseen), check out this article by Later: <https://later.com/blog/how-instagram-algorithm-works/>
- Every type of engagement has its own value within Instagram's algorithm; try to work this into each post in order to maximize engagement points and work the algorithm in your favor.
- Use trending hashtags to get more eyes on your content; extend post viewing duration by writing longer posts, using carousel images and incorporating video into your strategy; "hack" the algorithm by using Stories to get your content at the top of the page every time.

Be Original

- Give your followers a view they can't get anywhere else by avoiding stock photography and taking all of the photos yourself.
- Strive for uniqueness and consistency by assigning the Instagram duties to one or two people who can agree on a singular aesthetic but provide a differing perspective. For instance, give one of your designers the keys to the Instagram account so they can capture some of the amazing work coming out of the design room, and also make sure that your employees working events can document the work they're doing on-site for clients.
- **Must-Have App:** *Snapseed* photo editor gives you the power to create professional-looking and unique photos right from your smartphone.

Embrace Stories

- Ensure that your brand gets frontpage, above-the-fold facetime by keeping your Stories fresh, interesting and engaging. Unlike regular timeline posts, Stories expire after 24 hours and help provide your audience with updates throughout the day. They are also not affected by Instagram's algorithm, so if you post a Story, chances are your followers are going to see it.
- Use Instagram's Stories organization tool to extend the lifespan of your Stories and keep them on your profile. Moving a Story post onto your profile removes the 24-hour expiration and also gives you the opportunity to have evergreen Story content in convenient, organized content categories.. Bonus: Branded Stories categories for a clean and consistent look.
- Use Instagram's powerful Story tools like polls and feedback as another touchpoint for your audience. Curious how they feel about something you created? Go ahead and ask them with a poll or a feedback Story!
- **Must-Have App:** *Canva* photo editor lets you create Stories-sized graphics with rich text and brand options and comes loaded with templates for a creative boost.

Run Contests & Promotions

- Keep your followers engaged and drive walk-in traffic by posting regular contest and promotions. Your customers will begin to expect it and you'll drive engagement and participation to your profile and your brand as well.
- Capitalize on what's current and use pop culture references to tie in popular, trending hashtags that resonate with your customers and get more eyes on your content.
- **Must-Have App:** *Typorama* creates text-heavy social media images at the push of a button.

Pro-Tips

- Don't settle for smartphone quality! A WiFi-ready DSLR camera can get professional photos on your phone and then to Instagram in a snap. We recommend any of the Canon EOS models, including the 6D Mark II (\$1,400) and the 5DS (\$2,000).
- **Must-Have App:** *Canon CameraConnect* allows you to sync compatible DSLR cameras to your smartphone for wireless file sharing.
- User-generated content, or "UGC," is a great way to get your customers involved with your Instagram strategy and show your products in-use by happy consumers
- **Must-Have App:** *Later* Search & Repost feature for Instagram gives you the power to search Instagram for posts containing certain hashtags then repost them from your own profile with acceptable attribution to the post's creator.