

30 tips to grow your audience and stand out on instagram

[Media](#), [Social Media](#)



Instagram is the go-to place for to share their photos, videos and stories every single day. And as Instagram has grown over recent years, that's left many business owners and marketers with one very clear and important question: *How can we use Instagram for business?*

Related:

Well today, we'd love to dive head first into that topic and share:

- How to set up a killer Instagram profile
- The importance of goal setting and how to create a clear Instagram strategy
- How to post great content on a consistent basis
- Growth tips to help you build an engaged follower base

Continue reading for our best tips on how to use Instagram for business.

Let's jump in.

4 Tips to Enhance Your Instagram Profile

1. Write a killer bio

It takes just for someone to form an opinion on your brand online. This means it's incredibly important to make a great first impression with the content of your Instagram profile and bio.

Your bio deserves a lot of love as it's likely to be one of the first things people see when they click on your profile. It will also play a key role in the actions someone decides to take once they've landed on your profile, too. It

could entice them to follow you, scroll through some more of your content or even click the link back to your website.

A great Instagram bio should:

- Explain a bit about you and your brand
- Appeal to your target audience
- Use your brand tone and voice to help you connect with your community

2. Include a link

The only place on Instagram where you can share a clickable link is your bio. This is super valuable real estate.

Here are a few of the strategies we've seen work:

- Most Instagram accounts tend to use this link to drive traffic back to their homepage.
- Others link their Instagram profile to campaign-specific landing pages or individual pieces of content.
- Many brands also update their link regularly to drive traffic to their latest pieces of content.

3. Create an Instagram Business profile

to help companies better understand their followers and grow their businesses on Instagram.

When converting to a Business profile, you'll be able to include additional information about your business on your profile. For example, you'll be able

to add a phone number, an email address and your business's physical address.

Here's a quick video on how to set up a Business profile:

4. Use a recognizable profile image

When it comes to choosing a profile picture, it's important for people to instantly recognize it when they visit your Instagram profile. For most businesses, this means choosing one of the following options:

- Logo
- Logomark (the logo, minus any words)
- Mascot

There's definitely no right or wrong here and don't feel you must limit yourself to one of these options, but think about what will help people who visit your page to recognize your brand the quickest.

7 Instagram for Business Best Practices

1. Set some goals

When using any marketing channel, it's important to have goals you want to achieve. Instagram is no different. If you're going to invest your time and money in Instagram for business, ask: "What do we want to achieve?"

Here are some common goals that brands, teams and individuals tend to choose for their Instagram presence:

1. Showcase your products or services
2. Build your community

3. Increase awareness of your brand
4. Showcase your company culture and values
5. Advertise to potential customers
6. Increase brand loyalty
7. Share company news and updates

At Buffer, the two goals we've decided to focus on are:

1. To build and nurture an engaged community of Buffer users and supporters.
2. To focus on continually increase engagement on every one of our posts.

Setting these goals beforehand really helps us to define the types of content we share on the platform and how we measure success.

2. Pay attention to your color palette

Some of the most successful Instagram accounts tend to use a select color palette for their photos, helping them to create a distinct style. One example of this is , who tend to use very soft colors and light backgrounds on their images:

Try to think about your brand colors and visual style when it comes to Instagram. How can you make your Instagram content feel aligned with your brand's overall aesthetic and brand colors.

3. Stay consistent with fonts

Text overlays on photos and videos have become increasingly important on Instagram over the past year-or-so with many using text to add subtitles to

video (for viewers with the sound off). If text plays a key role in your Instagram content, it's important to also think about the font you're using and how it relates to the fonts used on your website or other marketing materials.

A great example of font use on Instagram is Sean McCabe (). He tends to use the same font and layout in all of his posts which helps to make them instantly recognizable:

4. Make the most of your captions

Captions are a chance to enhance your content further and there are plenty of ways brands use them. Some choose to treat captions as a place for sharing stories and micro-blogging. Others use them to add a short, snappy headline to a post. Still others use captions to ask questions and encourage replies. The possibilities are endless. What's important is to ensure the copy is aligned with your brand.

Good to know: Instagram captions are limited to 2, 200 characters, and after three lines of text they become truncated with an ellipsis.

5. Post consistently

Consistency and publishing frequency can help your audience learn when to expect new content from you, and keeping a consistent schedule makes sure you maximize engagement without hitting any lulls or stretches without updates. Any Instagram strategy should clearly outline a target post frequency to help keep you on track.

A found that most brands post to Instagram daily. In fact, the average was 1.5 posts per day. The study also found -- *and this was really interesting* -- that there was no correlation between increased frequency and lower engagement, meaning brands that posted more than twice per day didn't see any ill effects.

How we post consistently at Buffer

The Instagram API doesn't quite allow scheduling just yet, which means you cannot schedule posts directly on Instagram. To post consistently with Instagram, . Here's how it works:

1. Find, edit and upload a beautiful picture to Buffer. Add a caption with hashtags, mentions and emoji. Schedule for the ideal time.
2. Receive a push notification on our phone at the scheduled time.
3. Open the notification, select Open in Instagram and preview the post.
4. Make any final edits (filters, geolocation) and share from the Instagram app.

works by adding a post through Buffer and having a reminder pop up on a user's phone when it's time to send it out. Here's a little more on how can help:

6. Analyze your most successful posts

It's important to keep an eye on what's working and what's not on Instagram and one of the best ways to do this is by taking a dive into your Instagram analytics to check on things like:

- Which posts are getting the most likes

- How the number of posts you share can influence your engagement
- Your most commented on content

Instagram offers analytics within its business tools and these can be great to spot some trends and but if you're looking to dig a little deeper, it could be worth checking out Buffer's Instagram analytics. With Instagram analytics, you can sort every post by the most popular, most likes and most comments. You can also select any custom timeframe or from presets like 7, 30 or 90 days. This is a fantastic way to keep an eye on trends and what's performing.

7. Respond to comments on your posts

Responding to comments is a great way to build a strong community on Instagram. If someone takes the time to share their thoughts with you, it's important to respond back to them and show that you're listening.

Listening and responding to your audience can be a great way to encourage positive word of mouth and create new brand advocates, as highlighted by a found that 90% of consumers would recommend a brand to others after interacting with them on social media.

4 Quick Instagram Growth Experiments

1. Repost Instagram content to Facebook

A Buzzsumo from 3 million brand pages found that images posted to Facebook via Instagram receive more engagement than natively published images:

2. Leverage hashtags

Hashtags have become a uniform way to categorize content on many social media platforms. Hashtags allow Instagrammers to discover content and accounts to follow. I found that posts with over 11 hashtags tend to get more engagement.

Bonus tip: Try creating a brand-specific hashtag

At Buffer, our Instagram marketing strategy is to post consistent, quality content that aims to build Buffer's brand while also connecting on an individual basis with our community members. We believe strongly in the power of one-on-one interactions and connections.

Related:

In that spirit, we've created the hashtag #BufferStories which allows our community to tell a story about what they're passionate about both personally and professionally. We regularly use the #BufferStories hashtag to tell stories about our team and repost content from our community.

3. Include faces in your posts to boost engagement

I looked at 1.1 million random Instagram pictures and discovered these two really interesting bits of information. Pictures with faces get:

- 38% more likes
- 32% more comments

4. Experiment with Instagram Ads

Over the past year-or-so, Instagram has been working with brands to optimize its advertising platform, and the results so far seem great. Across

<https://assignbuster.com/30-tips-to-grow-your-audience-and-stand-out-on-instagram/>

more than 400 campaigns measured globally with Nielsen Brand Effect, ad recall from sponsored posts on Instagram was 2.8x higher than .

With various ad formats available, from photo and video ads to carousel ads that allow brands to tell a deeper story and provide a link for people to learn more, Instagram could be a great place to experiment with paid advertising.

On their blog, :

Instagram also has the added bonus of a deep integration with Facebook, which enables advertisers to reach people on Instagram based on demographics and interests, as well as information businesses have about their customers already.

11 Video, Photo and Story Ideas for Instagram

1. Share quotes that speak to your audience

Quotes are incredibly popular on Instagram and can drive a lot of engagement. Quotes can also be a great way to re-enforce your brand vision, values and what you stand for. The Skimm, a daily newsletter, uses quotes on Instagram to share snippets of the stories they feature in their newsletter:

VaynerMedia also use quotes to great effect on their Instagram by sharing wonderful, hand-drawn quotes from their team on the platform:

To create beautiful quotes, you'll need a tool to help you overlay text onto an image and create your design. Here are a couple of tools that could help:

<https://assignbuster.com/30-tips-to-grow-your-audience-and-stand-out-on-instagram/>

2. Run contests and giveaways

Contests are a great way to increase engagement and build evangelism among your audience on Instagram. When done properly and effectively, contests can have many benefits for brands:

- Increased awareness
- Build a stronger community and create brand evangelists
- Incentivize following

Three simple contests you can run on Instagram:

With Instagram, you can get super creative when it comes to competitions and you're only limited by your imagination. Here are a few common mechanics used by brands:

1. Photo sharing contest: In these types of contests, you ask your followers to share a photo using a selected hashtag (so you can discover all entries). These contests tend to have a set theme. For example, Starbucks ran a competition where they asked their followers to share creative shots of their 'Red Cup Moments' using the hashtag #RedCupContest:

2. Comments contest: With this contest mechanic, you ask your followers to comment on your post to enter the contest. You can also encourage users to tag a friend in the comments to enter -- this can help to increase the virality of the post.

3. Likes contest: This is probably the easiest contest to get up and running -- simply liking your photo will enter someone into your contest. The major

benefit of this simplicity is that there's no barrier to entry and it'll only take your followers a second to double tap and like your post.

3. Timely and news-related content

Is there something interesting trending? Maybe it's a specific holiday? National Pizza Day? You can join the discussion by creating something relevant to the story and your brand to maximize on the excitement. When it comes to jumping on trending stories, though, it's essential to think about how this story relates to your brand and whether joining the conversation is a good fit with your strategy.

Here's an example from , which shared the below post on World Emoji Day:

4. Use Stories

Instagram recently debuted , a feature that lets users post photos and videos that vanish after 24 hours.

Much like Snapchat stories, the photos and videos shared in your Instagram Story are ephemeral and can't be viewed once 24 hours have elapsed. Content shared to stories also won't appear on your profile grid or in the main Instagram feed.

Instagram Stories are empowering us marketers to tell better and deeper stories about our brands. Whereas you may only post one or two images or videos to your Instagram feed per day, stories enable us to go behind the scenes and share more real-time, less-polished content.

Here's an example story, where Mercedes-Benz shared a compilation of videos and photos of a photo shoot highlighting its Mercedes-AMG model:

5. Experiment with user generated content

As marketers, we shouldn't only be focused on creating content ourselves, we should also be thinking about how we can create opportunities for content creation and how we can craft inspiring experiences that encourage our community to create content for themselves.

User generated content (UGC) refers to any form of content created by contributors (*who tend to be community members*) .

UGC can come in many forms such as pictures, videos and tweets. And it's extremely powerful -- according to research from marketing startup and the global research company , Millennials and other generations trust UGC 50% more than other types of media.

Where possible, try to encourage your community to share memorable moments and experiences they have with your brand across Instagram and ask permission to repost some of the best content to your own channels. At Buffer, we tried this strategy and it .

6. Try Stories takeovers with other brands

A takeover is a collaboration where you and another Instagram user or brand appear on each other's channel and share content to Stories. Takeovers essentially work much like a guest post on your blog or a cool guest joining your podcast.

At Buffer we've experimented with a few takeovers with brands like TrackMaven and influencers such as Brian Fanzo, where he took over our Buffer Instagram Stories and our Social Media Manager, Brian, took over his:

These partnerships can work great when brilliant content is delivered on both sides and value is being provided to each audience. For example, if you're a home furniture company, you could jump on a takeover with a real estate company and talk a little about how to create the perfect bedroom layout. On the flip side, the real estate company could also use your Instagram Stories to give advice on buying and selling real estate.

7. Experiment with zoom

Instagram users can now pinch . When you pinch to zoom, the photo or video expands in a lightbox and moves out of the original frame to take over the rest of your screen.

This opens up a ton of fun content opportunities on Instagram. Here's an example of how Icelandic brand, , used zoom to celebrate some of :

For more examples of zoom in action check out: Instagram Zoom:

8. Repost content from other accounts

Though reposting isn't an official feature of Instagram's apps or website, it's something that many brands and users have been doing for a while now.

And it can be an incredibly effective way to grow your Instagram following.

A great example of reposting in action is GoPro. GoPro is a brand built on user generated content. Their Instagram feed regularly features content

from members of their community and showcases the amazing images you can capture using a GoPro camera. For example:

9. Try Boomerang

Instagram's takes a series of photos and creates a GIF-like image. However, there's one subtle, but super important difference between Boomerang and a GIF. A GIF loops a video over and over again. Whereas a Boomerang, plays a video forward, and then backwards, and then loops that continuously.

10. Take followers behind the scenes

Instagram is brilliant for behind the scenes content and sharing the human side of your business. This can give your followers an exclusive peek into life at your company and make them feel a part of your brand.

Related:

11. Showcase your products creatively

Instagram gives you an amazing platform to showcase your product or service in creative ways. This is something they do very well -- almost every piece of content they share on Instagram features one of their products, but each photo or video does so in a compelling, unique way:

Nike also has a similar approach, with the majority of their posts on Instagram also focusing solely on their products:

When it comes to using Instagram for business, try to think about how you can showcase your brand through the content you share on the platform. A few great ways to do this include:

- Showcase your products and/or services with demo videos
- Show real world use cases
- Share customer stories and experiences

4 Instagram for Business Resources

1. The Instagram for Business blog

The blog is a great place to see how businesses of all sizes around the world are using Instagram and get the latest news from Instagram. Some interesting posts include:

2. The Complete Guide to Instagram Marketing

We spent many days putting together this guide on everything you need to know to create a killer Instagram marketing strategy for your business: from creating a content strategy to measuring your results and everything in-between. You can check out the .

3. Inspirational artists and designers to follow

Everyone needs some creative inspiration from time to time. And to help, we've curated a group of 47 super-talented artists specializing in a range of disciplines. Follow these insanely accomplished artists and designers to stay ahead of the curve and inspired day-after-day. .

4. 10 Proven Tactics To Grow Followers and Engagement

Whether you're growing your own personal account or working on behalf of a company, this post shares the 10 best tactics (with tools and examples!) we uncovered that could help you grow a bigger, relevant audience on Instagram. .