

# **Social Savvy: Instagram Tips to Build Your Brand, Increase Engagement and Generate Sales**



Presented by Jackie Levine  
General Manager, 4th generation of  
Central Square Florist  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**@centralsquareflorist (on Instagram!)**

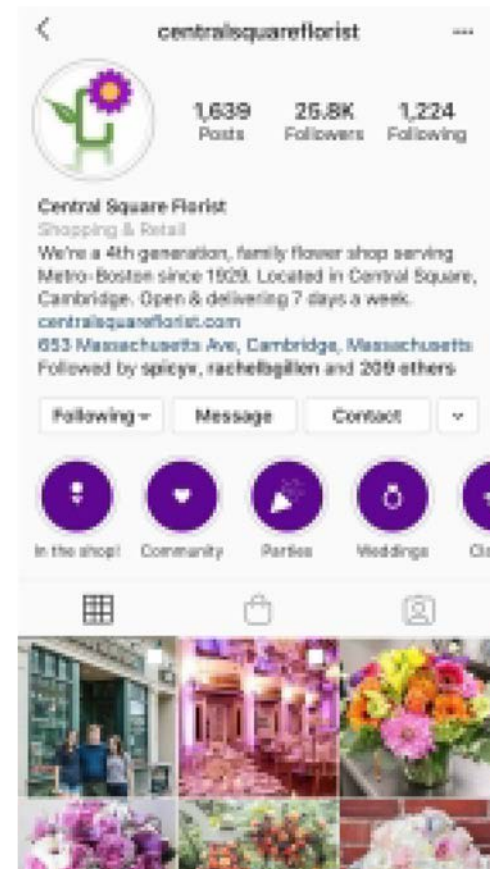
# About Jackie / Central Square Florist

Jackie: 26 years old. 4th generation industry member.  
Shop manager & event/wedding coordinator.

Central Square Florist: City shop located in Cambridge, Massachusetts located right in between MIT & Harvard. Established in 1929. 2,000sq/ft shop with 20 employees.



Photos Lena Mirisola Photography



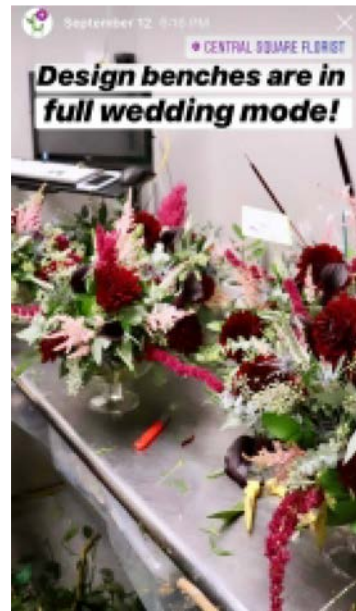
# Instagram story vs. post

## 'Stories'

- Broadcast photos and videos to your followers in a 'slideshow' format
- This 'slideshow' is a 24-hour reel of your moments
- Disappear after 24 hours (unless you add to 'highlights')
- Great for quick posts/behind the scenes/announcements



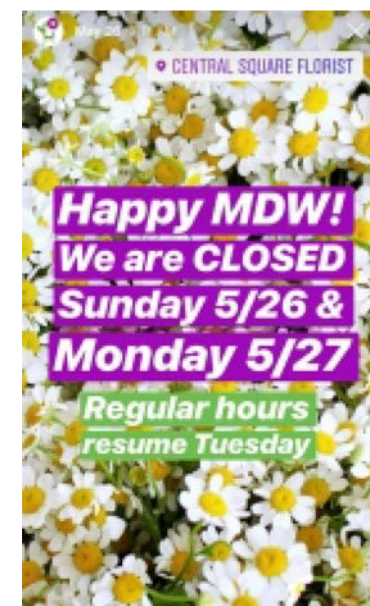
Quick snap



Behind the scenes



Different types of announcements




# Instagram story vs. post

## 'Posts'

- Evergreen. Posts stay in profile forever!!
- Great for REACH! Posts get discovered by NEW audiences
- The first impression! People follow if they like what they see! Make it count!
- Overall, your most aesthetically pleasing/emotional posts should be in your feed.



# Why should my business be on Instagram?




Everyone is on it! Instagram has 1 billion+ users!

It leans towards a much younger audience than Facebook! It's photocentric style appeals to young people.

That photocentric style = PERFECT for flowers!

**Instagram is EASY for florists! You have the content, but you need to know how to apply it!**

To be successful on Instagram you should strive to be....



**ON TOPIC!**

**REAL!**

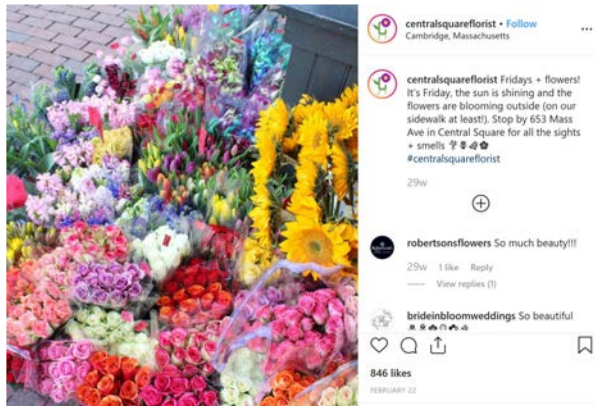
***Interesting!***

***Current!***

**It is NECESSARY to be these things before you can SELL on Instagram!**

# Staying on TOPIC! Focus on FLOWERS

Everything you post should relate back to the main topic...**flowers!**



NO personal posts

- No photos of your daughter's dance recital
- No photos of what you're doing on your day off
- No photos of anything besides **FLOWERS!**



# REAL Talk: How to be REAL on Instagram!

## No stock photos!

- Real photos from inside your shop
- Real photos from weddings (high quality photos!!!!)
- No wire service images
- No random photos from Google Images

## PEOPLE!

- Show off your team!
- Human photos do GREAT for engagement. People love to see people
- Tell your story.





# How to be INTERESTING? Spark interest! Give people a REASON to follow you!

At the end of the day, you are a business. Why should people engage with you in his or her spare time????

## How to do this???

- ***BEHIND THE SCENES!*** Bring your followers into the wonderful world of flowers! They will LOVE it.
- **Show off new shipments!** Customers will learn to expect this and check in regularly! Take videos and photos of new product and share via posts and stories!
- We tell customers to check our IG story -- “we’ll share when we get \_\_\_\_ back in stock” and they will follow! Eventually customers will learn to expect this and regularly check!



centralsquareflorist • Follow  
Central Square Florist

centralsquareflorist They're radiant! They're red! RED CHARM PEONIES are in stock in the shop! We're in LOVE ❤️ #centralsquareflorist

View all 16 comments

revelasalon 🥰👍👍

sunibel2017 🌸🌸🌸

tina\_simplyshine 🍷 peonies

ghy\_photography 🌸



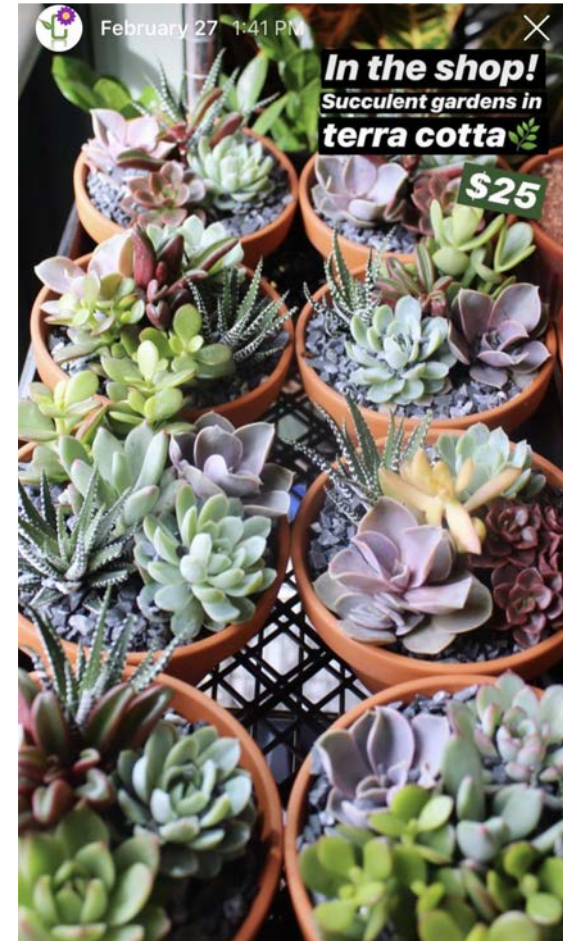
890 likes

MAY 20, 2018

Log in to like or comment.

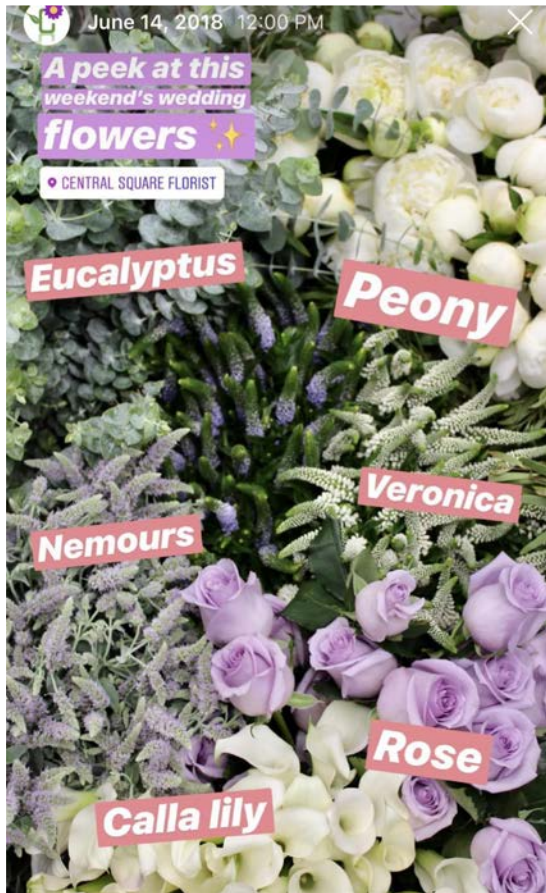


*Sharing what is in stock in the shop via a post!*

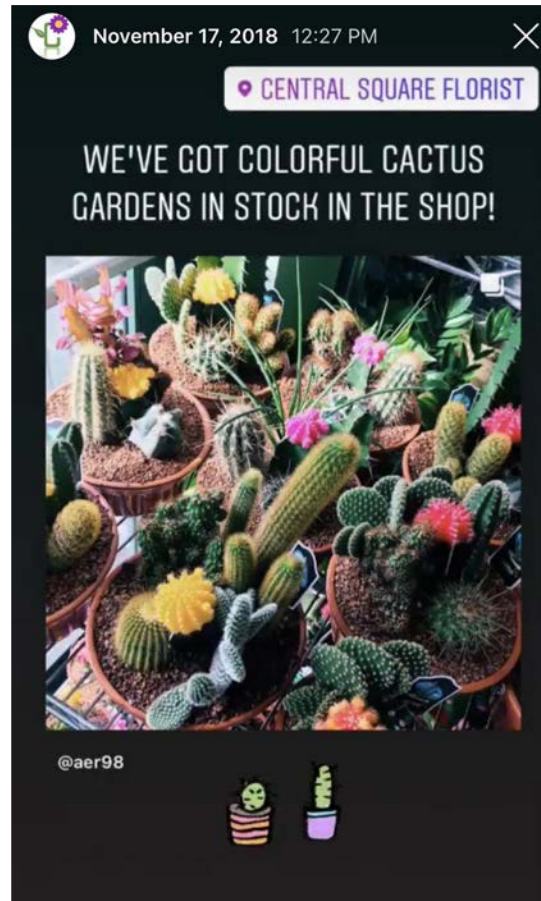


*Sharing what is in stock in the shop via a story!*

**Instagram Stories = BEST way to share behind the scenes, product and moments in your shop!**



*Behind the scenes! Showing off the blooms!*



*Sharing a post we were tagged in!*



*Human interaction!*

Build momentum!

EXAMPLE = Name game!

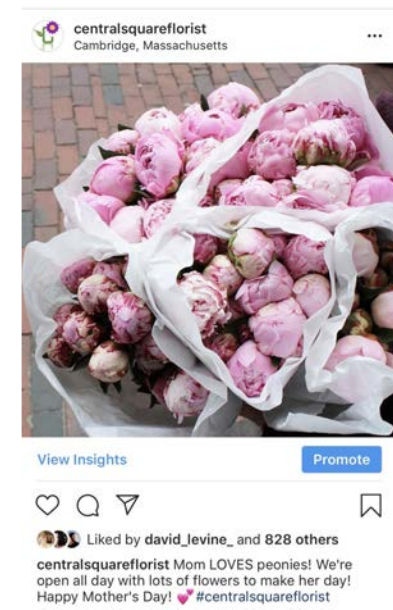


We get REAL phone calls “you haven’t posted the name on Instagram yet today....what is it?!”

# The NOW! How to be CURRENT!

Holidays! May seem a bit obvious to wish a Happy Mother's Day  
How about those not so obvious 'holidays'? → Capitalize on all  
the fun (maybe not "real" holidays!).

National Dog Day →



centralsquareflorist  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

centralsquareflorist Happy #NationalDogDay! Instead of a 'name of the day' we're giving out FREE roses to those who bring in a furry friend to the shop today! Valid today 8/26 until 7pm 🐾👉 Pictured: Daisy the mini goldendoodle

Load more comments

yittahlawrence Really cool idea 🐾

msullivanfloraldesignschool Awesome 🐾👉

roadiethegoldendoodle Fab!

cvetoray21 Such a cute dog!

874 likes

AUGUST 26, 2017

Log in to like or comment.

View Insights

Promote

Liked by david\_levine\_ and 828 others

centralsquareflorist Mom LOVES peonies! We're open all day with lots of flowers to make her day! Happy Mother's Day! 🌸👉#centralsquareflorist

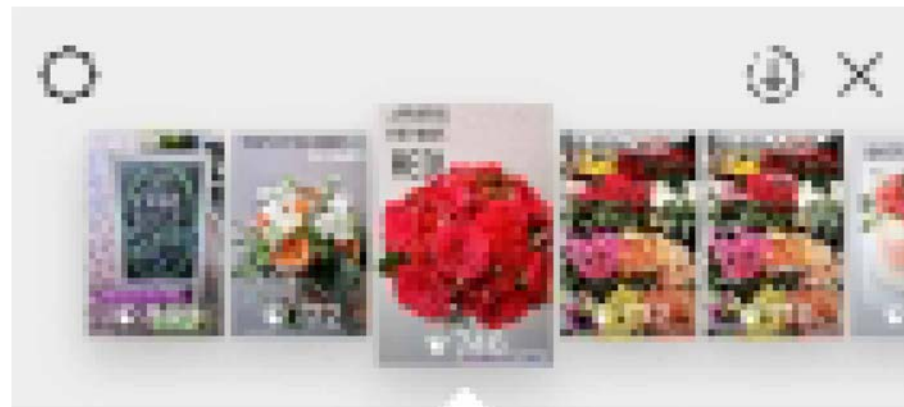
# The NOW! How to be CURRENT! (Continued)

Current trends -- what's hot right now = great content!



# Instagram Stories + Highlights!!

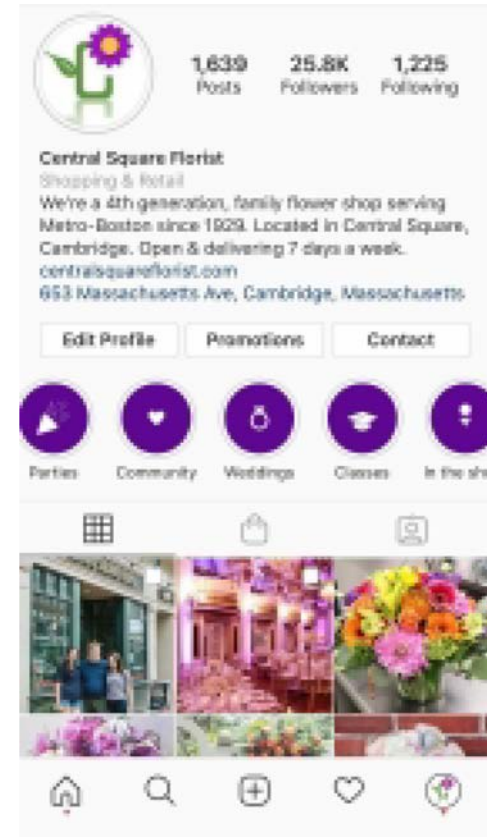
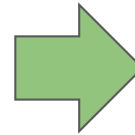
- Need to post several stories a day. The more stories you post the better viewership you will get as your account gets back to the 'top'
- Stories only last 24 hours :(
- Move it to highlights! Highlights last forever :)



# Instagram Stories + Highlights!!

## What's so great about highlights?

- Prime location on your feed! It's one of the first things people see when viewing your profile!
- Curated collections of Instagram Stories that your followers — both old and new — can tap into and watch any time they like.
- Perfect place to share specific things

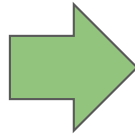


I created the 'icons' on Canva



# Creating highlights!

1. Go to your profile
2. Upper right-hand corner tap the three lines
3. Select 'archive' .
4. Select the post you want to highlight and click 'add to highlights!'
5. Select a current 'highlight to add to OR create a 'new' one!



## Stories: My tips + tricks!

- Tagging LOCATIONS! Best way to make it onto the 'stories' of that location
- Hashtags! Use them, but know that your post might not make it onto the hashtag story....
- Hashtags can make you look 'desperate for likes". Use them sparingly OR hide them behind photos/other boxes.



# Gaining Followers + Engagement! Tips on posts!

- LONGER CAPTIONS!!! Write more! The more the merrier! Instagram counts how many seconds someone stays on your post for...the longer the caption the longer they'll stay!
- Reply back to comments! With Instagram's algorithm it is SO important to reply! The more engagement you create, the higher chance of others seeing your posts! By responding/liking your followers' comments, you are increasing your posts chance of being seen by others!!!
- Engage with similar floral accounts! Especially before and after you post!



# The BIG topic! Gaining followers!

- In the end, having followers is important. Ultimately, you can't sell without having anyone to sell to, right?
- Do NOT buy fake followers. Instagram will punish you. Your engagement will go DOWN
- DO engage in good practices that will ultimately lead gain followers.
- Your best followers are **LOCAL!** Followers that will be customers!

# Partnerships!

- Partnerships are a great way to gain followers, but they need to make sense!
- Do NOT accept partnerships that are only going to hurt you...not help you.
- Our example: BAKER! People who love flowers love cake...right?



*We gained over 400 followers through this giveaway! All we had to do was post and give away a \$100 floral arrangement...easy!*

# Time Management: Making TIME for Instagram!

- Have a 'bank' of quality photos you can post on IG! See a great bouquet?! TAKE A PHOTO!!!
- Set up and save DRAFTS of completely finished posts right in the Instagram app! Post when ready! EASY!!!
- Soon you'll be able to schedule Instagram posts via Facebook's Creator Studio

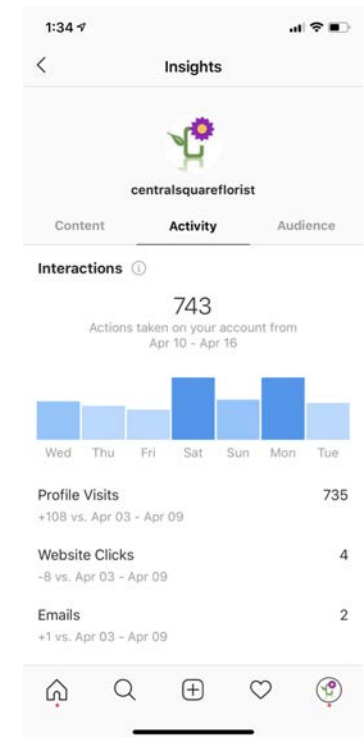
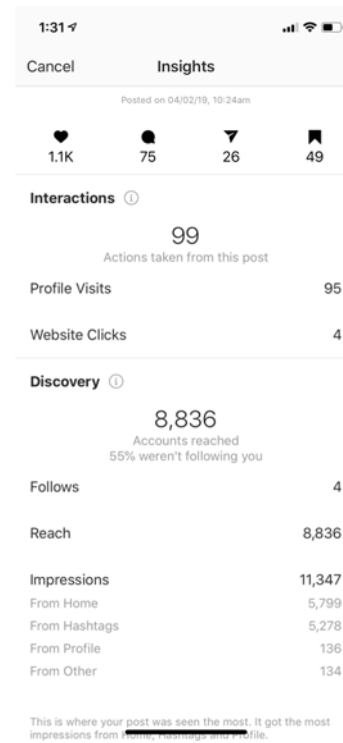


**TIP: Saving photos for a 'rainy day'? Make sure you still have those flowers in stock :)**

# Measuring your EFFORTS!

## Checking & understanding insights & performance

- Check the **insights!**
- How many comments did you receive? Comments received shows how **ENGAGING** your post was!
- Did your hashtags perform well? Or were your hashtag too vague?
- Time matters! Post when Instagram says is best for you!



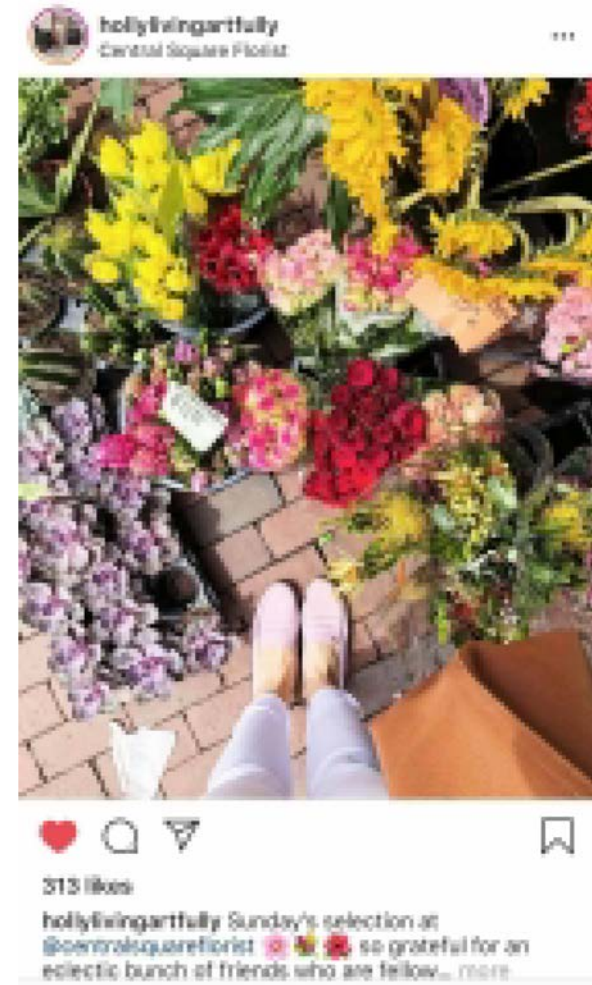
# How often should you post on Instagram?

- Post 2-3 times per week
- Do NOT post multiple times a day...your engagement WILL go down (if you have things to post throughout the day use stories!). Instagram finds posting multiple times a day 'spammy'
- Post often. Keep it consistent.



## Locations! *Specifically YOUR location!*

- Check your geo-location on Instagram! Make sure to like and comment on posts people share AT YOUR STORE! Free advertising! Follows will follow this.



# PHOTOGRAPHY!

- Almost 100% of our IG photos are taken on a Canon EOS Rebel SL2 DSLR Camera
- Why? I have HIGH expectations for quality.
- I'm NOT a photographer. I take the photo 'on auto' and that's it! Good to go!

**Investment = ~\$500**



# TRUE STORY #1

A few months ago a customer visits our storefront.....

CUSTOMER: Do you have peonies?

ME: Sure do! They just came in this morning!

CUSTOMER: I usually check your Instagram to see if you have them. You didn't share.

ME: *\*OMG! I forgot to post! Posting after this!\**

**This is RESULTS! We have reached Instagram SUCCESS! Our customers EXPECT us to share what's in stock! This didn't happen overnight. This took time. You need to constantly BUILD and eventually this happens!**

## TRUE STORY #2

Earlier this year, a customer calls to order his mom flowers for her birthday

ME: Have you ordered from us before?

CUSTOMER: No, but I found you on Instagram and I loved your flowers so decided to call.

**#WIN!!!!!!!**

Customer was verifying us on Instagram and our content won him over! YES!

# Instagram Algorithm Thoughts -- SUMMARIZED!

- Instagram's algorithm is a bit of a mystery...and it's always changing.
- Engagement (likes/comments) -- Instagram REALLY cares about how well engaged people are with your post. When a post gets a lot of likes/comments in the first 30 minutes this signals GOOD quality to Instagram and it will show your post to more people. How quickly this happens is SUPER important!
- Long captions = longer amount of time spent on your post. Instagram likes this and thinks your post is more worthy!
- Instagram knows the accounts you love. If you regularly engage with a certain account you are more likely to see their content!
- Instagram posts today have a longer life than they did before -- you'll see posts from 3 days ago in your feed.



523 likes

centralsquareflorist Happy Wedding Day, Vicky & Mike! Here's Vicky's summer bridal bouquet! This beauty features coral chams, peonies, diana's memory dahlias, tree spirit roses & white astilbe + accented with silver dollar/seeded eucalyptus and dusty miller! It's a beautiful day for a wedding #BackBay at the @lenoxhotel! @centralsquareflorist

View all 44 comments

eileen\_lakeforestflowers Happy wedding day! And those peonies!

centralsquareflorist @eileen\_lakeforestflowers so lucky to have gotten them in late July!

# Real example + thoughts!



- Post from yesterday! It's emotional, personal, human...
- Instagram says it's performing 95% better than my recent posts
- Look at that hashtag number. Terrible. Sometimes hashtags don't work. This post was still successful completely organically through the feed. This post didn't appeal to the hashtag searchers.
- It also didn't appeal to accounts that didn't 'know' us
- But it really appealed to those who do...and you can see so through the comments many of which are detailed.
- Posted over 24 hours ago and is still performing well this morning. In the past hour gained 20 more likes (8am-9am the day after posting) = still in the feeds

# GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN :)

- Instagram is such a fun and interactive way to engage with your current and future customers!
  - It's PERFECT for florists!
  - Beautiful flowers = tons to share!
- Your Instagram account is a CONNECTION!  
Connect, engage and inspire...then you will sell!  
Because your followers will LOVE you!

