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HOW TO USE INSTAGRAM *For Business*



559.978.4096

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Instagram is no longer just the social media network for posting fun photos from your vacation. With the launch of Instagram Business Tools, Instagram delivers a new way to generate buzz for your business and increase your bottom line. Learn why you should care & how to get started in our free Instagram for Business Guide!

How to Use Instagram for Business Promotion

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Why Does Your Company Need an Instagram Presence?

Instagram's popularity stems from the fact that it's a purely visual platform. It's different from other social media—The emphasis is not on posting links to your e-commerce site. Instead, Instagram is the tool for sharing a story about your business, your products, and your services through a photo or a short video.



The uploading experience is fast and efficient, the filters make your mobile snapshots look professional, and your posts can be shared on Facebook and Twitter, instantly.

Video on Instagram offers a novel way to share your stories. Tap the movie camera icon and record up to 60 seconds. Or upload a video from your photo library. You can select a favorite scene to post as the cover image of the video, turn off the sound, and add filters.

Lydia Dishman, a Forbes contributor, cited Instagram's potential for marketers as, "The World's Most Powerful Selling Tool." Need more reasons to dive into Instagram?

Check out these eye-opening statistics:

Instagram boasts more than 500 million active users, and 300 million of them use this platform daily. (Source: Instagram.com) Instagram surpasses Twitter, Snapchat, and Pinterest in usage.

Instagram's usage continues to grow, doubling in the last 2 years. (Source: WeAreSocial.com)

Reach the up-and-coming buying generation (18-39 year olds). Over half of all Millennials use Instagram every single day. (Source: Pew Research Firm)

Instagram is rated the #1 app of all time for brand social engagement (Mashable.com, December 2015). Additionally, it's rated as the #1 social media engagement tool for business, besting both Facebook and Twitter over the past 2 years (Forrester Research)

Your competition is already there—Over 70% of U.S. companies will be marketing on Instagram by 2017 (source: EMarketer.com)

Instagram is a local marketer's dream: Tagging a photo with a location receives 79% more engagement (Source: SimplyMeasured.com)

Engagement per post on Instagram has grown at a rate of 53% year over year (Source: SimplyMeasured.com)

Instagram is business-friendly. Stand out above other posts with the newest Instagram Business Tools. Here's how this platform is shaping up as an indispensable means for connecting to new and loyal customers:

1. Your business profile enables you to choose how you want your customers to connect with you—Via phone call, text message, or to tap a contact button. Customers can even get directions to your doorstep. You don't need to sift through and track comments to respond to followers in a timely fashion.

2. Straight-forward Insights are provided through the mobile Instagram app. Discover how to shape your content so that it resonates with your followers—Learn the demographics of your Instagram audience and which posts perform better than others.

3. Instagram for business offers the ability to turn well-performing posts into ads. Just go to any post you've shared and add a button to encourage followers to take action. Select a target audience for your ad.



Types of Posts to Consider

For Maximizing Engagement

Square images rule on Instagram. Utilize Canva.com to embed verbiage into your photos. Make use of trending photo apps to edit your photos, add filters, and create professional images. Upload them into your smartphone, if they are stored on your computer hard drive, and then copy them into Instagram. If your photos are not already square, you'll have the chance to crop them to fit Instagram's parameters.

Your caption can be long (some 2200 characters), but after around 240 characters, your caption is truncated, showing [...]. To keep to this length, post the most important information at the beginning of your caption.

Of course, business posts contain stories about your company, but be specific about your company. Don't just state facts about your company—Tug at your follower's emotions:

- **Post a story about your customers.** How do they use your products and services? How do they benefit from them? Give a shout-out, using the @ symbol, to the customers and companies pictured, and include a hashtag that drives new customers to your business (download our FREE #Hashtag Guide). Add emojis and share the post on your Facebook and Twitter pages, too. This goes for Instagram videos, as well.

Examples include showing a customer enjoying your services, posting a customer photo with their testimonial, and customers showing off a novel way to use your product.

- **Post a story about your employees.** They work behind the scenes, ensuring customer satisfaction. Why not show them in action, perfecting your products and helping customers? Picture them as people with fun interests, not just robots assembling products. Make it known that you treat your employees well. Let your employees embody your brand's personality. These posts add to employee satisfaction and boost your company's reputation.

Examples include photos of employees helping with a local charity, employees using your products in a novel way, and even photos of employees showing off their employee-of-the-month parking space.

- **Post a story about you.** What excites you about your products? How did you get into your line of business? How do you make product and service decisions? Display your office and the day-to-day decisions you make. Where are you traveling, and why? Photos of your travels demonstrate that your company is without walls. What events do you attend? What inspires you?

Examples include posting a video of accepting a prestigious award, photos of setting up a booth at a convention, and a snapshot of talking one-on-one with a high-powered customer or celebrity. Show what inspires you by posting thought-provoking quotes.

- **Post a story about your products.** This is not only a menu of your offerings, but a story of how they came into being. What was wrong with the older models? What is the best way to use your products? Customers want to know how to get the most out of your items. Create a tutorial in pictures or video. Invite followers to post their own photos, too—You might even discover customers using your products in ways that defy your imagination!

Examples include a pictorial history of an item, showing the improvements you made over previous models. Interject a bit of humor to display what happens if your products or services are used incorrectly. Feed your followers with tips and how-tos. Post the latest trends.

Reelin followers with your captions. Some tips for increasing meaningful engagement include asking questions. Host contests and offer coupons and discounts that are only available for your savvy Instagram followers. And don't forget those hashtags.

Take Advantage of Instagram's New Stories Feature

To capitalize on the stories you post, use the new Instagram Stories Tool. It allows you to share multiple photos and videos together in a slideshow format. Unlike regular posts, Instagram Stories won't appear on your profile grid or feed, and they disappear in 24 hours. You can choose to feature parts of your story to post on your profile. Add captions and colored filters, too.

Post Stories as often as you like, and select specific followers to view. As with other Instagram posts, you can monitor who has viewed your Stories, and even select portions of your story to post on your profile and keep.

A similar feature is found on Snapchat, but with Instagram, there is less of a learning curve.

Instagram has a “discovery” portal to make it easy for customers to find you. No wonder Instagram is used by far fewer teens than Snapchat. {see graph at <http://www.businessinsider.com/update-a-breakdown-of-the-demographics-for-each-of-the-different-social-networks-2015-6>}

Use the Stories feature for showcasing behind-the-scenes aspects of your company, the kinds of information that you only wish to share with a specific audience. Or reveal the newest product or service rollout to a particular segment of target customers. Give Instagrammers a tour of your company, taking your smartphone’s camera to unexpected nooks and crannies within your company’s walls.

Instagram Hashtags

Why and How to Use Them for Business Marketing

What’s the value of hashtags for business on Instagram? Hashtags make your company visible on Instagram. They increase the reach of your posts and help you gain more Instagram followers. They enable you to connect with colleagues and check out what your competitors are doing.

Get an introduction to Hashtag usage with our FREE #Hashtag Guide. It includes all-important information about how to find the best hashtags to use for your business.

For Instagram, specifically, hashtags make it easier for people to locate photos that contain what they want to see. Using general hashtags, such as #love, #follow, and #tbt (throw back Thursday) might help you to collect likes, but that doesn’t mean that you’ll receive additional engagement, interested followers, and sales. You’ve got to dig deeper.

Perform keyword research for your brand (again, refer to our #Hashtag Guide). Use the free Websta app to find keywords and examine insights for your Instagram business profile (visit <http://websta.me>). Popular keywords change over time, so you’ll want to review your hashtags at least every six months to ensure you’re using the best possible phrases for your business.

Instagram allows you to include numbers in your hashtags, but not special characters, such as \$ and %. You can use a maximum of 30 hashtags per post, which is way too many for any one caption for a photo. Remember, your photo tells the story, and the caption helps people learn more about the story. If you’re stuffing several dozen hashtags into a caption, without any explanation of the story of your photo, it looks cluttered. A few relevant hashtags will do the trick—Include no more than 5 per caption. We recommend including additional hashtags within the first comment of a post. This keeps it separate from the caption area and works quite well to increase your post’s overall reach.

The key to building sales—Reward your followers for using your branded hashtags. Set up a triggered response to their content by posting a comment on the photo.



Get Started on Instagram Success

Create a profile using your Twitter account name, add a profile photo (for instance, your logo or a graphic image), and then link it to your website. Connect your Facebook account, and then sign up for a business account. Your Instagram bio cannot exceed 150 characters. Watch Instagram's video for step-by-step instructions to set up a business profile.

Setting up your profile is easy, but knowing what to do next is not. How does your marketing strategy differ on Instagram from the strategies you use in other social media? That's where our Moore Than SEO social media content experts come in.

Contact us for a complimentary, no obligation Digital Marketing Assessment—Take the temperature of all your online marketing efforts (website, blog, and social media channels). We'll recommend a customized program to fit your objectives and budget. We'll even help you to determine how utilizing Instagram Ads works in your marketing mix.

Call us at (559) 978-4096 to expand your brand awareness on Instagram and beyond.





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moorethanseo.com
(559) 978-4096

Clovis Office:

1187 N. Willow Avenue,
Suite #103, #144
Clovis, CA 93611

Fresno Office:

700 Van Ness Avenue,
Suite #005
Fresno, CA 93721